

## ***Are You a Little Pole? Constructing National Identity in Literature for Young Children***<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

The paper attempts to answer the question about the relation between the construction of national identity in contemporary world and children's literature. Qualitative analysis of books for children was made. The main assumption is that stories we tell children create a specific cultural map of narration, thanks to which children create the feeling of identity, which is both individual and social. Contemporary literature for young children, contrary to older books, is devoid of national character.

**Keywords:** *construction of identity, national identity, children*

The words "Who are you? A little Pole" begin one of the most popular Polish poems for children: *Katechizm polskiego dziecka (A Polish Child's Catechism)* by Władysław Bełza. The poem contains symbols and references important for national culture, creating a specific reservoir of national identity.

Identity is a vital notion when considering development. It is also the notion which links individual (unit) development – ME structure – with social development – WE structure. Deliberations on identity and its formation remain a significant element also from the macro point of view – national culture. Hence, the notion of identity may be treated as a connector between the individual and collective, and in a wider meaning – nation.

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