

TELEVISION

International Central Institute for Youth- and Educational Television, IZI

Special english Issue No. 16/2003/1: "Childrens's Fantasies and Television"

Jan-Uwe Rogge

Fantasy, emotion and cognition in Germany's "Sesame Street"

Notes on the framework stories

Children have a magical-fantastical interpretation of reality. They like simple, clear stories featuring fairy-tale elements that they can occupy with their imagination. A reception study on *Sesamstrasse* in Germany discovered this particularly in the case of the Muppet stories and the character Pepe. In several film inserts the kids felt they had not been taken seriously, however.

1. Max meets Ernie and Bert

Max, four and a half, comes to the counselling session with his mother. She seems rather annoyed. Max is excellent at causing his parents chaos at home.

Mother (annoyed): "The worst thing is that he says it is not him who makes a mess but Ernie and Bert, who have come to visit him." She looks at me: "Just imagine, Ernie and Bert! He's crazy!"

Max: "Not Ernie and Bert, only Ernie, Mum, only Ernie!"

Mother: "Stop it!"

I intervene and ask Max: "What happens then?"

Max (smiling): "They come, pull everything out of the boxes and then disappear without tidying up!"

Mother: "Max, please! Stop this nonsense!"

Max: "But you say that the one who makes a mess has to tidy up! Only Ernie doesn't bother! He just clears off!"

Mother in a shrill voice: "Max! Stop telling stories!"

I turn to Max and ask him: "Does that make you angry?"

Max nods.

"Does that annoy you?" I dig deeper: "Why don't you say anything?"

He looks at me, confused.

"Have you got an idea?" Max shakes his head.

"Tell him," his mother butts in, "to stop that nonsense of his! He has to tidy up!" She is angry. "That bloody rubbish on the telly! Though *Sesamstrasse* is supposed to be a good programme. You're supposed to learn something." She looks at me unnerved. "And that's the result!"

Max smiles at me.

"Max," I say to him, "I would have a chat with Ernie and tell him that it annoys you when he doesn't tidy up."

"What?" the mother butts in again. "You have too much understanding for him! You've probably watched too much television yourself!"

But Max looks at me attentively. "I have to tell him off?" he answers hesitantly.

"Yes!"

"But how?"

I look at him: "I would try it like this: Ernie, you can play with me. But then you have to tidy up before you leave. Otherwise you needn't come any more!" Max nods energetically, indicating he has got the message. Then he looks at me inquiringly. "What if he doesn't want to?"

"You can tell him that he needn't bother to come again!"

Three weeks later. The mother comes to the counselling office again. "He does the tidying up!" Max is there, too, and laughs: "I told Ernie off!"

"Then what?"

"He doesn't come any more. He stays in Sesamstrasse and does his nonsense there."

Children invent invisible companions, invisible only for adults but tangible for kids. They are characters who have emerged in their fantasy or for whom the media have acted as "midwives", as it were; they are characters who go through thick and thin with them, who are inseparable for a certain time. Adults have problems accepting these characters, as they think their kids are fleeing from reality and confusing reality and fantasy. But the opposite is the case: these characters are extremely important for the child's emotional development. Their companions act as putty for filling gaps in their sometimes still fragmentary intellectual learning process - but they pose no hazards for the child. The child associates with them voluntarily, it controls and directs them. The child attributes to the characters its own wishes and thoughts, however. In Max's situation, he found a both simple and magical, child-friendly solution. Max could not accept his parents' criticism of his disorder.

He found this less a criticism of the thing itself than of his own person. The more vehemently his parents expressed their reproaches of his disorder, the more intensively he waged his little retaliatory battles against them, which gradually drove them to despair. The significance of Max's fantasies very quickly becomes clear. Ernie embodied Max's polar perspective, highly typical for the age of between three and five: the division into good and bad people. Ernie represented the "bad" side of things, Max the "good". Children do not gain a differentiated view of people, i.e. the development of a "both-and" attitude besides an "either-or" attitude before they are five and later. This view gradually changes. Ernie served as a vehicle, for Max a magic vehicle, whose significance could not be discerned by his parents at first sight.

