

# Storytelling Revisited

2022

**Narrating Spaces. Literature,  
Education, Gender, Geography,  
and Tourism**

Núria Camps-Casals, Mireia Canals Botines, Núria Medina Casanovas (Eds.)



This book is the result of work by the consolidated research group GLOSSA (which includes the former research groups TEXTLICO, GRELL and GRAC) (2021 SGR 00813) of the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC) (C. de la Laura, 13, 08500, Vic, Spain).



Grup de Recerca Glossa  
**Lingüística aplicada  
didàctica i literatura**  
UVIC-UCC

### Acknowledgments

The support of the GETLIHC and TRACTE research groups, from the Faculty of Education, Translation, Sports and Psychology (FETEP), the EMPREN research group, from the Faculty of Business and Communication Studies (FEC), the ISaMBeS research group, from the Faculty of Healthcare Sciences and Wellbeing (FCSB), and the Department of Media at UVic-UCC are gratefully acknowledged. The Vicerectorate of Research and Knowledge Transfer and the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Translation, Sport and Psychology of the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia are also gratefully acknowledged.

*Aquesta actuació es duu a terme en virtut del finançament del Institut Català de les Dones atorgat a la Fundació Universitària Balmes, titular de la UVIC-UCC, per a l'organització d'activitats amb perspectiva de gènere.*

This publication has been possible thanks to the funding from the Catalan Institute for Women granted to Fundació Universitària Balmes, holder of the UVIC-UCC, for the organization of activities with a gender perspective.



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Institut Català de les Dones**

First edition: November 2022



© present edition:

Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat de Vic - Universitat Central de Catalunya  
C. de la Sagrada Família, 7, 08500 Vic, Tel. 93 886 12 22  
[www.uvic.cat](http://www.uvic.cat)

Printed by: Artyplan

Legal deposit: B 23781-2022

ISBN: 978-84-125523-9-3

*Editors's note: The authors of the manuscripts are fully and solely responsible and accountable for the content of their papers, including any images or figures that they may have included.*



# Summary

---

<b>Notes on contributors</b>	7
------------------------------	---

---

<b>Introduction</b>	11
Núria Camps-Casals	

---

<b>Feminine aspect of British travel literature and the benefits of travelogue technique for present education</b>	13
Maryna Zuyenko	

---

<b>"Let's See the Moroccans up Close!". Constructing Otherness in Vasile Alecsandri's <i>Travel in Africa</i></b>	21
Catrinel Popa	

---

<b>The Conflict of Narratives in the Representation of Women: A Review of Iranian Tourism Advertisements</b>	30
Ziba Salarvand	

---

<b>Pre-service Teachers and their Perception of Storytelling</b>	38
Núria Camps-Casals	
Mireia Canals-Botines	
Núria Medina-Casnovas	

---

<b>The relevance of space when co-creating: Storytelling in the metaverse</b>	46
Albert Armisen Morell	
Clara Eugenia de Uribe-Salazar Gil	
Núria Arimany Serrat	

---

<b>'Mundus est fabula': narrative discourse as constitutive principle of literary space</b>	65
Samantha Sechi	

---

**The Importance of Reading Classical Texts Again:  
*The Little Prince* as an Exercise of Education and Self-Care** 78

Christian Distefano

---

**Carto or The Video Game Ability to Tell a Story Through  
and With a Map** 90

Alexis Hassler



# The Importance of Reading Classical Texts Again: *The Little Prince* as an Exercise of Education and Self-Care

Christian Distefano  
University of Florence  
christian.distefano@unifi.it

*“Is it possible for a book to become a meeting?  
If the encounter is something that changes the course of a life,  
that reorients it, if the encounter is an event that offers meaning to life  
opening it to a new image of the world,  
then a book, undoubtedly, can be a meeting”*

(Recalcati, 2020, p. 25)

## Reading: a complex and current challenge

Reading can have many meanings, often personal: it is an intimate moment of reflection, leisure, confrontation. Reading means interpreting and trying to understand different points of view from ours: in a word *thinking*. Therefore, reading means trying to develop a thought that is as open as possible, free from prejudices and stereotypes, reflective and *hermeneutic*.

