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Title	Author
Early Detection of Mild Cognitive Impairment, Dementia and Alzheimer's Using Qeeg	Written by Norsiah Fauzan, Nur Hurunain Amran
A Simple Model about Regional Economic Cooperation – A Multidisciplinary Approach Careers, Identities and Professionalization. a Study on Doctors about Their Social Representations Related to the Labor Market Today and its Foreseeable Future Collective Identity, Anglo-Saxon Bond and the Persistence of the Anglo-American Special Relationship	Written by Fazil Yozgat Written by Miriam Aparicio, Ana Maria Costa e Silva
Contemporary Models of Organization of Power and the Macedonian Model of Organization of Power	Written by Ruike Xu  Written by Driton Kuçi
Development of Social Security in the Czech Republic in the Context of Current International Treaties	Written by Zuzana Horváthová, Josef Abrhám, Iva Chvátalová
Diplomatic Means of Resolving the International Dispute: Case of Iranian Nuclear Program	Written by Mentor Lecaj
Distinct Matters between the Phenomenon of Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Human Beings as Types of Organized Crime in Kosovo	Written by Armend Podvorica
eParticipation Issues in Contemporary Europe	Written by Rada Cristina Irimie
Importance of Video Aids' Usage in Teaching and Learning Process of English Language Classes	Written by Eriselda VRAPI, Xhevdet ZEKAJ
Inovative Surgical Treatment for Intratubal Administration of Methotrexate	Written by Aneta Tomescu, Cezar Laurentiu Tomescu, Rodica Sirbu
Justification of Acquisitive Prescription in the Civil Law System. Why is It Not an "Uncompensated Deprivation?"	Written by Silvana Dode
Kosovo's Security Policy in Preventing and Fighting Trafficking of Human Beings 2009-2014	Written by Reshat Maliqi
Legal Justice and Historical Aspects of the Appearance of Criminality	Written by Mevledin Mustafi
Miskawayh's Apologia for Greek Philosophy Professor Dr. Mohd Nasir Omar Department of Theology & Philosophy National University of Malaysia 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia. abunasir@ukm.edu.my +6013-3322833 Abstract In the East, Greek philosophy was st	Written by Mohd Nasir Omar
New Perspectives on Contractual Law in the Context of Real Contracts in the Systems of International Contemporary (Roman) Law	Written by Bashkim Selmani
Pedagogical Explanation Methods of Teaching Matrix Programming Operations: Effects on Students' Achievements in IPCs	Written by Arjan Skuka
Perception of Lecturer on Intercultural Competence and Culture Teaching Time (Case Study)	Written by Enkeleda Jata
Pharmaceutical Uses of Chitosan in the Medical Field	Written by Alef Mustafa, Emin Cadar, Rodica Sirbu
Prophetic Leadership Model: Conceptualizing a Prophet's Leadership Behaviour, Leader-Follower Mutuality and Altruism to Decision Making Quality	Written by Nik Maheran Nik Muhammad
Public Spaces in the Focus of Citizen's Right - Case Study – Urban Spaces Tirana	Written by Sazan Guri, Artan Manushaqe

Title	Author
Science Teachers' Attitudes towards Using ICT and Mobile Learning Technologies in Malaysian Schools	Written by Mohammed Yousef Mai
Slum Kampong Tourism "Jakarta Hidden Tour": Designing Eco-Cultural Based Pro-Poor Tourism	Written by Retnayu Prasetyanti
The Challenges in Building a Legal State in the Republic of Macedonia	Written by Mersim Maksuti
The Evaluation of the Drafting Process of Regional's Development Strategies in Albania. the Research on Gjirokastra's Region	Written by Alketa Bejko, Etleva Peta, Belinda Xarba
The Influence of Social Media on Organizational Communication: Case Study in Republic of Macedonia	Written by Liljana Siljanovska
Violence in YAL with special emphasis on contemporary Macedonian YAL	Written by Jovanka Denkova
Witness Protection in Kosovo: Progress and Challenges	Written by Kadri ARIFI

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# Violence in YAL with special emphasis on contemporary Macedonian YAL