My observation: If parents and adults were prepared to observe their younger children more closely, if parents learned to develop an understanding for their magical-fantastical perspective, it would be possible to find solutions to conflicts with children aged between three and five. Admittedly, they would be valid only for a short time, but could settle many a power struggle in an astonishing and equally amusing way.

2. The significance of the magical-fantastical phase in child development

The magical-fantastical phase in the child stretches from the age of four well into primary school age. Magical thinking has been accorded a subordinate position in the discussion on education during the past few decades, rationality and the orientation towards cognitive learning goals being the main priorities even at pre-school age. The notion of achievement is defined more in terms of intellectual ability and less by the child's social, motor and emotional abilities. But it is important to realize the following: The child regards itself in the magical phase as a mixture between a scientist and a wizard, a researcher and an artist. On the one hand, the child knows about real processes, about the background to many things. On the other hand, there are - by the nature of things - enormous gaps that the child fills with its own fantasies and self-created reflections.

Children think in images. And these images constructed by the child - whether they be monsters, shadows or imaginary robbers - can be just as real as the reality surrounding the child.

The child gives things a soul, breathes its own will and intentions into them, attributing to them an importance of their own. In this way, Lego bricks can become the child's imaginary playing companions at the age of three - every brick, which later from the age of five it only sees as playing material.

Whereas at the age of three the Batman cape is still sufficient to make feel it like the idol, at the age of seven the whole outfit is necessary to develop the fantasy of being the super-hero.

The self-determined attribution of a soul to things frequently proves to be contradictory, however: it endows children with the strength to demonstrate self-confidence and self-reliance. But the magical ingredient they create can turn harmless objects or situations into terrible monsters. Dark shadows become ghosts, fluttering curtains turn into prowlers, creaking noises into over life-size burglars.

Children are never passively exposed to the objects in their environments. They develop self-confident and autonomous techniques of confronting and tackling reality. Children invent fantasy characters, for instance, invisible forms that accompany them for a while before disappearing from their world. In make-believe stories and fairy-tales the child is given explanations affording him or her emotional support.

Such genres therefore evince amazement and puzzlement, as the child already possesses the knowledge that things can be in reality the way they occur in these stories. The "it could be like that" perspective depicts a way of seeing reality that differs from the realistic viewpoint.

In play children have to come to terms with threatening, frightening impressions. In play the child experiences totally mixed bags of emotions; it therefore has - as the psychologist Hans Zulliger expressed it - "healing powers". The same goes for the ritual that children develop - by waving a magic wand, as it were - to give diffuse, unclear experiences a structure. In the ritual children can banish insecure, frightening situations in life.

Sometimes children regress, i.e. they slip back into earlier stages of development to escape psychical or emotional pressures. Such regression can be creative as well as being compulsive. At times, precisely the opposite may help: children undergo fantasy trips into the future, catapulting themselves forward into the future in order to gain strength for the present.

In the magical-fantastical phase, certain genres are important for kids: fairy tales, magical and animated television stories, comedies. The formal structures of these genres do in fact correspond to the psychical make-up of children between the ages of four and eight. These genres seem to support them as they live through this phase of their development with its corresponding tasks. The fairy-tale researcher Max Lüthi has developed five aspects that corroborate this connection:

- The fairy tale is one-dimensional. This means that everything can come into contact with everything. Fantasy characters are a normal occurrence. Cars, animals and trees have human properties. They support, assist and rescue the hero in situations of maximum danger. And nobody is surprised.
- Fairy tales are two-dimensional, meaning the suspension of time and space, of laws of nature, gravity and logic. Fairy tales observe their own laws; all is possible, nothing is impossible. The fairy tale does not focus on outward reality; rather, the child is offered symbols that help it to come to terms with its inner reality. In the fairy tale the unexpected, the unpredictable takes place, but the kids know the little hero will emerge victorious. Everything is in motion, there is always something on the go.
- The fairy tale lives on the formulae: "Once upon a time" and "happily ever after". These formulae represent an incantation, they are characteristics of intimacy, they are long-known rituals for banishing, enduring and controlling fear and anguish.
- The fairy tale hero overcomes his adventures alone, cut off from the outside world. Invisible hands or assistance from the outside world only intervene when he is in the utmost danger.
- The fairy tale thrives on the confrontation between two poles: big and small, strong and weak, good and evil, with the small and the cunning, the fragile and the weak, the good emerging victorious over the evil or the unjust. In the same way that "evil" is symbolically portrayed - sometimes stretching as far as clichés and stereotypes - the abstract message of fairy tales reads: "Sweat and strain, and prove yourself!" They focus on growing up, the search for identity, and development. At the end of the fairy tale the hero emerges purer, more developed, in simple words more mature.

No doubt such structures - as in the case of animated television series or films - can be abused, placing excessive demands on kids emotionally. At the beginning of a new episode the hero of an animated television series is featured as just as much of a bungler or blunderer, just as astonished and gullible as he or she was in the previous episode. Mistakes, impetuosity, impudence and stupidity are constantly repeated, the search for identity becomes a never-ending process.

If children are to be reached by means of make-believe stories, a few points should be borne in mind:

- Children like simple and clear stories containing fairy-tale elements - elements that they can occupy with their fantasy:
- Children need stories with a happy ending as a way of encouragement. Children cannot stand parental explanations and interpretations of stories. In their opinion, the latter are disturbing interventions in their self-determined, creative activity. The more explanations that adults have about magical stories, the more the children's inner pictures are affected. If kids have any questions, they will ask them. Parents should trust their children (also) in this respect. But children more frequently want to chat with those of the same age; with them they experience more understanding.

To get involved in the stories, children need certainty, familiarity and dependability, only achieved after they have repeatedly heard and experienced the stories. The more closely a story or fairy tale

approaches the kids, the more intensively their subjectively meaningful themes will be matched and their wish for repetition expressed. Many children therefore do not make do with listening to the story just once; they turn it over in their minds, going through it over and over again in order to find a solution. For kids the principle of repetition is part of listening to the story - until the inner picture has been processed for the child, until its significance no longer exists, until their fascination is captured by another story.

3. Age-compatible programme conceptions - What does this mean?

Sesamstrasse is structured in two parts: first, the studio stories about Samson, Finchen, Tiffy and Rumpel as well as the stories with the puppets (Ernie, Bert & Co). Then there are the film inserts, adopted from American productions or produced in Germany. The genres of these film inserts range from real films and picture stories to a wide variety of animation forms. This part of *Sesamstrasse* is not the subject of the following considerations and study. This study mainly focuses on the "inhabitants" and the magical-fantastical reality of *Sesamstrasse*, i.e. the puppets and the monsters.

The concept of the framework story was developed by the Editorial Department of the North-German Broadcasting Corporation (Norddeutscher Rundfunk) (editor responsible: Anke Schmidt-Bratzel), the production team (Studio Hamburg) (editor responsible: Bettina Bergwelt), and, not but not least, the head author: Angelika Bartram. I accompanied this project in my role as a psychologist and pedagogue. The starting point of the concept was the life-environment and everyday world of the target group, i.e. children aged between three and six, with particular emphasis on their special development characteristics. This is referred to in the programme manual, the basis for authors developing the framework stories: "Taking children seriously means taking them seriously in every phase of their development and trying to meet them on the level of their experience. Taking children seriously therefore also means taking their wishes, dreams and omnipotence fantasies seriously and not just regarding them as a collection of cute features but as an immense potential of opportunities. Taking children seriously means taking the power of their fantasy seriously and making sure this power is not impeded, not pushed one-sidedly in an intellectual direction but developed into an ability inducing the desire to form and fashion their lives."

With regard to translating this concept into a dramaturgy the manual continues: "If the intention is to convey something to children, it is necessary to use their language. This applies to everyone wishing to tell stories to children. They must comprehend how children handle their world in the various development phases, how they think, how they speak in order to use these elements subsequently in their stories. Otherwise the stories are liable to pass the children by."

