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**THE CONCEPT OF SELF-PERFECTION IN “JONATHAN
LIVINGSTON SEAGULL” BY R. BACH AND “MARTIN EDEN”
BY J. LONDON: COMMON SEARCH FOR A BETTER SELF**

Bachelor's thesis

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Olen koostanud töö iseseisvalt. Kõik töö koostamisel kasutatud teiste autorite tööd, põhimõttelised seisukohad, kirjandusallikatest ja mujalt pärinevad andmed on viidatud.

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Töö autori allkiri ja kuupäev

PREFACE

With the development of contemporary literature the topic of self-perfection has been gaining its popularity and importance. This particular concept is the fundamental topic in R. Bach's "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" (1972) and one of the main topics in J. London's "Martin Eden" (1909), which connects these books written in 20th century America. The development of the idea through years and its interpretation in the contemporary 21st century is in the focus of the present study. The lack of such a comparative analysis of these two novels makes the proposed study topical in answer to the question what motivational factors influence characters to self-improve, and how they are similar/different in view of the development of the society in the 20th century.

The aim of the research is to analyse the concept of self-perfection in contemporary literature: what it means and how it is manifested in "Martin Eden" (1909) by J. London and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" (1972) by R. Bach. Hence, the study is focused on the analysis of main characters' attitudes and actions in achieving their dreams and ambitions through the process of self-perfection; the use of vocabulary (nouns, verbs, and adjectives) to describe characters' views and actions to achieve self-perfection is in the focus of the comparative study of the novels.

The paper consists of four parts: the introduction, two core chapters, and the conclusion. The introduction considers definitions of self-perfection and self-help in modern literature. Also, it presents an overview of literary studies of the novels "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London to reveal how, if any, the concept of self-perfection has been analysed before. Chapter I "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London: Protagonists' Self-Development" defines the volume of self-perfection as perceived by the main characters of the novels under analysis (Jonathan Seagull and Martin Eden). Chapter II "Self-Perfection Vocabulary in "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London" provides the results of the comparative analysis of the use of nouns, verbs, and adjectives to reveal characters' similarities and differences in their self-perfection process. The conclusion summarises the outcomes of the study and comments on the hypothesis.

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INTRODUCTION

The Contemporary Meaning of Self-Perfection

Over the past few years, the popularity of the word ‘self-perfection’ has increased spectacularly. This is evident by the number of studies on the topic of self-perfection, and the increasing number of psychologists who write about self-perfection and dedicate their lives to finding answers to questions on what self-perfection is, and how to achieve it (Handel, 2012).

First of all, the definition of ‘self-perfection’ has to be considered. This definition is not a commonly used definition in literature (Aboalshamat, Hou, Strodl 2014: 137). The words such as ‘self-help’ (McGee, 2005), ‘self-improvement’ (*APA Dictionary of Psychology*, 2007), and ‘self-development’ (Aboalshamat, 2014) are much more frequently used expressions.

The contemporary meaning of the word ‘self-development’ has a lot of definitions, and not all of them are associated with the topic of social or mental growth. According to the *APA Online Dictionary*, self-development is “the growth or improvement of one’s qualities and abilities” (*APA Online Dictionary*: para 1). It also says that “self-development activities aim to improve aspects of life that professionals do not typically apply themselves to, such as: friendship, identity, and life skills” (Aboalshamat, 2014: 137).

Hall (2017) defines the meaning of self-development in relation to youth who are seeking for a sustainable future. At the same time, Hall (2017) mentions that the subject of self-development mostly focuses on immaterial objects. The author subdivides connection between self-development and immaterial objects into categories of “the Perceptive Powers, Reflection and Reasoning, Memory, Imagination, Will, and Moral Nature” (2017: 12). In Hall’s opinion, self-development is a small part of a wide process called self-culture. The author also emphasises that it is tremendously important for youth to have a purpose in life: “To stand purposeless, with purpose on every hand, would be an anomaly, and nature knows no such deviation from her law” (ibid: 7).

While self-perfection is the most current term used to describe this concept, there is very little literature yet using this term. Increasingly, the concept of self-perfection in the contemporary society strongly refers to the idea of self-help, and consequently, self-help books. Bergsma (2008) summarises main themes of self-help books, which are:

- personal growth (Goleman D. *Emotional Intelligence* (1995), Whiteside P. *Little Book of Happiness* (1998), Csikszentmihalyi M. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (1990), etc.);
- personal relations (Gray J. *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus* (1992), Carnegie D. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1998), etc.);
- coping with stress (Wilson P. *Little Book of Calm* (1999), Carlson R. *Don't Worry, Make Money* (1998), etc.);
- identity (who am I?) (Bolen J.S. *Goddesses in every woman and Gods in Everyman* (2009), etc.);
- miscellaneous (depression, hypnosis, psychotherapy, etc.).

Starker (2002: 6) mentions that more and more people today are trying to find the way to self-develop by using self-help books. Starker (2002) argues that self-help books are popular due to being comparatively cheap to buy and easily accessed. Also, they provide the solution of problems privately, without visiting a psychiatrist, and they are popular as they present an exciting piece of reading.

