

Abstract

This study deals with some of the recent theory of autobiography. Methodologically, it is based on literary narratology but, as part of interdisciplinary research, it also draws on insights provided by philosophy, psychology, and cognitive science. It shows that an autobiography does not reflect an author's identity but helps construct it by narrative means. As far as the truthfulness of an autobiography is concerned, the study takes into account the issues of autobiographical memory and its reliability; it also deals with collective memory in the context of genre norms. Drawing on positioning theory, the study offers a conception of autobiography as a formally and narratively complete work that, however, reflects the current situation and position of the author who is writing it. This master's thesis demonstrates its suggestions using autobiographical texts from Czech as well as world literatures.

Keywords

autobiography, memory, narrative identity, referentiality, positioning theory