Reading, as Massimo Recalcati says, has a deep meaning, because it is not only a tool to read and know the world, but we ourselves are read by the books while we're reading them, because a narration helps us to understand our depth, our experience, our life.

A book becomes, then, a *knife*, which marks our life, dividing it in half, touching it in an irreversible way; a *body*, with its own scent, its own look and, finally, a *sea*, open, infinite, able to overcome every possible wall and closure (Recalcati, 2020).



Talking about reading, especially aimed at the youngest, becomes a very complex and articulated theme for today's society: it is a challenge faced by all those who work in educational services (from the family - first - to school, to extra-school services, etc.) and for which they are responsible. Reading becomes a complex theme-problem for many reasons because it is influenced by different aspects that are discriminating and that could promote greater or lesser passion for reading.

First, to mention just a few aspects, let's think about how much reading is strongly conditioned by family habits (as the statistics indicate, parents readers represent a model for children and young people, who will be more or less stimulated to read during their day and their growth); at the same time the residence environment is also very important, because the dissemination, for example, of libraries and bookshops or, more generally, of recreational places where to confront other people and read, are a strong discriminator on the percentage of readers of that specific geographical area.

More generally, if we wanted to outline a reference framework for the situation of readers, analyzing the Italian situation, we could observe how "in 2020 the share of readers increased slightly compared to the previous year: they are 41.4% of people aged 6 and over (+1.4 percentage points). Since the year 2000, when the share of readers was 38.6%, the trend has been increasing until reaching its peak in 2010 with 46.8% and then decreasing again and returning, in 2016 (40.5%), around the level of 2001" (Istat, 2022).

Despite the difficulty behind this practice, reading means taking an educational and formative path, a *quality experience* (Dewey, 2014), which makes us know and better understand some cultures and aspects of other traditions close to us or far away, but also take a path with and on ourselves, with our emotions, with our experience, with what we are. In this way the reading becomes *Self-Care* - a central ontological category in pedagogy - able to offer the reader not only knowledge but also *transformation* (Cambi, 2010).

In this perspective, this *transformation* becomes an instrument to improving the reader's humanity and self-understanding. It is understood as *Bildung*, as a human education of man, as a "complex and dynamic



process of spiritual growth (that is, inner and mediated by culture to refine and enrich the interiority itself) and the development of the oneself in a more humanly rich and accomplished self" (Cambi, 2012, p. 44).

This challenge is certainly difficult, but it is extremely necessary and current, because it emphasizes the urgency of educational experiences that give new importance and *Care* to the human (in the complexity of its entire existence) in a society too technological and materialistic. The human existence is complex not only for the potentialities of human rationality, but also for the inner and emotional dimension - polyforms, changing, in some ways unknown (Galimberti, 2021) - that animates both the development of the individual as Self and his relationship with the Other.

In this context the return to *classical texts* could mean the implementation of *quality experiences* necessary in an educational process (Dewey, 2014), not only because such books *always say something* (Calvino, 2010) but because this book can implement the *exercise of thought* that today is necessary and should be valued, through a reflection on themselves and on what is around us.

### **Reading classical texts again to give a *form* to ourselves**

In its deepest meaning, *Bildung* means defining and constructing a form for man, especially through that hermeneutical-reflective and, therefore, trans-formative circle that characterizes it. It, in fact, "hinges on the person [...] typically modern [...], imposes on it a sense [...] and realizes it [...] as a form" (Cambi & Santelli Beccegato, 2004, p. 11), always changing and to be questioned. To do this, *Bildung* uses the Foucaultian category of *Care*. Taking *Care* of oneself and of other people means "listening, questioning, remodeling oneself internally, structuring and restructuring oneself according to a design (or form) that precisely in the reciprocal balance between the various elements [...] finds its own barycentre" (Cambi, 2004, pp. 129-130).

Art helps us in this, as a pedagogical tool, as an experience, as a means of *Self-Care*. Art helps us in all its forms (from literature to music, from cinema to theater, from painting to sculpture), not only as a cultural and historical



expression, but above all as an instrument of education. This tool is used by man to read reality, to interpret it, to analyze it, to better understand it. And art makes this action because it narrates to people who live it facts and events that concern the person, the complexity of his emotional side, his daily difficulties, his experience: his Being (Cambi, 2004). For these reasons art can exalt the particularities of the human being, his *uniqueness* and *diversity*, developing deep reflections and thoughts that touch the most intimate and private (therefore personal) part of the person.