Starker (2002) discovered that in the early eighties approximately 3700 books started with the words “How to”. Today, several decades later, the number of self-help books has considerably grown (Starker, 2002). Dolby (2005) also claims that the investigation among self-help books has shown that more than 17 000 books begin with “How to”. Dolby (2005: 50) defines the term of ‘self-help books’ as “a category of popular nonfiction”, whereas Santrock, Minnett and Campbell (1994: 4) define self-help books as “books that are written for the lay public to help individuals cope with problems and live more effective lives”. Dolby (2005) finds that content and function are the general criteria that differ self-help books from other literature, and also emphasises that self-help books are:

The unique combination of (1) self-improvement content; (2) an informal, rhetorical style; (3) the general problem/solution structure within some fairly predictable literary forms; and (4) an educational function that sets this category apart as a genre of popular literature and a distinct and identifiable element of American culture (Dolby 2005: 37).

More precisely, Dolby (2005) points out that the meaning of the expression ‘self-help’ seems to be a synonym to the word ‘self-improvement’, though ‘self-help’ sounds more modern, but ‘self-improvement’ has a more exact meaning:

Who gets to say what “selfhelp” really means? I have chosen to use the term because it seems closest to the earlier, perhaps more accurate term “self-improvement” used to describe the active intention of the reader as he or she engages in selecting and reading the book. For most Americans, “self-improvement” sounds a little stuffy; “self-help” is more direct, more honest. It describes what the reader is seeking and what the reader thinks the author and publisher are selling (Dolby 2005: 37).

Writers propose a vast amount of self-help books (e.g. Goleman D. (1995), Csikszentmihalyi M. (1990), etc.). Every self-help book author gives own definition of how to handle different problems and questions related to self-improvement. For instance, Covey (2013) mentions the example that the path for self-improvement consists in developing seven essential habits, which are:

1. *Being proactive*. The author conveys the significance of taking responsibility for our lives, which the word ‘proactive’ means. He also says that proactive people are not afraid of being responsible for the decisions they make and the actions they do. The main difference between proactive and reactive people is their perception of the influence of the environment around them, i.e. *proactive people* are influenced by the environment as much as *reactive people* are, but they “build their emotional lives around the behaviour of other” (Covey: 38), whereas *reactive people* always depend on society as a whole.
2. *Beginning with the end in mind*. Covey (2013) explains the necessity of developing the habit of ‘beginning with the end in mind’ to make person’s life more effective. ‘To begin with the end in mind’ actually means having a clear and explicit vision of person’s destination through the imagination of his dreams, so that he could comprehend where he is now, what he needs to change in his life, and whether he moves in the right direction.
3. *Putting first things first*. The habit of ‘Putting first things first’ focuses on making dreams come true by carrying them from imagination to reality. However, at this stage, the author emphasises the importance of such factors as self-management, time-management and self-leadership, which are the essentials of wealthy people.
4. *Thinking win-win*. Covey (2013) conveys six main paradigms of human interaction, which are *Win-Win*, *Win-Lose*, *Lose-Win*, *Lose-Lose*, *Win* and *No Deal TM*. The author considers that the most fundamental “philosophy of human interaction” (Covey: 129) is *Win-Win* interaction. *Win-win* paradigm considers the action of cooperativeness and mutuality as the primary key to interact with people. People with this attitude perceive life as a foundation to cooperate with others, not to compete with them. The key words of *Win-Win* interaction are co-operation, compromise and interchange. When people realise the notion of *Win-Win* interaction, it becomes easier to ensure success and achieve higher results working together than separately.
5. *Seeking first to understand then to be understood*. Covey (2013) emphasises the importance of empathy and empathic communication. Covey (2013) recognises

that the most significant word in developing this habit is ‘listening’, because the biggest communication problem people have, is that they “do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. They're either speaking or preparing to speak” (Covey: 152). The author also claims that emphatic listening means listening not only with your ears, but also involve your heart, your eyes, and your feeling. The main point of emphatic listening is trying not only listen but hear to understand what happens in other person’s mind – what he feels, how he feels, why he feels it, what he is thinking about. Covey (2013) concludes, that people do not need to judge other human-beings, but it is more important to enhance empathy to be a successful leader.

6. *Synergizing*. Synergy means “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” (Covey: 170). This particular statement means that people who cooperate and work together would benefit rather than those who work alone. The author argues that “two pieces of wood hold much more than the total of the weight held by each separately” (Covey: 170). The metaphor helps the reader understand the concept of synergy as the highest activity in every person’s life because the process of synergizing implies knowing and using all the previous habits.
7. *Sharpening the saw* literally means constant renewing of four general attitudes: physical (constant sports activities), spiritual (reading great literature or listening great music, privacy with nature), mental (developing knowledge and continuing education), and social/emotional (leadership, empathy and co-operation). Covey (2013) also states that one of the biggest treasures people have is investing in themselves both physically and emotionally. When a person constantly renews four areas mentioned above, it becomes easier for a person to grow mentally. However, Covey (2013) states it is not possible to achieve this habit if a person does not have the desire to renew the body, the mind, and the spirit. That is why Covey (2013) suggests renewing four general attitudes to be able to practice previous six habits and to achieve the status of an effective person.