The temperaments of the protagonists in the framework stories are structured and oriented towards the age and development stages of three- to six-year-olds.

Finchen is a snail, three years of age. She has loads of imagination, is hungry for knowledge and curious about everything because there are so many things for her still to discover.

And then of course there is Samson. Finchen is his best friend. Samson, the bear, is five years old. He reacts very emotionally, sees what is behind things, and constantly asks questions. And yet make-believe stories are his favourites.

Tiffy, the bird, six years of age, has just started school and almost disassociates herself from Finchen and Samson. Tiffy wants to know everything and to tell everyone what she knows. But Tiffy needs her cuddles so she goes to Samson.

Rumpel, an ageless grouch, must not be forgotten. Rumpel represents the rebellious child who finds nothing good about what others enjoy. Rumpel provokes whenever he can. Rumpel loves indulging in a bad mood. Rumpel is the defiant child, who is initially against everything.

This blend of characters creates a creative-anarchical relationship dynamic reflected in the plots and dramaturgies of the framework stories. This is illustrated in episode no. 2055 (The Light in the Fridge), which is about why there is a light on in the fridge. While Samson and Finchen look for magical-fantastical explanations ("Perhaps it's the cucumber lying in the fridge that turns the light on?"), Tiffy vacillates between a scientifically correct and a make-believe explanation. Nils, an adult reference person from the framework plots, finally reveals the secret without managing to convince Samson and Finchen completely with his explanation. They prefer to abide by their interpretation, which is more familiar at their age. The magician Pepe, portrayed by the German actor-comedian Dirk Bach, also plays a key role in several episodes of the framework stories. This character was reintroduced and soon accepted by the child viewers. The magician Pepe is a child living in the present, in "here and now". Many of Pepe's tricks are a flop, hardly any go right at the beginning. But Pepe does not give up, despair

is not part of his vocabulary. Pepe tries time and time again until he finally pulls it off. Pepe's behaviour is child-like, not childish; Pepe acts like a child, without ever resorting to childishness. There is something mysterious about him, which soon enchants the kids. Pepe plays, does all kinds of tricks, creates stories; this is what the kids identify with.

From the children's perspective playing a game constitutes an appropriate form of coming to terms with experiences, as it embraces key child development aspects. The child voluntarily gets involved in the game, which itself obeys certain rules. In the game the growing child is in charge of the speed at which it wants to tackle the problem and find a solution. In the game the main question is the conceptual solution of the problem. The game lives on the principle whereby the child learns the concept by grasping for it. Autonomously and equipped with its own means, the child confronts the problem, tries to grasp it and gain a conception of the problem. This takes place at a speed set by the child. The game features varying speeds: rapid progression; a snail's pace; a pause to consider; a review to check progress; settling down and making oneself at home; taking a step backwards. Pepe and the opportunities he offers make all this possible.

Not only the characters comprise the fascination for children. The dramaturgy of the framework story generates a very special form of excitement children can grasp:

- To begin with, the kids identify with the Muppets regardless whether they put themselves in their position or transcend above them.
- Kids are welcomed directly by the protagonists, they feel they are taken seriously.
- The stories relate to the kids' competences.
- The stories create references to everyday life without any semblance of being insincere, superficial or pedagogical.

4. Study on the framework concept

A study on episodes 2046 and 2055 focused on two questions:

- How do kids handle magical-fantastical design elements? Do they accept the transmission of an entertainment and knowledge blend?
- How do kids accept the newly introduced puppets and Pepe? What significance do they attribute to them?

This study therefore does not seek to survey the overall concept of *Sesamstrasse* in the context of other pre-school programmes. Comparing the results of the companion study with other, more comprehensive studies, the following may be concluded: The results are absolutely representative and can be generalized against the backdrop of other studies.