Among all the forms of art, the verbal channel used by literature perhaps implements in a particular way, the *Care*: through the narration, the reader takes part in the stories told in the texts, expanding their world, and developing experiences that give shape to the reader-person (Cambi, 2004). But can all the texts offer us these opportunities? Probably not, because not all literature, “even if it involves and captures (think of the various genres of *black, yellow, pink*), [...] usually manages to touch neither deep shares of the person, nor high and complex dimensions of human, social, historical experience” (Cambi, 2004, p. 133).

The classics, however, the so-called *timeless works*, have the main characteristic of narrating humanity outside of any historical time, of any circumstance, telling the deepest aspects of a culture. But they are timeless, because “they have grasped the basic metaphors of every time, which then coincide with the deepest plots where thoughts, feelings and feelings flow [...] that, only thanks to those books, find the right words to express themselves” (Galimberti, 2018, p. 174). A surely *timeless book* is *The Little Prince* (De Saint-Exupery, 2012), translated into more than four hundred languages and dialects, which has represented and represents an important *meeting* in the growth of each of us and which contains important pedagogical meanings.

### ***The Little Prince* as an exercise of education and Self-Care**

Reading *The Little Prince*, one of the most important classical texts in world literature, means interpreting the many languages and metaphors that characterize it. The values he communicates, in fact, certainly exceed what could seem a simple and unreal story. His messages deeply touch the



emotional sphere of the reader who tries to read the many interpretations of the story. His words, his story, his characters have represented a sensitivity that, page after page, make us reflect on the difference between superfluous and necessary, between secondary and primary aspects, because this classic text invites us to overcome the materiality and appearance of reality, to give importance to our interiority and sensitivity: to *look* with the *heart* (De Saint-Exupery, 2012).

The first message of this classic text can be described with a question: how much sensitivity is there in adults? How much imagination remains during growth? Reading the Narrator's childhood we can reflect on this question, because "all adults were children once. (But few of them remember it)" (De Saint-Exupery, 2012, p. 5). The actions of adults, in fact, according to De Saint-Exupery, are often rational and calibrated and deny the imagination: "in fact, it is only because of them that the star of the Little Prince is classified as the asteroid B 612: to believe in its existence, adults will not want to know if butterflies live there, but rather know its size, its weight, the distance... of the numbers... But the Little Prince just had to know that there was a rose" (De Saint-Exupery, 2012, p. VII). This belief without the need to know the concreteness of this asteroid is the demonstration of the symbolic capacity present in the Little Prince, as in every child.

With growth, however, even the imagination of the Narrator decreases and increases that rationality typical of adults. When De Saint-Exupéry started school at the age of six, all his symbolic and fantastic side that characterized him until that moment, began to diminish, because the teachers wanted him to replace drawing with writing. The pencil, until then used with imagination, must now be used to mark numbers and letters on paper. Even if, like him, any child would prefer to draw a "funnel" while the teacher teaches to write that same word, he will soon understand that this is the fate that children must live to become great.

The journey that the Little Prince undertakes can therefore be seen as the metaphor of what leads from the innate imagination of children to the knowledge learned at school, towards rational adulthood. Growing up and abandoning the imaginary vision of life, "the great never understand anything by themselves" (De Saint-Exupery, 2012, p. 8), because they need



a child who makes them understand the emotion of a drawing or any other fantastic aspect of reality that only children can perceive.

This different point of view, this seeing with the mind rather than with the heart, is what characterizes adults who knew the Narrator as a child. These adults cannot understand the real meaning of his drawing and their comments make him give up his passion for painting (obviously not considered important), to devote himself to issues considered more relevant. Their rational, superficial, and scientific judgment of the Narrator's drawing (which automatically excludes the symbolic aspect of the drawing), can make us reflect on the school.

Many times, assessments of teachers are assigned without considering the pupil's thought or emotions. Sometimes we consider only the simple observation of the achieved result, but we do not perceive a discomfort or mood that children can manifest with their actions or with what they don't say with words.