By summing Covey’s (2013) review of how to become successful, it can be concluded that self-perfection can be easily achieved by anyone – it only depends on person’s desire to cultivate these habits and move step-by-step to the highest level of self-development, which means self-perfection itself. The author starts this book by giving Aristotle’s quote: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit” (2013: 24). Throughout the overview, Covey (2013) continuously emphasises the importance of evolving these habits in person’s life. The primary goal of “The 7 Habits of Highly

Effective People” (2013) is an explanation that nothing is impossible and the clue for self-perfection is pushing yourself to expand the seven fundamental habits that are mentioned above.

Summarizing the references used in the introduction, it can be said that the modern idea of self-help books has been inspired by literature works on the topics of self-development and self-realization. The list of such books in English is quite long (Tolle E. *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* (2004), Coelho P. *The Alchemist* (2014), Covey S. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (2013), Yogananda P. *Journey to Self-Realization* (2000), Sharma R. *The Greatness Guide* (2008), Holiday R. *The Obstacle Is The Way* (2014), etc.), with „Martin Eden” by London to top it at the beginning of the 20th century and „Jonathan Livingston Seagull“ by Bach to highlight this topic in contemporary literature. The latter two novels, „Martin Eden” by London and „Jonathan Livingston Seagull“ by Bach, were chosen for the present study on the basis of the critical reviews of the novels by Caffey (1972), Palmisano (2006) and Walker (1965) who mention that both Martin Eden and Jonathan Seagull were obsessed by the battle to become who they wanted to be through the constant effort of self-developing and self-educating.

“Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach and “Martin Eden” by J. London as Novels of Self-Perfection in Critical Reviews

“Martin Eden” by J. London

Walker (1965) mentions that “Martin Eden” is a story about a man who has achieved the goal of his life despite being unaccepted by society and overcoming extreme hardships. Moreover, Walker (1965) mentions that “Martin Eden” is not the first London’s book, where he described his own experiences and stories from life (*The Call of the Wild* (1903), *John Barleycorn* (1913)). The critic claims that Jack London uses Martin Eden to describe the poverty, starvation, and the hardships he encounters in his own life. Walker (ibid: 133) also argues that “*Martin Eden* is not only one of Jack London’s best books; it is also one of his most puzzling ones”. The critic (ibid: 134) states that “Martin Eden” is a story that "appeals to almost every young person who has secretly hoped to learn to write but has believed that such success belongs only in a Cinderella story". Walker mentions that the phenomenon of “Martin Eden” is partly explained by the fact that Martin Eden was not afraid of taking risks and challenges:

Each rejection slip was another challenge, and the manuscripts continued on their rounds, provided that there were enough pennies left to buy stamps (ibid: 135).

To conclude, Walker's (1965) opinion is similar to Hall's (2017) point of view, who claims that the worst thing is not to have the purpose and to lose the goal in life. Martin Eden lost his interest in life – he did not want anything to do. He strived for success and, when he eventually became a successful writer, neither money nor drink, food, expensive clothes could awake his desire to live.

Stuck in his life and being consistently in a state of exhaustion, at the highest level of depression Eden committed suicide. As Walker (1965: 142) states in relation towards Martin Eden, "The battle is everything; the result, nothing".

Similarly, Ousby (1979) claims that "Martin Eden" is one of the best London's novels, however not the most known. Ousby (1979) argues that "Martin Eden" conveys the path of development of becoming a successful writer, and as Walker does, he marks that it is based on London's life. Ousby (ibid: 189) mentions that "Martin Eden" is a "sudden, rash and unforgettably vivid" story by London which is told as a protagonist's heart-rending adventure. The critic states (ibid) that London's style of conveying Martin's "sense of discovery and enthusiasm" is unique and inimitable. He (ibid.) also claims that "his style always goes straight to the point and lets the reader into the hero's mental world". Ousby (1979) concludes that "Martin Eden" is a novel about defeat, obstacles, and lost beliefs that led Eden to commit suicide.

Powell (1982: 186) also mentions "Martin Eden's" similarity with London's own life, and names it London's "confessional and autobiographical" novel that "represents London at the peak of his power, [when] he was able to infuse language with the energy he lavished on life".

Martin (1967) emphasises that "Martin Eden" is more about Eden being a socialist and about socialism itself, rather than about a self-developmental way. The critic also affirms that one of the main ideas of "Martin Eden" by London is author's inspiration by Nietzsche's super-man idea. The fact to be noted is that Martin (1967: 236) finds surprising that no one noted "an attack upon the superman philosophy" in „Martin Eden“. Even London himself mentioned in 1910 that "Had Martin Eden been a socialist he would not have died" (ibid).

Spiller (1969) conveys that "Martin Eden" is London's best work and none of the books London had ever written was as powerful and confessional as "Martin Eden". Spiller (1969: 1034) states that "Martin Eden" is "the chronicle of a sick ego, this thinly screened confession, with its fidelity, its misunderstanding of naked tragic forces, and its failure of resolution, is the central document of his career".

Summarising the critics' reviews mentioned above it can be concluded that they define the novel as London's confessional autobiographic novel which considers questions of protagonist's development and self-improvement. London's skilful use of language and style allows the reader to follow the character's mind and understand his decisions on this pass of self-development.