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**Abstract:** *In this paper, we focus on contemporary Macedonian literature for young people, in particular of one of its segment, and it is the presence of violence and violent scenes in the works designed for this audience. Theorists of this literature, popularly called YAL, not circumvent these issues, just like writers who write books intended for adolescents. This topic will be discussed by explicit examples that will be taken of contemporary literature for young people, in order from one side to indicate their presence, and the need to write freely on the subject, and on the other hand to help young people who are experiencing these problems. The analysis will show that in most cases, the cause of the young sometimes turning to violence or themselves been victims of violence are shifting family values, or lack / absence of the family, a family member, usually a parent, neglect by parents and their preoccupation with work.*

**Keywords:** Literature for young people, violence, Macedonian Literature

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last half century, experts try to define literature for youth. Other terms that refer to this literature: adolescent literature, books for teenagers and so on. This is literature that describes things that connect children's literature to literature for adults (Pinkwater, 1982). It seems that adolescence is a time of questions, confusion and strong feelings. It is a time when young people lose the innocence of childhood when peeked into the world of adults (Cart, 2013).

This type of literature is defined by the following activities: the main character is a teenager, events revolve around the main character and his / her struggle to resolve a conflict, telling the story from the perspective of the young protagonist (Donelson, 1977: 7-241). The topics are: maturity, sexuality, relationships, drugs and so on (Barlow, 2002: 77-78).

It would seem that before we start reviewing this painful subject we should briefly look at the characteristics of adolescent literature. The theory of literature provides a clear picture of the characteristics which are supposed to have such work, for example, according to theory of literature, YAL should mainly have these following characteristics that define literature for young people:

1. The protagonist is a teenager.
2. The events revolve around the main character and his struggle to resolve the conflict.
3. The story is told from the point and through the voice of a young adult.
4. The literature is written by and / or for young people.
5. The literature is marketed for youthful audiences.
6. The story is no "happy ending" the way they have books for children.
7. Parents are largely absent or are in conflict with the youth.
8. The theme of this literature is mostly about: maturity, sexuality, relationships - relationships, drugs;
9. The books under 300 pages, mostly to 200th



Gisela Konopka from Center for research and development of young people at the University of Minnesota developed the concept of normal adolescence in 1973. From her research resulting five key concepts and features six adolescence. The five concepts of adolescence "experience of physical sexual maturity", "experience of withdrawal from the protection of adults", "awareness of themselves in interaction with others," "reassessment of values" and "experimentation". According to her, adolescence characteristics are: "uncertainty", "deep sense of loneliness", and "a high degree of psychological vulnerability, "change of mood", "strong need to be part of the group" and "need to be emotional and in the mood for a fight" (Konopka, 1973).

On the other hand, there are authors like Carlsen, who put emphasis on the protagonists and their experience of the world and the person which is transmitted narration. Moreover, Carlsen believes that in literature for young people, a key point is that the main protagonists are adolescents commonly facing a problem and the story is in the first person (singular), because that way the reader-adolescent can be best connect with the character / protagonist. (Op.cit. VanderStaay, 48). Crowe again, though he notes that adolescents can read and read different types of texts, however he reduces the definition of literature for texts who are written, designed and read by young adults (Crowe, 2001: 146-150). Stephens expresses a subjective attitude and commitment to the "young" that it should refer to the problems that young people face on the road to claim their own identity (Stephens, 2007: 34-42). Rosenblatt also focus his attention on the adolescent as a reader of this literary genre, linking it to the need for the reader to enter into the experience of others, to feel the beauty and intensity of what the world offers. All that Rosenblatt connects with human need to connect and identify. This is where she sees the positive side of adolescent literature or research experiences of others through literature, can directly help in empowerment and building self-confidence. Linking with similar experiences can help adolescent-reader to feel less lonely or to serve as a guide, or to serve as a guide through his own experiences, and to explore human relationships, issues related to morality or social expectations (Fox, 2010:8).