310 children at 12 day nurseries were interviewed. Five of them were located in the area of the City of Hamburg, the other seven south of Hamburg in the country. The children were aged between three and six. Most came from a middle-class background. The parents took an active interest in their children's television consumption, seeking high-quality programmes for their children. The children frequently tuned into the ARD/ZDF children's channel Kinderkanal. Frequent-viewing children were just as few as those watching programmes unsuitable for their age group.

The children's average television consumption amounted to approximately one to two programmes a day, usually pre-school programmes. Those named were *Sesamstrasse*, *Die Sendung mit der Maus* (The Programme with the Mouse), *Sandmännchen* (The Sandman), as well as *Löwenzahn* (Dandelion), *Siebenstein*, *Teletubbies*, *Disney Club* and *Tigerenten Club* (Tigerduck Club). They were joined by still popular animated television series such as *Heidi* and *Pokémon*. The latter were referred to by older children.

Sesamstrasse was known to all the children. It was the format they were allowed to watch without any fuss from their parents, as the latter agreed with the concept of the series.

Another significant factor entered the arena: "We're allowed to watch *Sesamstrasse* by ourselves," explains six-year-old Michael, "because we learn something." *Sesamstrasse* enjoys a high level of acceptance on the part of the parents. It is classified as being "suitable for children", since it features no commercials, no violence and no elements giving rise to anxiety. For the kids *Sesamstrasse* assumes the role of "their" programme. They get involved, they feel accepted.

The way the kids deal with *Sesamstrasse* is tantamount to a ritual: they know when the programme is

on, settle down in front of the television, trust in the developments about to appear on the screen. Familiarity with the programme hinges mainly on the Muppets: the kids really get involved with them; they know their character and temperament. There is the large, cuddly, funny-clumsy bear. Five-year-old Anne says she likes Samson most of all, he is so cuddly, so big, nice to have as a brother because then nothing can happen to her. She would even go for a walk into a dark forest at night with him. But Ernie, Bert and the Kruemelmonster are repeatedly stressed as being well-known and familiar Muppets without the question having to be popped. The kids attribute their affection for the Muppets to the contents in a number of different ways: they are all funny, occasionally cause a lot of nonsense, they make you laugh. They are like "good friends", explains six-year-old Jan.

"With them somehow I know what is coming. Ernie, who gets on your nerves a bit, and Bert, who is quieter." It was like that with his elder brother, who has to put up with a lot from him.

For the kids the Muppets not only represent entertainment. They incorporate attitudes, characters, vital principles. They create references to their daily lives, in a clever-witty way, not in a superficial, schoolmasterly fashion. Particularly striking were the explicit viewpoints of the kids interviewed about the programme format. The older they were, the clearer the expression of their opinion. They praised the blend of entertainment and knowledge transfer and felt accepted by the programme as autonomous personalities. That's why *Sesamstrasse* was a programme for them because they could watch Ernie and Bert, Pepe and Momi by themselves without any parental involvement. "Mum doesn't always interrupt," says six-year-old Stefanie, "Samson is my friend, Mum's got *Lindenstrasse*."

The study was divided into two parts:

- First, the kids watched two episodes of *Sesamstrasse* (2046 and 2055). The kids were observed by means of a video camera. The intention was to capture the kids' verbal and non-verbal reactions and immediate effects on programme-related parts.
- Subsequently, group and individual interviews took place, when the kids had the opportunity to express their opinion on the programme. The kids were asked questions in an open, theme-oriented interview (cf. note).

Observation of behaviour during viewing

The kids were fascinated by both episodes, concentration phases alternating with phases of less interest. This completely matches children's perception behaviour. The age group investigated cannot follow attentively a programme lasting almost 30 minutes. This would expect too much of them cognitively and emotionally. Particularly striking is the fact that their glance returns to the television as soon as the Muppets appear; other activities that have nothing to do with the programme cease. The kids watch the protagonists in enthralment. Many kids use the short film inserts to switch off mentally, to gather their thoughts and to get involved in the Muppets and their stories once again.