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach

Palmisano's (2006) brief review gives the accurate idea that the novel "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" is mainly based on the concept of transcendence. The critic claims that "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" is not the first Bach's book that is dedicated to the topic of transcendence. For instance, one of Bach's most known books "A Gift of Wings" (1989) emphasises the same idea of self-perfection that is mentioned in "Jonathan Livingston Seagull".

The critic's opinion is similar to Bach's comment about his book – the point is that constant practising and not being afraid of being an individual shows how strong a human spirit can be. The critic assumes that:

The core of Jonathan – we really can be more than we are if we try hard enough. We all have the means to do so. What we need is the will, an adventuresome spirit, and an idea of what we might eventually become with practice and effort (Palmisano 2006: 34).

Caffey (1972) expresses a similar opinion to the main message of Palmisano (2006). Caffey (1972) argues that the main point of the novel "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" is the lack of boundaries and limits, if a person really wants to achieve the dream. This is how Caffey describes his point of view:

The great virtue of this book is that it means precisely what you want it to mean. ... No matter what your age, sex, race, annual income, religion or politics, somewhere in the context of your life you can find a use for Jonathan's message that there are 'no limits' (Caffey 1972: 1185).

Even despite the fact that the novel "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" became a successful book among readers, critics gave a lot of negative reviews about it. For example, Carey (1972) states that "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" "is for those who think the world would be a lovely place if it were full of chummy people and tale animals" (Carey 1972: 797). A Publishers Weekly (1970) assumes that Bach's decision to choose a seagull who is not afraid of living against regulations of the flock is not the best way to tell an inspirational story. However, Bach himself claims "*Jonathan*, the book, is the archetype Cinderella story" (Palmisano 2006: 34).

The important fact to be noticed is that "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" is neither about religion nor spirituality. However, Beetz (1991: 276) mentions that "Jonathan

Livingston Seagull” touches the topic of Buddhism and Hinduism because Hinduism “teaches that perfection is the goal of life, and Buddhism that the heavens are multiple”. In Beetz’s (1991) opinion, these two religious topics are strongly emphasised in Bach’s “Jonathan Seagull”. As Bach mentions, “The depth of Jonathan’s touch is as unique as the people who read his story. I wrote him for myself and for anyone else who finds special space for him in their lives” (Palmisano 2006: 34).

Beetz (1991) also claims that Jonathan Seagull is a perfect example of an ideal human spirit in the bird’s body. The significant fact that differs “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” from other books written by Bach is the simplicity of language the author used to describe Jonathan’s actions and dreams. Jonathan Seagull demonstrates and encourages the importance of conviction – the important quality a person has to have to be able to cope with difficulties. Beetz (1991: 276) argues that “readers can complicate the meaning as they wish, accepting the overall allegorical themes and applying them to various life situations”. The critic continues with saying that the more readers read the novel, the more they “fill in their own connotations for many recurring general terms, such as “love”, “excellence”, “discover”, “breakthrough”, “time”, and “knowledge” (ibid.). The critic marks that Jonathan Seagull’s values take place throughout the whole novel:

[...] he devises new experiments in flight creatively and with a joyful perfectionism: alert and brave, he faces routine dangers: almost religiously dedicated to his “desire-which-is-a-gift-to-others,” he is nevertheless practical about the physical details of his discipline. Once he become wise, Jonathan has also become more generous, loving, humorous, and mystical (ibid.).

It can be stated that the critics agree that “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by Bach is an inspirational story about a seagull who is not afraid to become an individualist.

According to Bergsma (2008), it can be concluded that the novels “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach and “Martin Eden” by J. London are directly connected to one of the major themes in psychological books, which are the topics of personal growth and finding answers to the questions of ‘Who am I’. Moreover, both Martin Eden and Jonathan Seagull were craving for their purposes and eventually reached them. Hall’s (2017) summary of the self-development process can be taken as a basis for the perception of the protagonists’ process of self-perfection.

Hence, it can be hypothesised that the concept of a better self as it is depicted in “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach and “Martin Eden” by J. London is manifested in the common meaning of self-perfection for both characters – i.e., the strength of desire to achieve their dreams, and the joy of finding their path in life despite the rejection and non-acceptance by environment, which is expressed in the authors’ descriptions of their

thoughts and actions in the novels through the lexical choice of the nouns, verbs and adjectives.

CHAPTER I

“JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL” BY R. BACH AND “MARTIN EDEN” BY J. LONDON: PROTAGONISTS’ PROCESS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT

1.1 “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach: Plots, Characters, Themes

Written by Richard Bach in the late 1960s, “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” had a strong impact on Bach’s growing success and popularity. After plenty of rejections from publishing houses, Bach struggled and was depressed because the money he was getting for his writings was barely enough to pay his rent (Walters, 1972). One way or another, in 1970 Macmillan Publishers finally issued „Jonathan Livingston Seagull“, and made Richard Bach known all around the world.