## 2. INFLUENCE OF FAMILY AND FAMILY VALUES FOR ADOLESCENTS

Of course, developments in society cannot be considered out of the nearest environment in which the individual exists, in particular young people, and it's family. In the context of closer determination of the term "family" will emphasize that the social sciences, sociologists use the term "traditional family," which refers to the environment for the upbringing of the child that sociologists have identified earlier as the norm. The term "traditional family" means middle-class family with a breadwinner - a father and a housewife mother, within which raise their biological children. Any deviation from this family - model is considered "nontraditional family" (Panasenko, 2013: 79-98). According to Susie Duffy, consistent family social unit consisting of parents and children, who are grown, and family values that define such values that the family develops the basis for how children learn, to grow and function in the world.<sup>1</sup> In this context, we emphasize the vast importance of family values and the development of the young man and his relationship to violence. According to Dictionary.com, "family values" are defined as "moral and ethical

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.parentiq.com/news/DefiningYourFamilyValues.asp>, accessed on 15.08.2015

principles that are traditionally held and transferred within the family, as honesty, loyalty, diligence and faith.<sup>2</sup>

According to Merriam-Webster, "family values" are the values of traditional and conservative character held to promote stable family functioning and strengthen the structure of society. Then, according to Oxford Dictionaries., "Family values" are the values that have traditionally been learned or enhanced within the family, such as high moral standards and discipline.<sup>3</sup> Family values include all ideas about how you want to live your family life, and they are often transmitted from previous generations. They can help to define the behavior in different situations, to help young people to make good choices, to strengthen the relationship that your family has.

By addressing such books for reading with characters and works that are carriers of positive moral, ethical, political, social and religious values, should help young people to build relations in accordance with their family values, help them understand the importance of family support, and to recognize how these family values that need to be nurtured from early childhood to help them overcome certain obstacles or challenges that will be encountered in the future. To this end, we will consider texts that explicitly treat themes of modern life and modern living, such as divorce of parents, adoptions, vices of today, family conflict, death in the family, adolescence, the role of older (parents, grandparents) in fostering these values and so on. Because literature is one of the most effective ways to educate young generations, we will allocate works by contemporary Macedonian authors that foster positive values such as tolerance, understanding, training, etc.

### 3. VIOLENT SCENES IN THE MACEDONIAN YAL

In the novel "Skalila" (Misirkova-Rumenova, 1987) there is an event with the abuser Tome Siclara repeated couple of thimes. Violator, along with his group again attacked Boro and his clique demanding money and asking their territory – the street. Boro was not brought to beating with children, he was not strong enough to do that, so he and his band on resourceful way escaped brawl. In this way the author opens a very delicate issue in literature are for children and youth, and that is violence and how young people deal with it. Author Michael Cart emphasizes therapeutic influence has this literature for adolescents, because there they read a series of problems which are themselves faced through secondary education, some family conflicts, issues related to their identity, issues related to violence and questions associated with certain mental problems (Cart, 2010: 275).

In the novel "Bubreze" (Misirkova-Rumenova, 2001), main protagonist Elena lives in a family in which violent events occur and the social and family plan: the divorce of her aunt who then returns home with her bags, layoffs, strikes every day, and the implications that her boyfriend might be drugs, it all affects young girl. Although in the novel there are not present scenes of violence, at least not directly, but there are scenes in which young adolescents are confronted with death, and the reason is the stampedo which was caused in a fire at a discotheque. In doing so, the young protagonist Elena creates a feeling of remorse because the girl who was killed, was her friend and she that waited them at the disco until they were on a completely different place. It will deepen the gap between Elena and her boyfriend Vojdan, which will inevitably lead to the suspension of their relationship, when Elena turns to new friendships and to sport.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/family+values>.

<sup>3</sup> *Oxford Dictionaries*. Oxford University Press, accessed on 18.08.2015

