



POSUDEK VEDOUCÍHO DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglická a americká literatury**

Název práce: **Narrators in Horror and Detective Stories by Edgar Allan Poe**

Autorka práce: **Bc. Anna Tušlová**

Vedoucí diplomové práce: **doc. PhDr. Mariana Machová, Ph.D.**

Oponentka diplomové práce: **Einat Adar, MA, Ph.D.**

Quality of Research

1) Please rate the following statements about the thesis on a scale of 1 (insufficient) to 3 (excellent)

1. The topic of the thesis is suitable for the scope and well defined: 2
2. Sets clear goals or questions for research: 3
3. Delivers significant research findings: 1
4. Demonstrates conceptual clarity and accuracy: 2
5. Demonstrates a good understanding of the literary work(s) discussed: 3
6. Demonstrates a good understanding of the critical field: 1
7. Engages with sufficient scholarship in a meaningful way: 2
8. Shows independent thinking and originality: 1

2) Comment briefly on the quality of the research presented in the thesis:

The topic of the thesis is far from original and neither is it dealt with in a very innovative or fresh way. The student clearly struggles with the full grasp of the theoretical framework and its application on the chosen material, the knowledge of which she gets mostly from the summarizing work by the Czech narratologist Tomáš Kubíček, not from the original theoretical sources. The connection between the theoretical concepts and the material is not deeply thought through, but it does work. The stories for analysis are well chosen and the discussion is well focused on the central issue of the narrator.

Quality of Writing

1) Please rate the following statements about the thesis on a scale of 1 (insufficient) to 3 (excellent)

1. Has a clear and suitable structure: 3
2. Employs appropriate register and academic style: 2
3. Uses correct and relevant terminology: 2
4. Adheres to academic thesis guidelines, format and MLA style guide: 3
5. Written in correct and fluent English (both grammar and vocabulary): 3
6. Carefully edited with few typos or mistakes: 3

2) Comment briefly on the quality of the writing presented in the thesis:

The level of English very good and there are not many language or formal errors. The thesis is written in good English style, in line with essential academic standards, however



the writing style gets a bit tedious and repetitive. The thesis is clearly and logically structured (although there is still some tendency of the thesis to fall apart into a "theoretical" and "practical" part rather than creating an organic unity of the two). The terminology used is good, however it sometimes seems a bit haphazard – both the style and the argument of the thesis would probably benefit from a narrower conceptual framework with very clearly defined terminology.

Overall Review and Assessment

(short description of the thesis and its findings, what has been achieved, and areas for improvement)

The thesis discusses the narrators of selected stories by E. A. Poe in the light of major narrative theories of the 20th century (summed up in the first part). Using some of the narratological tools outlined in the first part the theses attempts a categorization of Poe's narrators into three types (mad unreliable narrators, narrators who report on madness of the other characters in the stories, narrators of the proto-detective stories) and illustrates each category with the analysis of two relevant stories. The issues of madness and sanity and the question of the narrator's reliability are central to these discussions.

While the general concept (despite not being highly inventive) and the structure of the thesis are sound, and the writing is fine, overall the thesis does not have very much to offer and seems to a large extent a work of duty that of much intellectual creativity. The "theoretical" chapter betrays a lot of uncertainty on the candidate's part when it comes to complex narratological theory. However, it must be appreciated that inspite of the lack of any previous schooling in the field the student was able to provide a decent (albeit basic and not very insightful) overview of the main theories relevant for her topic.

A lot of the argumentation in the "practical" part depends heavily on secondary sources (which are not as many as could be), to the extent that at places the text is closer to a compilation than to an independent argument.

As the thesis supervisor, I would like to acknowledge the improvement the candidate made in the process of writing. The student was responsive to the supervisor's comments and recommendations, which helped to improve the thesis greatly compared to the first drafts. At the same time, the majority of the achievements of the thesis (the structure the use of the secondary sources, some of the arguments) are more a result of the supervisor's guidance, which the student was able to incorporate in her work, than of her own creative or intellectual input. It is, however, important to note that the student followed the guidance well and heeded the advice given, so that the final result is a thesis that meets all the requirements for an MA thesis despite not being hugely inventive or original.

Questions for Defence

(please provide two questions for the student to answer during their defence)

Could you comment more on some of the narrative theories presented in the first part of the thesis? Which ones did you find particularly relevant for your research?

Can you consider other stories by Poe and relate them to your narrator typology? Are there stories that feature yet another type of the narrator?



Práci doporučuji k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: **dobře**

30. 5. 2023

Datum

Podpis

* Numerical assessments are provided as a guideline for recommending the final grade following an indicative scale:

over 38 "výborně"

32-38 "velmi dobře"

28-32 "dobře"

below 28 points the work is in danger of failing.

The final grade will be determined by the committee following the thesis defence.