Plot

Jonathan Livingston Seagull was not an ordinary seagull. Since he was very young, he craved to fly and experience the independence of being free. Most seagulls did not care for anything but for flying and for eating. However, Jonathan Seagull was different from the rest of the flock. For Jonathan Seagull, flying was the purpose of his life that was giving him a sense of fulfilment. Even Jonathan’s parents were ashamed and dismayed by the fact that their son spent hours alone trying to learn new stunts. They were constantly reminding him that the main reason why he needed to fly was for eating, but Jonathan Seagull wanted to become the best at flying. Despite the conventions of his parents and society to be like the rest of the flock, Jonathan Seagull decided to become an individualist and take responsibility for his life to achieve the greatest results in flying. Eventually, Jonathan was faced with a choice – to be banished to a solitary life on the Far Cliffs, or to leave practising air-stunts, while remaining a member of the gull society. Without regard to the consequences of being alone, Jonathan Seagull decided to leave the flock. It was a crucial decision of the responsible seagull who wanted to find a higher meaning in life than just scuffling for fish. In the second chapter, Jonathan went to “heaven” where he met many seagulls with a similar view on the importance of practising the flying skill to make it better. Jonathan Livingston met Sullivan, who became his first mentor in “heaven”. In the same timeframe, Jonathan encountered Chiang, the Elder Seagull, from whom Jonathan was being taught to comprehend the vast challenges of the art of flying. Elder’s last words were: “Keep working on love.” (Bach 2015: 59). Hence, Jonathan realised that practising flying did not mean only flying itself, but was more significant to put your heart into flying. From that moment, practising love through flying became Jonathan’s primary target. However, after a while Jonathan Seagull decided that

he must return to the Breakfast Flock to share the new experience and knowledge he received from Chiang. The final chapter reveals the legacy that was left after Jonathan Seagull's disappearance from the flock. The numerous adherents were not already interested in developing flying technique – they were mostly focusing on Jonathan's idealization. Since that time, the cult of Jonathan Livingston Seagull's personality started withdrawing and "the symbol for Jonathan's teaching became a smooth pebble" (Ibid.:106). Although, only one seagull felt disgust for the flock. Deciding that life is pointless, Anthony Gull, was brave enough to accept that there is "no reason to prolong the painful boredom of living" (Bach 2015: 116), where nobody can understand him and when everybody despised him for speaking out against the gulls. While making a dead-dive, Anthony Gull met an unfamiliar seagull, who impressed him by showing perfect stunts. An accidental encounter prevented Anthony from committing suicide. It was Jonathan Livingston Seagull whose unlimited desire and willpower had made him the most prosperous seagull amongst all seagulls ever alive.

Characters

Jonathan Livingston Seagull is the protagonist of the novel. Sullivan becomes Jonathan's mentor in "heaven". Chiang, the Elder Seagull, was Jonathan's role model and teacher, who taught him the most unbelievable stunts. Fletcher Gull developed into Jonathan's student. The forth chapter conveys the result of Jonathan's and Fletcher's collaboration, i.e. after Jonathan Seagull's vanishing into more "unlimited world". This chapter describes the story of Anthony Gull, whose tale was similar to young Jonathan Seagull's story. Similarly to Jonathan, Anthony opposed the conventions of the flock.

Themes

One of the main themes of "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by Bach is encouragement to follow our dreams, even if they can lead to exile from society. The importance of accomplishing ambitions is also emphasised in this novel – Jonathan's will to fly for the joy of flying and for the freedom to be an individual. Along with the topic of achieving ambitions, the theme of hypocrisy is emphasised in the novel as well. In the beginning of the novel the flock treats Jonathan unfairly, and sometimes even foully. However, at the end of the novel Jonathan Seagull becomes the object of idealization and adoration.

1.2 Self-Perfection of Jonathan Seagull

1.2.1 The Beginning of the Self-Developmental Process

Jonathan Livingston's life was a constant process of pursuing. For Jonathan Seagull, the process of self-development started with the sudden realisation of his desire not to be like the other seagulls, whose main goal in life was scrabbling for fish heads. Jonathan's determination of the will was mentioned in the very beginning of the novel:

Most gulls don't bother to learn more than the simplest facts of flights – how to get from shore to food and back again. For most gulls, it is not flying that matters, but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered, but flight. More than anything else, Jonathan Livingston Seagull loved to fly (Bach 2015: 4).

The other gulls' boring life motivated Jonathan Livingston to search for the ways of achieving the higher level of life. Jonathan Livingston did not mind "to be skin and feathers" (ibid.) because he practised new stunts all day instead of hunting for fish. Jonathan even tried to become like the other gulls – he was spending hours in attempts to catch fish, "screeching and fighting with the flock around the piers and fishing boats, [...]" but he couldn't make it work" (ibid.). Jonathan tried profoundly to comprehend seagulls' way of thinking and to follow their lifestyle. However, the longer Jonathan Livingston Seagull tried to become like others and to kill his rebellious spirit, the more he craved to live the life to the fullest.

1.2.2 Desire towards Knowledge

For Jonathan Livingston Seagull, the art of flying was life itself. Jonathan's desires were only dedicated to the topic of developing skills to succeed at flying. Once Jonathan soared above the sea practising another stunt and smashed down into the dark cold water. Disappointed and frustrated, Jonathan promised himself again that he should try to do the best he could to be like the rest of the flock because he is "limited by [his] nature" and he is "a poor limited seagull" (Bach 2015: 11). Jonathan Livingston swore that he would be "a normal seagull" (ibid.). While returning to a flock at night, Jonathan tried to convince himself that he was a limited and usual seagull whose main goal in life consisted of searching for fish and bread. Jonathan's mind was filled with thoughts of comprehending that he is not a majestic eagle, he did not have neither the eyes of an owl nor falcon's wings – he was a usual seagull, like thousands of other seagulls. Although Jonathan suddenly realised that everything he needed to benefit at this stunt was "hold most of [his] wings and fly on just the tips alone" (Bach 2015: 14). That particular case strongly influenced Jonathan Seagull's willing towards knowledge in practising flying skills.