"Prolet zad mojot prozorec" (Arsovski, 2005) is a novel that captures the problems of young adult in the urban area and has a story that is told interesting, with a sovereign language whomarks are the characters. All virtues of the narrative genre for children are conducted with meticulous procedure in which heat and refined didactics are unobtrusively present in the narrative. Modern young reader can identify with the positive ethical principles that this novel affirms. The novel has a sovereign compositional story that led to the engagement of the reader's attention witch confirms the narrative quality Tome Arsovski. It is a novel in which the narrator is a high-school student girl. Scenes of violence in this novel are related to the drug problem. The novel begins with a stable situation in which we see Dana as a high school student, in a relationship with Darko, but very soon she reveals the vile nature of her best friend Betty which takes Darko from her. Although at the time she captures them, she will not make any violent scene, however Dana will water them with a drink in a public place. The topic of interest in the opposite sex is characteristic of adolescent literature. Although Dana apart her relationship with the "blonde angel" (Darko), because of his relationship with Betty, she is not so hurt by the loss of love, as the fact that she feels betrayed by best friend. After this, the disorder occurs in her life, but fortunately life continues and Dana introduces a curly boy called Philip: „Romantic as Lord Byron, he is witty, elegant, most beautiful child in high school. A dim view, full of longing for something that even I can not cut through. Sometimes his pupils shine like live coals, another time his hands quiver of hidden internal struggle: he surely likes me and refrain about something, perhaps he is afraid to offend me? (p.29)". Dana saw some nervousness, some strange behavior with Philip, but she could not predict what the problem and how accidents is lurking in the future: "I did'n knew that poor, he had tied a stone around his neck. Smoking. And drink. I can kill myselfes" (p.29). In this chapter, Dena realizes that life is not all as rosy as it seems to young children: "Slowly I realized, life is a garden where not only rose's bloom, there are weeds and nettles and weeds. You haven't seen the nettles, and they glowed you on your feet. Rose with a thorn touched you, and she hurt your knee. On the life path, obviously, there are obstacles and misconceptions, and funny moments, joys and lies (p.24)". The drug problem that Philip has directly affected Dana at the party with his companion. The topic of drugs as acute problem today in world literature for young occurs in 1980 with an autobiographical novel by Cristiane Felscherinow "We, the children of the track of the Zoo" (Težak, 2008). For the members of those circles that are in higher stratum of society by their status, Dana is a potential user that they need to attract, but her inner strength will cause resistance inside her: "I already stepped to the edge, Philip offered me to try marijuana, but when he burn, like crazy and staring, he grabbed it from me: Do not, Dana, do not listen to me! It is hell!(p.85)". Because of that, she will put at risk her life, and Philip's, who thanks to the love he feels for her, would protect her, and even himself would go to rehab: "I asked Filip seriously, do they threaten you if you don't ... slide me too?" (p.78). At the last meeting when Philip and Dana are sitting in the park, she realizes that Philip is already addicted to hard drugs, because his face was not clear and beautiful as before, but it was wrinkled and dark, as if he had not fifteen, but fifty years. But Philipp loves Dana and instilled great confidence in him, he knew that her love will get him out of the hole in which he were. Without telling anyone, he went to rehab and no one knew where he was for a month and a half. Because of what happened with Philip, Dana could not sleep, had nobody to confide in, nobody to tell her plight, there was nowhere to evict her soul.

As alcohol, and drug use became substantial health problem in young adults. Studies shows that adolescents who live in urban communities, are at higher risk of involvement in the drug problem and it seems that there are no gender differences and boundaries then and has great influence whether an adolescent playing with consumers of drugs (such in the case of this novel),

and the fact if an adolescent comes from a family with a single parent. These studies highlight the importance of open communication between parents and their adolescent children (Kuther, 1995).

In the abovementioned novel, Dana as a child of divorced parents, with a boyfriend who is addicted, she moves in the circles of addicts and drug dealers, with a mother who is constantly on the road, has all the prerequisites to become a drug addict and itself, but thanks to her inner strength and will, she saves not only herself from these hazards, but she also saves her boyfriend Philip. Although in his mature age, author Arsovski main draws inspiration from teenage love, friendship, companionship, experienced author paints and parents and teachers, thereby expanding the artistic and social context of the work, including the problems of families with divorced and business burdened parents, so common in modern life.

