

Abstract of the Doctoral Dissertation

Author: MA Aleksandra Majka (mgr)

Supervisor: Professor Magdalena Czachorowska, PhD habil. (prof. dr hab.) (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz)

The Image of Residents and Teachers in Polish Literature at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries A Linguistic and Stylistic Study

The dissertation entitled *The Image of Residents and Teachers in Polish Literature at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries. A Linguistic and Stylistic Study* aims to present the image of characters in Polish literature of the 19th and 20th centuries who were assigned the role of “residents” – mostly relatives, teachers, governesses, and family friends. My focus was on such figures, socially diverse, representing different material and social status, holding various worldviews, and performing a range of functions within the literary work, yet united by their dependence on the goodwill of others and, at times, their reliance on relatives with whom they resided. These characters, while not directly part of the family portrait, nonetheless complemented it.

The material for linguistic analysis was drawn from the works of authors who published in the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. My primary interest lay in female figures, working as teachers and residents, from the novels *On the Niemen* (*Nad Niemnem*) by Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Nights and Days* (*Noce i dnie*) by Maria Dąbrowska, *The Doll* (*Lalka*) and *The New Woman* (*Emancypantki*) by Bolesław Prus, and *The Girl with a Wet Head* (*Panna z mokrą głową*) by Kornel Makuszyński. In addition to female characters, I also highlighted two male figures – Bolesław Kirło and Ignacy Orzelski.

A particularly valuable reference was the monograph by Elżbieta Skorupska-Raczyńska entitled *The Creation of the Father in the Niemen Novels by Eliza Orzeszkowa*

(*Kreacja ojca w powieściach nadniemeńskich Elizy Orzeszkowej*). A *Linguistic and Stylistic Study*, published in 2013. The author concentrated on three novels by Orzeszkowa – *Dziurdziowie*, *On the Niemen (Nad Niemnem)*, and *The Peasant (Cham)* – from which she collected linguistic material concerning the figure of the father/stepfather/foster father/guardian. Most importantly, I followed her assumption that the linguistic image of a character constitutes part of the linguistic picture of the world.

In the first part of the dissertation, I presented the social, cultural, and legal conditions regulating various aspects of life in the Polish lands. I focused particularly on family-related legal regulations recorded in the then-applicable *Napoleonic Code*. Of special interest were legal provisions concerning the duties of adults toward children under their care. I also discussed the image of education in Poland at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, concentrating mainly on home education while also briefly describing institutional schooling. Furthermore, I conducted a lexicographic analysis of the lexeme *rezydent* (“resident”) to demonstrate when it first appeared in Polish and how its semantics evolved. I also included depictions of residents from different social groups based on memoirs, letters, autobiographical sources, and literary works.

Chapters II–IV are devoted to the protagonists of *On the Niemen (Nad Niemnem)*: Justyna Orzelska, Marta Korczyńska, Teresa Plińska, Bolesław Kirło, and Ignacy Orzelski; to Miss Florentyna from *The Doll (Lalka)*; Madzia Brzeska from *The New Woman (Emancypantki)*; Aneczka Niechcic, Celina Mroczkówna, and Maria Hłasko from *Nights and Days (Noce i dnie)*; and to Aunt Barbara, Aunt Amelia, and the “adoptive grandmother” from *The Girl with a Wet Head (Panna z mokrą głową)*.

The final part of the dissertation contains general observations and conclusions drawn from the linguistic and stylistic analysis, along with differences and similarities arising from the overall characterization of the selected protagonists.