1.2.3 The Fighting Spirit

In addition to Jonathan Livingston Seagull's rebellious vitality, the fighting spirit played a significant role in the process of Jonathan's self-perfection. It can be assumed that Jonathan Seagull's unstoppable spirit did not have any boundaries. The only subject that mattered to him was flying even if it would cost his life and society's respect. From the very beginning of his life, Jonathan persuaded himself not to be like others. As he grew older, his fighting spirit grew as well – it was expressed in his desire to achieve his biggest dream despite the mockery of other gulls.

Jonathan Livingston's banishment to a solitary life triggered his inner thoughts to understand who he was, and what he needed to do in life. However, neither the likelihood of spending the rest of the life as a hermit nor unacceptance by the seagulls could not make Jonathan Seagull change his point of view:

What he had once hoped for the Flock, he now gained for himself alone; he learned to fly, and was not sorry for the price that he had paid. Jonathan Seagull discovered that boredom and fear and anger are the reasons that a gull's life is so short, and with these gone from his thought, he lived a long fine life indeed (Bach 2015: 26).

The novel describes the story of Jonathan Livingston Seagull's inspirational battle for the right to be ourselves. Jonathan's fighting spirit develops in the second chapter of the fable when he was accepted into the unlimited seagulls' world and cultivated a relationship with Chiang. The Elder Chiang provided classes for Jonathan and remained his mentor in heaven. The difference between this place and the place Jonathan Seagull came from, consisted of the members of the brotherhood, i.e. "[there] were gulls who thought as he thought" (Bach 2015: 43). The most vital aim for every seagull there was "to reach out and touch perfection on that which they most loved to do, and that was to fly" (ibid.).

In heaven, Jonathan Seagull practised aeronautics every day, hour after hour, blinded by eagerness, he was not better or worse than other birds. There, in heaven, surrounded by Elder Chiang, Sullivan and few other gulls, Jonathan Seagull was not under any illusions. He began every morning with practising new stunts in order to close to the purpose – to achieve the perfection through flights. Even under the direction of Elder Seagull, Jonathan could not make difficult tricks, such as folded-wing snap roll or point-roll, failure after failure he attempted to do that until he eventually succeeded. A month later, Jonathan accomplished advanced level in the art of flights. During the month of being a student of the Elder enabled Jonathan Seagull to get new experience. By achieving the physical perfection, Jonathan Seagull started his path towards "practising his kindness lessons" (Ibid.:59), as Chiang suggested.

The significant fact to be noticed was that Jonathan Livingston Seagull's fighting spirit did not stop at the completion of his primary target – to fly for the delight he got from flights. After Chiang's vanishing into other universe and the last words he said, Jonathan Seagull suddenly realised that his mission now changed to sharing the knowledge and experience he received from the Elder to other "limited" seagulls. Being influenced by Chiang's words that "Heaven is not a place, and it is not a time. Heaven is being perfect", Jonathan Seagull was thinking days and nights about the time he spent on Earth with gulls who treated him with contempt, and "the more he worked to know the nature of love, the more he wanted to go back on Earth" (ibid.). Jonathan's flight companion Sullivan was sceptical about his thoughts of returning to the place where "[he was] Outcast once" and where "gulls where [he] came from are standing on the ground, squawking and fighting among themselves" (ibid: 60). Sullivan's main wish was to convince Jonathan to stay there, in heaven, and "to help the new gulls here, the ones who are high enough to see what [he] have to tell them" (ibid.).

Some time after the conversation with Sullivan, Jonathan Seagull was trying to persuade himself with the proverb said by Sullivan: "The gull sees farthest who flies highest" (Bach: ibid). However, after much solemn thought, the unstoppable Jonathan Seagull decided to get back to Earth notwithstanding all Sullivan's words. Jonathan Livingston Seagull was sure that "all we have left is Here and Now" (Bach 2015: 61). Therefore, in "the middle of Here and Now" what could be more important than being inspired by sharing "a perfect idea of freedom and flight, [of the seagull] limited by nothing at all" (ibid.).

Jonathan Seagull's battle for the right to be free continued with the encountering with Fletcher Lynd Seagull who developed into Jonathan's first student. Similarly to young Jonathan, Fletcher Seagull "was still quite young, but already he knew that no bird ever seen so harshly treated by any Flock, or with so much injustice" (Bach 2015: 62). Moreover, Fletcher Seagull was sure that "flying [was] so much more than just flapping around from place to place" (ibid.). By the end of three months, Jonathan was already teaching six other Outcasts gulls who were impressed of his idea "of flight for the joy of flying" (ibid.: 74). Jonathan Livingston's determination both inspired and forced the other gulls to accept "an unlimited idea of freedom" (ibid.). Day after day, the Flock was spending long hours on exhausting training, but what mattered most was their infinite will towards practice in order to be close to the perfection.