The novel "Mladi i divi" (Arsovski, 2007) was released shortly before his death, and the author Tome Arsovski once again confirmed his artistic mastery in writing. It does so through modern dialogue, colorful slang of young people, getting into the psychological labyrinths of the teens, whose humor prevails and defeats the dramatic fluctuations of youthful vitality. The novel depicting life of modern adolescents, specifically two sisters, Jana and Dena, who jointly live because of the small youth aged between them, on the other hand because of the continued absence of parents at a time divorced. Two sisters go out together at cafes, along survive all the problems, because actually are been left alone. Besides socialize with their peers, because they are very popular and communicative, they work through the summer in a familiar café in Skopje. But one evening going home from work, a tricky situation will happen where walking on the streets of Skopje, she and her friend were attacked by some unknown assailants who abused two girls, but fortunately on the street appeared Goran his friend Costa Grande, who helped them to get away from the unpleasant situation. Then everyone, happy, went to a nightclub to celebrate the happy event with girls. This event will shake and although will ends well, because they were saved by their friend, from that moment they seem to mature and begin to think about all the dangers around them. Then, both sisters become more cautious.

In the novel "Sinata pateka na ljubovta" (Manev, 2000), the hero Zoran belongs to the happy family in which love prevails, mutual understanding and happiness. Zoran is a student who lives in Skopje, trying to pass exams for next year, and on the break from the faculty returns to his home village of Anzabegovo, where are his parents, his brother and sister - twins and girl Mary. All in the family have mutual respect and agree with one another. Zoran remains true to his girlfriend Maria and he is anxious to see her. Their love is very clean and big, and they surrender to the passion without thinking what might happen. From their love creates something that now grows in the belly of Mary, she is pregnant. But their happiness is interrupted when Zoran, sees a beautiful gypsy Eshmes and falls in love with her. He is constantly lying to Mary and inventing some new ways in order to be removed from the situation. At the football match he can not put the ball into an empty goal because his mind is confused by the beautiful gypsy with black eyes and slim body. This will be the toast and persecuted by the entire village, all furious at him. Not thinking of his parents honor parents, the embarrassment that causes getting a love affair with Eshmes, he hurts Mary with the words: "So what, have an abortion! – says Zoran with a voice which even surprised himself (p.110)". Because all of evil that he caused, he constantly have nightmares, waking up late at night and can not sleep again. "I just slept and nightmares appeared to him". Although the novel has no scenes of violence directly, the very immoral and inappropriate behavior toward Mary by Zoran is sufficient for his conviction by the family and the environment.

In the novel "Zaboraveniot kolosek" by Gligor Popovski (Popovski, 2001) as a result of global social change, starting to penetrate and other topics such as the disintegration of a family, dysfunctional family, and so on. Hero Janko, voluntarily leaves his parents' home because after the departure of his father overseas, his mother began to live an immoral life. In protest he went to live on the street. Although there is in danger of straying in evil ways, he will be accepted by friends and start working and earning, and it also will save him. However, deep down, he can not make peace with this situation and with a sense of homeless and rejected, so repeatedly to returns home to inspect the situation from afar. When he sees that his mother has not changed and that through their home constantly defile unknown men, in a situation Janko lose her composure, and will even think to rush in crime: "I can open any door, I know the layout of the apartments, rooms ... But I was so embittered and unhappy, and I felt if you do not control that I do and greater damage than I had imagined (p.89) ". However, time is taken away from that thought, but can not abstain and not to react to the immorality of his mother: "My mother came out on the balcony, wearing only a T-shirt and skirt. The man approached her and tossed his hand over his shoulder. And she, slimy, like a cat, hugged him around the waist. I could not bear. I felt that my chest was cracked will burst poison from them. I was forgotten! I got up, I searched for a stone around my bench, chose a shady spot, closer to the building and throw the stone to the bright window. Broken glass burst, pieces falling on the sidewalk, I turned around thru yhe shaded areas of the park, as wind undertakings me, run to the railway station" (p.90).