In addition to the importance of imagination, the moments lived by the Little Prince during his journey (they are a central part of the narrative) can become for the reader a metaphor of today's society: this is one of the most extraordinary aspects of this classic text. This journey begins when the protagonist of the story finds on his star a flower: it is not just any flower, but the only flower, the only Rose that inhabits, in addition to the Little Prince, the asteroid B 612. On it, in fact, there are only weeds, which every day the protagonist removes from the ground, for fear that they grow a lot and occupy the entire asteroid.

Spending his days alone contemplating the sunsets, admiring the beauty of the universe, and looking for some company, when the Little Prince sees that unique Rose growing on his planet, he is immediately very excited and enchanted by her. He begins to take care of her and to grant her every wish to be well. But after many requests that the Rose tells the Little Prince and not looking at the care and his commitment to make her feel good, the protagonist begins to doubt her and decides to leave his planet to make a journey between the various asteroids near the B 612. In each of these planets he meets characters who have particular and different characteristics.



The first planet is inhabited by a King, a monarch of the entire Universe (because it also ruled the stars and the sky). But there is a peculiarity: this king is only on his planet and, therefore, governs the normal development of nature (for example, he tells the Sun to rise). This King suffers a lot from his loneliness and when the Little Prince goes away, he proposes him a job that, generally, does not exist: this request hides the King's need not to be alone. This is an indirect request that only those who look at the depth of the person can understand. These kinds of demands are often made by today's adolescents because they many times live a social condition that, many times, makes them feel bad. For this reason, they seek help through unspoken sentences or actions that communicate emotions and moods (Galimberti, 2014).

After visiting the first planet, the Little Prince arrives at the second planet, where he meets a very vain character: for him it is important only to be appreciated by others. Reading this part of the narrative we can think of the need for acceptance that young people look for on social media: each *like* they receive satisfies their need for acceptance and recognition for others.

The third planet that the protagonist visits is, instead, inhabited by a Drunkard who drinks to forget. Also, in this case our reflection focuses in particular on adolescents (but also on adults who have this addiction), who get drunk not to think about the sufferings and problems of life. Here we see all the characteristics of the nihilist society, which hinders the meaning of our life and makes it difficult to understand why we must act, if we are not sure that we will reach the goal we would like (Galimberti, 2014).

On the next planet the Little Prince meets a Businessman, symbol of post-modern society. He gives a lot of importance to money and to the development of the market. The Businessman has the stars, counts them, and the more he counts, the more he has. So, when the Little Prince arrives and distracts him from his work, the inhabitant of this planet is not happy, because he has lost time to spend to make more profit. This is one of the aims of contemporary man; this is the basis of the economy that needs a constant production, and, at the same time, a self-destruction of the goods produced, so that it persists in time. If what the Little Prince communicates to us is the beauty of life and its richness beyond the material aspect, all this



is eclipsed by the Businessman, a metaphor of the advent of a predominant market in society and in people's lives.

The Little Prince's journey continues and reaches the fifth planet, where he meets another man who thinks only of work (turning on and off the street lamps) and who has no time for himself. Just doing this activity, this bizarre character doesn't have the opportunity to explore the world and have exciting experiences. The same fate of this inhabitant characterizes, again, also all those postmodern men who, instead of turning on and off the street lamps, turn on and off every day the machines they work with, convinced that "those who do not work do not exist" (Galimberti, 2016, p. 282).

Alienating themselves totally, the inhabitant of this planet, as part of the postmodern people, are interested only in their own work, "as if this had become the only indicator of the recognizability of man" (Galimberti, 2016, p. 283). The myth of efficiency requires them not to carry out other activities other than work and communicates to them the belief that they have no free time. Sad and incredulous, the Little Prince continues his journey, arriving at the sixth planet, whose inhabitant is a Geographer, whose work is to transcribe in a large book everything that explorers tell him about.