1.2.4 Success

The most crucial moment that predicted Jonathan Livingston's success as a teacher happened a month after when Jonathan told the Outcasts to return to the rest of the flock and not to be ashamed of the status of Outcast. Each of them were against it because "[they] were not ready" and "[they] were Outcast" (Bach 2015: 75). However, Jonathan Seagull's precise perseverance made them to return to the Flock's Council Beach. Jonathan Seagull's flexibility under hardships was conveyed in the way he treated the seagulls who used to scoff at his ideas to practise flights. Despite the fact that Jonathan and his students were Outcasts, some young gulls were impressed by the way they flew. "Well, sure. O.K., they're Outcast. [...] But hey, man, where did they learn to fly like that?" (ibid.: 77), said some of them. Every day Jonathan Livingston's students improved their skills – Martin Seagull "became a wizard of low speeds" (ibid.), Charles-Roland Gull "flew the Great Mountain Wind to twenty-four thousand feet, [...] determined to go still higher tomorrow" (ibid.), Fletcher Seagull "conquered his sixteen-point vertical slow roll and the next day topped it off with a triple cartwheel" (ibid.).

By consistently practising, guiding, and pushing his students, Jonathan realised what significant results they had achieved. While they were learning new stunts and exercising old ones, the Flock converged on the ground observing them contemptuously. A month after the return, one other condemned gull became Jonathan's new student. The next night, Kirk Maynard Gull came to Jonathan to ask help him to learn to fly. Very soon, thousands of gulls were standing and listening to Jonathan Seagull. The message of his speech were understandable for everyone; he spoke that "it is right for a gull to fly, that freedom is the very nature of his being, that whatever stands against that freedom must be set aside, be it ritual or superstition or limitation in any form" (ibid.: 81). The number of seagulls who wanted to listen to Jonathan Seagull's lectures was growing every day. Although Fletcher Lynd Seagull still remained Jonathan's most talented student, who was already close enough to outdo his great teacher, by the time Jonathan Seagull was ready to leave the Flock and to establish Fletcher the grant of the Flock. "Don't believe what your eyes are telling you. All they show is limitation," he said, "... Look with your understanding, find out what you already know, and you'll see the way to fly" (ibid.: 90). Now it was clear that Fletcher Lynd Seagull was "the only Son of the Great Gull" (ibid.).

One of the most meaningful achievements Jonathan Livingston succeeded in was the mental and practical knowledge he learnt after the exile of the Brotherhood, and which he transferred to Fletcher Gull despite society's scorn and denial. That is kind of man

Jonathan Seagull was. That is how he was remembered in his adherents' memories. The unlimited and unbroken Jonathan Livingston Seagull who influenced lives of many limited gulls to follow his example.

To sum up, it can be concluded that "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach is connected to Hall's (2017) brief overview of self-development, which was mentioned in the introduction, and which considers the definition of self-development as one of the most crucial determinants for young people who covet moving forwards. Although Hall's (2017) overview is addressed to youth, it also refers to Jonathan Seagull, whose state of mind and actions depicted the process of self-development described by Hall (2017). The portrayed growth of self-improvement touches Jonathan Seagull as well:

[A man] carefully overlooks that career, and feels that he must pursue it, so as to win the approval of good men, and the approbation of his conscience. Perhaps he stands alone, amid unfriendly surroundings [...]; without an eye to mark him (Hall 2017: 18).

Jonathan Livingston Seagull's process of pursuing consisted in some parts the author mentioned in his book, i.e. self-knowledge, self-reliance, self-denial, individuality, discipline, the will, and the reflection (Hall 2017). According to Hall (2017), the mechanism of self-development consists in "forcing the struggle to end in victory" (ibid.). As a consequence, completing Jonathan's struggles finally led him to succeed in the action for what he desired:

Armed as he may be, still he may often be defeated; let him never be disheartened. A triumphant end will crown an indomitable will; and the full-rounded and elevated character, which are the fruit of victory, will be full indemnity for the self-denial he has practised, and the toil he has undergone (Hall 2017: 19).

Therefore, "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" is strongly associated with Hall's opinion, and mostly based on his theory about self-development. Even despite the fact that Jonathan Seagull was not a human, Hall's overview can still be internalised with the example of this novel.

1.3 "Martin Eden" by J. London: Plots, Characters, Themes

"Martin Eden" is the greatest semiautobiographical novel by Jack London written in 1909. The novel tells the story of a former sailor who had a strong will to achieve the life of high-class society through self-education in order to win the heart of a young lady.