In the novel "Ulica" by Slavko Janevski (Janevski, 2004), a group of young boys whose principal residence is the street, are looking for their place. The hero, Jane can not track down and find a common word to anyone in the family, because there ruled dullness and monotony. Through the description of only one day, he describes his entire childhood where all the other days were identical to each other, gray and boring. That he did not like, he wanted more, and not accepting monotony. Despite the presence of some members of his family, he feels if ignored and it seems like everyone just stumbles over him. So, he has only two more opportunities where he can show him self, and it is the school and the street. On him remains to decide what will he choose. So his resentment and the desire for something new and different, forces him constantly to explore until he finds the real thing. In the next stage he thought salvation could find in school. Following is described and represented the school as very boring and professors are anecdotal and even cartoons shown and described, since all are boring, slow, uninteresting, and at the same time too strict. He feels like they are untouchable. He can not expect some advice from them. He even ridicules certain teachers for certain subjects, he feels disappointed because and that this place is unfit for the edifying of his personality. So the only remaining street. Here parade only negative characters that are on the verge of existence, evil and horrible. Jane comes in several grim events described along with the street gang, but then realizes that his priority is - book. It is his mainly weapon. The desire to experience something extraordinary is his only motive for this life and not socially conditioned (unlike the other characters). Participating in actions, he is constantly aware of the boundary between good and evil. That is why after the act he is always feeling bad, played, set and instead filled and adventurous as expected at the beginning, he was disappointed. He becomes stronger on the street, but never really belongs to her. Finally, he realizes that it is not his living space and therefore leaves. Apparently, Jane realizes some things and matures, and thus builds its own identity. Violence in this novel we see in the images of Bazdar and Pencho. Bazhdar is older homeless on whose trust fight all children of the street. He is the leader of the shares. To those who stand closest to him, the remaining show open hatred - because it means that they have reached the top. A top, it is theft in the apartments, breaking windows glass, taking pay toll, and taking tax

from the passengers that are smaller and so on. We do not know anything in terms of the family of origin, but it is clear that he has mastered the craft to all who aspire to the street. While about Penco and Kuzman we learn something distinctive about their family environment, for him –we do not know anything. For example, according to the author, Pencho is criminal and it will remain forever. He repeatedly emphasizes his physical strength and unscrupulous in thefts at all costs and under all conditions. But his behavior is conditioned by the environment they originated. Namely, his father is a ruined man - an alcoholic, so it is quite clear that his life has no future. Through it we become quite clear the reasons for his hopeless future.

"Den potoa" is a novel by Vasil Tocinovski (Tocinovski, 2001) which is an excellent example of how social change and turbulence in society reflect on the dislocation of family and family values. It is one of those novels oriented to modern living of young man. In it, through an interesting observation of daily activities of youth groups they show the dilemmas faced by young people in contemporary turbulent life. Important place take everyday social and economic trends in society and reflect on family and emotional life of young people. The author covers current events that hit our country since independence: privatization, layoffs, unemployment and reflections of all these events on young people, especially families. In the difficult times of transition occurred disintegration of many families. In the difficult times of transition occurred disintegration of many families. Many children and young people remain on the streets, left to themselves. Many of them found a way out in hopelessness, but a great number found new wrong roads. On one such intersection will be found and Jovance, the protagonist of the novel, whose mother lives immoral, and that forces him to get away from it. The charge takes student Darko and saves him from many dangers in the streets, and thus fall into dangerous situations. For these reasons, the novel has a multitude of words with a pejorative connotation, insults and threats " asshole" (p.11) "villainous" (p.16) "robber" (p.22) "thief" (p.23) "jerk" (p.26) "urine-head", "dummy", etc.

In the novel "Beloto cigance" by Vidoe Podgorec (Podgorec, 2010), violence is presented thru the speech of intolerance and hatred. He first came to the fore in conversation with the old Hansa and Mulon grandfather of Taruno (the white gipsy), when her hatred for child Taruno gets monstrous dimensions: "Come on, while it is still small - Get rid of him! In vain he eata our bread ... If you don't expel him, I, with my hands will blind him ... I will have scalded his eyes with boiling water" (p.14-15). Her words full of hatred and thirst for inflicting pain to Taruno, at little boy cause fear and trauma, but at Baba Mulon cause rebellion and protective attitude towards Tarun, so therefore he addresses her with the words "You snake, snake ... Get out of here" (p. 16). Other place where hatred and violence are visible in this novel is the relationship of the villagers (adults and children) to the Gypsies as to the people who has no home, people who beg in the villages or engage in criminal activities, for which mostly they offend them with inappropriate words, threatening... (Denkova, 2013:4).