The real film on Turkish children from the series *Mischa in der Türkei* (*Mischa in Turkey*) receives a critical appraisal in both episodes. After a very short time the kids' attention wanes, they lose interest, resume contact with the other kids sitting next to them, they do not get involved in these parts. "It's boring," says six-year-old Jonas on behalf of the other children. Without embarking on an exact product analysis, the stories about Turkish children, whose intentions are no doubt important and comply with the *Sesamstrasse* catalogue of learning goals, fundamentally differ from the quality and the aesthetic translation of the Muppet stories. Many stories in the film inserts contain no suspense, the aesthetic translation is not very appealing, the speaker seems childish. The result: the kids do not feel they are taken seriously, they lose interest.

There is no doubt that the puppets are the focus of the kids' interest. Ernie and Bert, the Kruemelmonster, Tiffy and Finchen, but also the newly introduced Pepe top the kids' popularity list, as mentioned above.

Cognition and emotion belong together

Learning and entertainment form an indissoluble blend. Children find a cognitively oriented knowledge transfer boring, one-sided and preachy. Cognition and emotion belong together. The kids discover emotionality in the characters and temperaments of the Muppets as well as in the songs and the music of the episodes. The latter fix the attention of the kids, enchant them without demanding too much of them emotionally. The children sing along, move to the beat of the music, their gestures and mimic are

sparked.

The programme-related attention of the kids does not exclude other activities. Two different forms can be observed. First, those activities required to take their minds off things, to relax and switch off. The kids do not care about the contents of the programme, but when "their favourites" reappear they return to the programme. Being familiar with the format of the programme, they also know how the episodes are structured: they can "switch off" without running the risk of missing anything important. Second, programme-related entertainment takes place: two kids chatting about how Pepe found his magical charm again; other kids explaining in a highly matter-of-fact way how the light in the fridge goes on and off. And then there are the para-social chats: a child says that it wants to help Pepe find his forgotten magical charm, for example; another says it finds the writer from a film insert "stupid" or "silly". Children like being welcomed directly by the Muppets. "It's as if Samson is talking to me," remarks six-year-old Vanessa. Directly addressing the kids makes them feel accepted; an almost personal relationship with them is established, important for later transfer of knowledge and translation of intended learning goals. The better liked the protagonist is and the more competent his explanations are, and the more he can involve kids where they stand at the moment - both in terms of space and intellect -, the more willingly kids identify with this character and its abilities. Observations of their behaviour have made this very clear.

Evaluation of the interviews

- Pepe captured the hearts of the kids immediately without superficially ingratiating himself as one of them. The kids find him funny, witty, comical. They feel he addresses them directly. He is like one of them - with all his strengths and weaknesses. He tries out many things, is sometimes sad, then cheerful again. He falls flat on his face, knowing how to extricate himself from tricky situations. Somehow or other he always knows a way out - and there is something mysterious about him. So it is almost self-evident that children are inspired by Pepe to invent their own (magical) stories. In the interviews the kids were observed talking about their own magical tricks, their successes and flops.
- The *Fridge Story* situation was different. Here the kids felt they had been addressed, but felt they were more competent than the protagonists of the programme. This produced a certain viewing attitude: the kids commented on the Muppets' acts, telling each other what they all knew and finding themselves cleverer on the whole. Whereas the excitement in the Pepe episode developed from how he got out of the "mess" he had made, the *Fridge Story* contained a totally different kind of suspense. The kids viewing the episode knew about the technical processes, they could see how the Muppets eventually approached their level of knowledge.

Children like the mixture of knowledge- and information-transfer with entertainment. But they have high expectations of such formats: "If it isn't funny, then I don't want to watch it," says five-year-old Sandra. And like an expert, six-year-old Tim remarks: "The pictures must be really cool. I must see what is being explained, otherwise I don't understand!" His friend Rafael of the same age adds: "If they only talk, it isn't good, either. A bit of music so I can join in the singing, that's cool. Or when they explain the alphabet with a song, I remember it much faster." Six-year-old Carlo says it is easier for him to remember something if he can copy what he has seen afterwards.