The Geographer has no experience, he does not know concretely what he writes in the books, he has never seen what they tell him: "the geographer is too important to go around. He never leaves his office, but receives explorers, interrogates them, and takes notes on their memories" (De Saint-Exupery, 2012, p. 74). There is only one small detail: the Geographer has no explorer at hand, and for this reason he always remained in his ignorance. In this sense, the story of the inhabitant of the sixth planet raises questions: how many young people today experience what they study? Does their knowledge remain in the abstract, without a link with reality, or is it experienced in the first person when possible?

The metaphor of this planet is fundamental because it helps us to reflect on the importance of knowledge, a critical approach to knowledge and, again, the importance of experience in learning.

After leaving the sixth planet, the Little Prince arrives on Earth, which, unlike the previous planets, is characterized by a multitude of inhabitants.



After an initial moment of discomfort, because he does not find people to talk to, the protagonist finally arrives in a flower garden, full of roses.

In that moment, the Little Prince understands that his Rose, which he thought was unique in the world, is any rose. This moment of sadness and resignation, hides the protagonist an important awareness, which he will understand only after meeting the Fox: this is one of the most emotional moments of the narration. Their encounter is very important in the story, because the values that the Fox communicates to the Little Prince and the readers, reveal the deepest meaning of this narrative. The words that the Little Prince and the Fox say to each contain those values that are indispensable for living together and for developing positive relationships, caring relationships. Relationships that are able to consider and exalt the uniqueness of each one.

“Who are you?” asked the Little Prince. “You’re very cute...” “I am a fox”, said the fox.

“Come and play with me”, the little prince proposed, “I am so sad...” “I cannot play with you”, said the fox, “I am not tamed”

(De Saint-Exupery, 2012, p. 91)

The Fox is not only a new friend to the Little Prince, but she will tell him what it really means to care and love someone. His words, of great emotional strength, give the Little Prince and his readers a beautiful reflection on the importance of diversity. “What does it mean to *tame*?” (De Saint-Exupery, p. 92), the Little Prince asks to the Fox, and she replies: “this is something to be forgotten. It means *creating bonds*” (De Saint-Exupery, p. 92). Strong, stable, lasting, and not hasty, superficial, momentary bonds. Bonding means going beyond appearance, eliminating prejudice, understanding, and caring for the other person. It means showing others that we are present, and we are a point of reference. It means understanding that, even among many people, that person will always be unique to us and different from the rest of the group.

“You, until now, for me, are but a boy equal to a hundred thousand children. And I don’t need you. And you don’t need me either. I am but for you a fox equal to a hundred thousand foxes. But if you tame me, we



will need each other. You will be unique to me in the world, and I will be unique to you in the world" (De Saint-Exupery, p. 92).

Being unique in the world: it is at this moment that the Little Prince understands that his Rose is precious, even if there are many other specimens. At this moment he realizes that, even in the midst of a flower garden full of roses, he will not find any other rose like his.

"If you tame me, my life will be like enlightened. I will know a sound of steps that will be different from all the others. The other steps make me hide under the ground. Yours, will get me out of the den, like a music" (De Saint- Exupery, p. 92).

Perceiving the uniqueness of the other does not only mean understanding his characteristics, his singularity, but also establishing a relationship with him based on listening. A listening of the person, which has an educational value. Listening to understand. Listening to take care of others to be attentive to their needs. Listening to grow together and develop a stable relationship, which does not stop at appearances and prejudices, but reaches the interiority of the person. To become responsible forever for those who are tamed you have to spend time for this action, engage a lot and wait long to create an important relationship. Only if we are attentive to others, and not superficial, we can really understand the singularity of that person. "It is very simple: you can only see with the heart. The essential is invisible to the eyes" (De Saint-Exupery, p. 98).

This is the main message of this narrative.

*Diversity* means uniqueness. *Uniqueness* means looking with the heart. *Looking with the heart* means going beyond superficiality to find the beauty of life, of feelings and, above all, of human relationships.

"From you, the men", said the little prince, "they cultivate five thousand roses in the same garden... and they do not find what they seek..." [...]

"And yet what they seek could be found in a single rose or a little water..." [...] "But the eyes are blind. We must search with the heart" (De Saint-Exupery, p. 108).



### **Classical texts and school: what relationship?**

In educational contexts (especially at school) is proper importance given to classical texts? Is the educational importance understood?