Verbal violence as a form of violence is present in the novel "Kula od kopnezi" by Rajko Jovcevski (Jovcevski, 1993), where the main character from his native Kathino goes to school in the big city (Bitola) and there meets with children who live in a different environment. Intrigued by his simple clothes, these urban kids from day to day mock to his appearance and clothes: "Gentlemen, we arrived Count" (p.16), "Majesty, Count, would not join us we ordinary mortals!?"(p.19), "Good night, Count and have a nice dreams" (p.20).

The novel "Preminot ne e osvetlen" (Nikolova, 1993) treats and social theme, the theme of orphan child living in the home for children without parents. Great desire for a family and a home

makes it manageable for the deceiver who is presenting to him as his father, after which he manipulates with young boy to steal, so they can have a home some day. Fortunately, at the same time, the boy Sokole met with the family of Igor and with his help and his family in time to escape the clutches of criminals.

The novel "Sama" (Petrevski, 2006) is one of the best works of Gorjan Petrovski. This novel fully captures the everyday life of the young man, twisted and ugly time in which the young man daily encounters falsehood, hypocrisy, wickedness, deceit, alcohol, prostitution. One yesterday's child should withstand the pressure and build proper person in avoiding all vices. The main character in this novel is the internationally renowned pianist Simeon Georgiev and Teodora Malinova, young girl, international carate fighter. Everything what happens in the novel is connected with it, and all events begin and end with it. Besides it presented as a world famous young pianist, with his consistency, perseverance, diligence, humility, understanding, kindness, love and respect for others, our author captures the story of the main heroine in the novel Theodora Malinova. She is an international karate player who constantly hears the constant exercise of the pianist, his perseverance and desire to accomplish some great work which would leave a trace in his life, showing that the only measure of human are toil and work. Author represents rarely successful karate girl who is also eager for revenge as alone and lonely unfortunate girl. The reasons for this should be sought in the violence to which she was exposed by a best friend. In such event, she closes herself and becomes unavailable for all. And not only that, but she begins to train carate, which has its own background in desire for self-defense and creating a defensive wall around. After the insult and deception from school mate Emil and his band, all her spiritual and physical beauty recreated in its long and unique love for the young pianist. Gorjan Petrovski in this novel incorporates the story of two young characters who grow up too soon and engage in a life of evil. There they face all evils and misfortunes, debauchery, drugs. And while they themselves struggle, it needs work and effort to conquer life as a value and dignity. This novel exudes ancient wisdom and it is equally acceptable for the younger but also for the older mass of readers.

#### 4. CLOSING REMARKS

From a review of works written by contemporary Macedonian authors dedicated to young adults, it becomes clear that violence is a topic for open talk. In some of these novels, the main protagonists themselves exhibit certain violent behavior, but fortunately always come back on track. Even in most cruel violators, the roots of such behavior authors looking around, slum family relationships, the absence of parents, especially the absence of the father figure, the vices of today such as drugs and alcohol, the current socio-economic disruptions in society, poverty, etc. The analysis also showed that violence must always be physical, but rather as a sick and verbal violence, offensive and obscene words and so on.

Some recent studies connected to influence of violence shows that violence scenes have negative effects on child-adolescent adjustment Authors in this study indicate that there is a difference, depending on whether the adolescent is victim or witness to the violence. Then, the authors suggest that the effects are different and depending on where the violence is taking place, on the street, at home, at school, etc. Another factor that appears to play a crucial role is gender. The reactions of males and females are different. A possible explanation is that males are socialized

to be aggressive early, whereas females are expected to be sensitive and to maintain good relationships with others. (Bacchini, Affuso, Aquilar, 2014:3).

Novels analyzed in this paper indicate that in most novels, the main protagonists are victims of violence, and a smaller part are his witnesses. Most of them are male and the most common place where the violence takes place (verbal or physical) is a street, school, and finally family environment. The fact is that violence is very present in everyday life. Through this kind of novels that are offered for reading to adolescents we, as teachers can achieve many positive effects. With the help of such novels, adolescents can overcome personal care, family nostalgia, loss, and the challenges of adolescence, culture, gender, and sexual-identity formation (Athanases, 1998:273).

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