Here the children touched on two important points concerning the translation of learning goals, the transfer of knowledge and information: the entertaining-emotionalizing programme design elements are just as important as the references to everyday life ("What has that got to do with me?"). And yet the translation of these aspects is tantamount to a tightrope walk: the dramaturgical elements (music, songs, camera work) are very significant but too much excitement would distract, unsettle the target group. Exaggerated references to daily life could be misinterpreted as mere preachiness.

5. Summary

Children - in accordance with their age and stage of development - must test how they can make use of television. This explains why parents and teachers, producers and heads of programme services, journalists and authors are equally called upon. Doubtless the dramaturgy of a programme has an influence on whether the kids are overstrained or whether they are given the opportunity to keep an emotional distance. There are programmes that venture a dramaturgy suitable for children, but what is

suitable for children is not always what adults consider it to be. Children growing up understand something else by what is suitable for them: no didactic know-all manner, no boring attitudes, no officious images nor any avuncular tone. Pre-school programmes such as *Die Sendung mit der Maus* or *Sesamstrasse* offer entertainment and pleasure, but at the same time they take children's feelings seriously. Such programmes do not aim at the grand arch of suspense, they consist of several little arches of suspense between which the kids can have a moment's rest. Only a child who is permitted to perform other activities while viewing will be able to deal productively with the emotional challenges of television programmes. Children maintain quality demands on programmes, which may be described as understanding what is going on and experiencing things.

Children want to be emotionally carried away by their favourite programmes. But for reasons of endurance they need dependability and security, provided by a familiar dramaturgical framework. "What children need most of all," Bruno Bettelheim writes in his essay on "Children and Television", is "to learn from their experiences and to grow as a result. Children benefit most from programmes that show how people change as a result of their experiences - in terms of personality, their view on life, their relations with others and their ability to cope with future events." The framework stories of *Sesamstrasse* reveal this quite impressively.

NOTE

In five day-nurseries, students from the University of Hamburg carried out the video observation and the interviews under the supervision of lecturer Eva Schäfer. In ten day-nurseries, the observation and interviewing of educators took place under the supervision of Jan-Uwe Rogge. Eva Schäfer also compiled the evaluation of the observation and interviews she carried out.

REFERENCES

- Bettelheim, Bruno (1990). Themen meines Lebens. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt.*
- Fisch, Shalom M.; Truglio, Rosemarie T. (2001). G is for growing. Thirty years of research and children in Sesame Street. London: Erlbaum.*
- Lüthi, Max (1990). Märchen. Stuttgart: Metzler 1990.*
- Mediaperspektiven, -/2000/12.Neuß, Norbert (Ed.) (2001). Fantasiegefährten. Weinheim et al.: Beltz.*
- Rogge, Jan-Uwe (2002). Geschichten gegen Ängste. Reinbek b. Hamburg: Rowohlt.*
- Sesamstrasse: Summary of research findings in Germany. Prepared for workshop. July 2000.*
- Theunert, Helga; Eggert, Susanne (2001). Was wollen Kinder wissen? Angebot und Nachfrage auf dem Markt der Informationsprogramme. In: Schächter, Markus (Ed.): Reiche Kindheit aus zweiter Hand? Medienkinder zwischen Fernsehen und Internet. pp. 47 - 62. (Medienpädagogische Tagung des ZDF, Mainz 19.-20.9.2000). München: KoPäd.*
- Zulliger, Hans (1990). Heilende Kräfte im kindlichen Spiel. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch.*

THE AUTHOR

Jan-Uwe Rogge, Dr. rer. soz., family and communication counsellor with his own practice, lives in Bargteheide near Hamburg, Germany.

INFORMATION

[Internationales
Zentralinstitut](#)

für das Jugend-
und Bildungsfernsehen
IZI

Tel.: 089 - 59 00 21 40

Fax.: 089 - 59 00 23 79

eMail: izi@brnet.de

Internet: www.izi.de

COPYRIGHT

© *International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI)*

▶▶ *to the top*