The experience of Self Care through the reading of the classics needs time: to reflect, to understand, to question ourselves and think about the experiences we have lived. Working on ourselves and *reading ourselves* takes time and is an extremely complex educational action. At school this is not always possible, especially because, in some cases, attention to this exercise of thought (to which this experience aspires and which it seeks to develop) is lacking. Often at school it is more important, instead, the "teaching of commentary, paraphrase, contextualization, leaving at the margins - entirely on the margins - every teaching of reception" (Cambi, 2004, p. 135).

The *teaching of commentary*, however, also has consequences on the students' approach to the text, which is often read in a passive, non-personalized, superficial way, without understanding its importance (Venturi, 2019). Within this context, therefore, we should consider the development of complex thought as a necessity, as Edgar Morin said (Morin, 2014). His reflections bring about a profound change in scholastic practice because it should put inter-disciplinarity at the center of teaching. This term is meant to overcome the rigid division of knowledge, trying to develop a knowledge that is more reasoned, linked to a continuous exercise of thought.

The notional school (which promotes a well-filled head, rich in content), should be accompanied by a reform of thought (Morin, 2014), which aims at a more complex, articulate, not mechanical thought, but capable of implementing dialogue, comparison, exchange. It would be appropriate to put at the center of teaching at school reflection and self-reflection, to also promote self-knowledge. In this way it would give importance not only to the mind of the student, but also to the person in its totality, through teaching practices that consider his growth and put him at the center of the educational and formative process, in a perspective of reflection and continuous exchange. In this perspective, reading the texts again the classics could be considered a valid tool for several reasons: knowing the cultural tradition, implementing a process of reflection, introspection, and interpretation of the Self and, finally, develop a self-critical action on us.



## References

- Calvino, I. (2010), *Perché leggere i classici*, Milano: A. Mondadori
- Cambi, F. & Santelli Beccegato, L. (a cura di), (2004), *Modelli di Formazione: la rete teorica del Novecento pedagogico*, Torino: UTET
- Cambi, F. (2004), *Saperi e competenze*, Roma-Bari: Laterza 2004
- Cambi, F. (2010), *La cura di sé come processo formativo: tra adultità e scuola*, Roma-Bari: Laterza Cambi, F., *La formazione oggi*, in Anichini, A. & Boffo, V. & Cambi, F. & Mariani, A. & Toschi, L.
- (2012) *Comunicazione formativa: percorsi riflessivi e ambiti di ricerca*, Milano: Apogeo
- De Saint-Exupery, A. (2012), *Il Piccolo Principe*, Milano: Bompiani
- Dewey, J. (2014), *Esperienza e educazione*, ed. Cappa, F., Milano: RaffaelloCortina
- Morin, E. (2014) *La testa ben fatta: riforma dell'insegnamento e riforma del pensiero*, Milano: Raffaello Cortina
- Galimberti, U. (2014), *L'ospite inquietante: il nichilismo e i giovani*, Milano: Feltrinelli
- Galimberti, U. (2016), *I miti del nostro tempo*, Milano: Feltrinelli
- Galimberti, U. (2018), *Quali sono i libri "senza tempo"?*, Retrieved from website: [https://www.repubblica.it/argomenti/D\\_-La\\_Repubblica\\_delle\\_donne](https://www.repubblica.it/argomenti/D_-La_Repubblica_delle_donne)
- Galimberti, U. (2021), *Il libro delle emozioni*, Milano: Feltrinelli
- ISTAT. (2020), *Produzione e lettura di libri in Italia: anno 2020*. Retrieved from website: [https://www.istat.it/it/files/2022/02/REPORT\\_PRODUZIONE\\_E\\_LETTURA\\_LIBRI\\_2020.pdf](https://www.istat.it/it/files/2022/02/REPORT_PRODUZIONE_E_LETTURA_LIBRI_2020.pdf)
- Recalcati, M. (2020), *A libro aperto. Una vita è i suoi libri*, Milano: Feltrinelli
- Venturi, I. (2019), *Scuola, rapporto Ocse-Pisa: solo uno studente su 20 sa distinguere tra fatti e opinioni*, Retrieved from website: <https://www.repubblica.it/scuola/2019/12/03/news/ocse-pisa-242483497/>