

POSUDEK BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
KATEDRA ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA A LITERATURY PedF UK

Autor práce: Maria Ukolová

Název práce: *The quest for identity in selected works by Virginia Woolf (A Room of One's Own and Orlando: A Biography)*

Vedoucí práce: Bernadette Higgins MA

Rok odevzdání: 2018

Rozsah práce: 77 stran, bez příloh

Posudek: Vedoucího práce

Autor posudku: Bernadette Higgins MA

Posuzovaná oblast	Zvažovaná kritéria	Body¹ (0-5)	
1.	Celková charakteristika	Splnění zásad zpracování práce, adekvátnost titulu práce, naplnění stanoveného cíle, logická struktura práce, vyváženost a propojenost teoretické a praktické části	3
2.	Teoretická část	Stanovení a splnění cílů, prezentace různých teoretických přístupů k řešení problému, jejich kritické posouzení a zvolení relevantní teoretické základny pro realizaci praktické části	4
3.	Praktická část	Vhodnost a aplikace zvolené metodologie, jasnost formulace hypotéz, relevantní a srozumitelná argumentace a interpretace získaných výsledků, jasnost formulace závěrů práce	2
4.	Jazyková úroveň	Gramatická správnost a komplexnost, slovní zásoba, koheze a koherence textu, interpunkce a stylistické aspekty, celková úroveň jazykového projevu	4
5.	Struktura a forma	Přehlednost struktury, členění, řazení a proporčnost kapitol a oddílů, konzistentnost úpravy práce, odpovídající rozsah práce, adekvátnost a provedení příloh	3
6.	Práce s odbornou	Kvalita, množství a relevance	3

Celkové zhodnocení práce (včetně kritických výhrad):

This is a very interesting analysis of two works by Virginia Woolf - her influential collection of essays, *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and the novel, *Orlando* (1928), focusing on 'the quest for identity'. It is written very well and, particularly in the theoretical part, with great verve and clarity. The theoretical part is assured and begins with a definition of the terms sex and gender, introducing the notion of the 'gender spectrum'. The author then maps out the historical context of the early twentieth century with great sensitivity, particularly with regard to interpreting the period as experienced by women as opposed to men, i.e. seeing it not as an 'age of anxiety' but as an age in which women had become more empowered, partly through experiencing employment in the First World War and partly through their final success in acquiring the vote. She brings many aspects to bear in this section, marshalling insights into gender stereotypes, such as 'The Angel in the House', The Bloomsbury Group and the influence of the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud.

The practical part is structured as a chronological analysis of the two works, chapter by chapter, making many insightful observations, and ending each chapter with an 'in terms of the quest for identity' conclusion. This proves to be an unhelpful structuring, and perhaps the focus on 'the quest for identity' is in itself problematic as there is insufficient focus on what identity actually is, indeed what a 'quest' is, a problem which is flagged up as early as the introduction to the work when the author writes "By a quest for identity I personally understand a journey to find yourself as a person. However, what is more pertinent and applicable to the selected works of Virginia Woolf, which are the centerpieces of this thesis, is the journey to establish yourself as a female author." (p. 1). She then modifies this by stating that (p. 1) in *A Room of One's Own* "Woolf deals with the identity of a female author, or alternatively, her essays can be also viewed as quests for identity for a feminist. On the other hand, her fictional work Orlando may be regarded as a quest for gender identity." Perhaps the uncertainty over the 'quest for identity' is best seen in the analysis of Orlando, when, for example the author writes "When it comes to the quest for identity, Chapter 1 of the novel is possibly mainly relevant to the gender and/or sexual identity.....Also, since the first chapter deals with Orlando's growing up and introduction to the court life, one could say that Orlando's coming of age is a quest for identity in itself" (p. 46). Chapter 5 "further delves into female identity, namely and specifically female identity in the Victorian period. (p. 58) and "Most importantly, in the last chapter, the protagonist finally establishes and embraces her identity as an author to the full extent (p. 58) and "as far as the quest for identity is concerned, in my opinion, the last chapter mainly relates to the quest for identity as a writer." (p. 63) and "With regard to the quest for identity the novel may be interpreted from two different perspectives – gender identity and identity as an author." (p. 66). There is never any clear formulation of what 'the quest for identity' really is.

That, according to the author's analysis of the ending of *Orlando*, "Woolf shows, that human identity is not necessarily defined by a single word, situation or experience; the author perceives identity as a complex mosaic of selves." (p. 63) it might have perhaps been more enlightening to explore this striking approach to identity rather than attempt to 'slot' the texts into either 'the quest for gender identity' or 'the quest for identity as an author'. Despite this criticism of the practical part, this is a solid and sensitive piece of research with many positive features – thoughtfulness, originality and the clear immersion of the author in the works of Woolf that she explores.

Témata a náměty k diskusi při obhajobě:

1. Can the author expand on the interesting observation (p. 46) that "On the whole, truth-seeking and truth-conveying are important parts of both of the works."
2. Does the author believe there is a difference between 'sex-consciousness' and 'gender identity'? "Essay Five stresses the effect of sex-consciousness on the mind of the writer. In order to write truthfully and to express yourself to full extent and the whole capacity of one's literary skills, one must cease to be aware of their gender." (p. 37)
3. Can the author suggest a thematic way of structuring the thesis, as opposed to the chronological chapter-by-chapter analysis she chose?

Práci tímto - doporučuji

Datum: 23.5.2018

Podpis: Bernadette Higgins