

The man of destiny

Profession, Teacher



The story under the title "The Fun They Had" was written by a highly prolific American writer, one of the three grand masters of science fiction - Isaac Asimov. The theme is probably "the influence of technology on the process of teaching." The story is kind of utopian story, but from the perspective of the children who are the main characters of the story, it is a dystopia, since they thought there was so much more fun back in the days when there were classrooms... but the whole story circles around the theme of technology and how children in this version of the future and how children today interact with that.

The key in this text is lyrical, and the narration here is interwinding with the direct speech and the dialogues. To prove that the mood is lyrical let's look at the descriptions of one of the main character's feelings related to her mechanical teacher. The author uses colloquial speech and jargonized words, such as "gee, I guess, I betcha" here, to show us that these children are rather ordinary, and looks similar as the children of our age. The text could be divided into three logical parts. The first part of the story begins with the description of two kids who found a real book.

It was a little discovery, the girl "even wrote about it that night in her diary" It should be noted that all the events of the story take place in the future, in the year 2155, that's why a mere book from the past seems quite an interesting object for exploration. And, our heroes, Tommy (13) with Margie (11) read the book, thinking of those who used it many centuries ago. The author uses in this story such feature as pointing out the words by using the italic font. He emphasizes the words, to make us feel deeper and pay extra attention to the very phrase. Margie's grandfather once said that when he

was a little boy his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper” as we read this “ the”, we understand that from the point of view of these children it was very-very long ago. From the dialogue of the children we see that they relationship is a friendship. Of course, the author could not avoid from inventing new terms, such as “ telebook”. The second part begins with the picture of the teaching process in the far 2157.

From the very beginning of the part, we see the Margie’s feelings to the schooling process. Her attitude to the mechanical teacher leaves much to be desired. Reading the story we come across the problem, tackled by the author. It is a low knowledge level of children, and their uneagerness to study. To prove it we should mention the fact when the County Inspector slowed up Margie's mechanical teacher to an average ten-year level. The girl was 11, but she couldn't or didn't want to cover her own age level, " she had been doing worse and worse".

And how strong was her hatred towards school! She hoped her teacher wouldn't be back, that " large and black and ugly" teacher! " The part she hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. " - This sentence indicates at her being a usual girl with a usual nature, while this is the exact thing commonly disliked at schools. The third part of the text is the speculation of these children about the teaching process “ Centuries ago”. They argue whether the live teacher better than the mechanical one, or not; could the living one be smarter than the machine etc.

The narrator lets us see the criticism of this young girl, she could not believe that the human can teach as good as the machine. The key in this part is rather emotional, we can see this in the dialogue of our story-heroes. The author uses such colloquies as “ sure he is, I betcha”; and again points out the admiration of Tom - “ a regular teacher” This story, written by I. Asimov makes the reader to think about the teaching process nowadays. If we remember that it was written in the middle of the 20th century, we can say that the details in this story are well chosen.

I think that it has a certain purpose - to warn the reader about the possible future problems, because the era of Internet and wide spread of the computers has certain impact on our generation. Of course the mechanical, or computer teachers is the ideal solution for breeding the very clever people, the caste of self-made people, but from the other point of view, these people wouldn't be so social, and would expect certain problems incommunicationwith other “ ordinary” people. So, it is for us to decide, which way ofeducationis better.