Plot

Martin Eden was a young sailor about twenty-one years old, who had a good luck to occasionally meet with the elite family of Morses. While attending a dinner party, Martin accidentally contacted Ruth Morse, a daughter of Mr. Morse, and in the twinkling of an

eye fell in love with her. Martin had not had any explanations for his suddenly reignited feelings. Moreover, he could not believe that one accidental meeting could change his way of thinking a few seconds after he saw Ruth. Before he met Ruth, he never thought of studying. The sense of the new purpose in his meaningless life both inspired and pushed Martin towards practising perfection through education, and to reach the level of the Morse's family richness. As time passed by, Martin was getting more and more experienced in writing, however, not the successful and known autodidact writer as he would like to be. After a plenty of trials, failures and rejections from publishing houses, Martin Eden did not give up and still tried to prove to Ruth that he was worthy of her love and of respect from her family. However, Ruth refused to continue to wait for Martin's eventual success and left him. Although he was affected by Ruth's decision, Martin Eden still believed in himself. To his surprise, one publishing house concurred to issue Martin's "The Shame of the Sun" that considered "a deliberate attack on the mysticism of the Maeterlinck school – an attack from the citadel of positive science upon the wonder dreamers" (London 2004: 150). Eventually, Martin became a famous writer, however, with no goals in life at all.

Characters

The part of the novel that portrays Martin Eden's process of self-perfection mainly develops around two major characters – Martin Eden and Ruth Morse. Martin Eden is the main character of the novel. He is a former sailor who was captured by his sudden desire towards knowledge by meeting Ruth Morse. Ruth Morse is a bourgeois lady of twenty-four years old who was affected by Martin's appearance and physical maturity.

However, there are also some minor characters that were mentioned in the novel. One character was Lizzie Connolly who was a young, working-class female who was strongly in love with Martin; however, unmutually, because of Eden's feelings for Ruth. Another character was Joe Dawson, who was Martin's boss at the time when Eden faced hardships and was forced to work at the laundry for a living. They had endured difficult times together. Hence, when Martin became rich, he bought Joe a laundry, so that he would never have to work beyond the limit as he used to when he was younger. Another name was Maria Silva, Martin's landlady; he was inspired by her courage and diligence. She helped him a lot, and there were times when she forgave Martin's debts and even fed him. Consequently, when Eden achieved success, he bought a dairy farm for Maria that she had always wanted. Finally, Russ Brissenden encouraged him to return to his seaman

career. As it later turned out, Russ was the only man who really understood Martin's inner world and him as a human-being.

Themes

"Martin Eden" considers some significant topics which are still relevant nowadays. One of these topics is self-development, which is demonstrated in Martin's will to self-improve through becoming knowledgeable about literature, philosophy, and other fields he had not studied before. Working at the peak of his ability, he was craving to prove to Ruth that he was a worthy, responsible, and educated man. Therefore, the theme of adult education is emphasised in London's novel (Brockett, 1988).

The second topic of the novel is "a plague both on socialism and success" (Schuyler 1972: 107). Socialism is represented in Martin Eden's policy which portrayed in his personal self-development that was not connected to the development of his social class as it used to be at the end of the 18th century. Although London himself was a socialist, who, in his opinion, like any other adherent of this movement, "strived for a better form of government than the one he [lived] under" (Kershaw, 1998: 44).

It is also important to notice that Nietzschean philosophy and the Theory of The Superman is mentioned in "Martin Eden", which is conveyed in Martin's way of thinking (Kershaw, 1998). In this theory, Nietzsche expresses the idea that is similar to Martin Eden's point of view. Nietzsche claimed that "all that increases the feeling of power, will to power, power itself, in man" (Nietzsche 2013: 41) is good; "all that proceeds from weakness" (ibid.) is bad; "the feeling that power increases, – that a resistance is overcome" (ibid.) is happiness. Hence, it can be assumed that "the world belongs to the strong – to the strong who are noble as well and who do not wallow in the swine-trough of trade and exchange" (London 2004: 199) and "to the true nobleman, to the great blond beasts, to the noncompromisers, to the 'yes-sayers'" (ibid.), as Martin Eden once claimed. Consequently, Nietzschean philosophy played an important role in Martin Eden's mental and spiritual development.

1.3 Self-perfection of Martin Eden

1.3.1 The Beginning of the Self-Developmental Process

For Martin Eden, the process of self-development started with meeting Ruth Morse who "nevertheless stimulated his mind [like nobody else] and set it tingling" (London 2004: 6). The young lady full of intellect, beauty and warmth, embarrassed Martin with her purity. Martin Eden, who had never felt anything similar, understood that Ruth Morse

awakened in him a desperate desire to correspond to her both socially and mentally, and to win her heart; and here he was – sitting in front of her, “heavy corded, almost bull-like, bronzed by the sun, spilling over with rugged health and strength” (London 2004: 8), blushing and sweating, a former seaman, Martin Eden could barely understand what was going on with him:

He forgot himself and stared at her with hungry eyes. Here was something to live for, to win to, to fight for – and die for. The books were true. There were such women in the world. She was one of them. [...] he stared at the real woman, sitting there and talking of literature and art. He listened as well, but he stared, unconscious of the fixity of his gaze or of the fact that all that was essentially masculine in his nature was shining in his eyes (ibid.).

While having a conversation with Ruth Morse, Martin had a feeling of deficiency that he did not have enough education and that he “could not express what he felt” (London 2004: 7) because of his vocabulary scarcity that would be suitable at the respectable event. Moreover, his lack of knowledge of the etiquette maddened him, similarly to “the array of knives and forks [that] frightened him” (Ibid.:9). He was listening to Ruth’s appealing manner of speaking with an absorbed attention, while Martin’s “roughness frightened her; each roughness of speech was an insult to her ear, each rough phase of his life an insult to her soul” (Ibid.:13); however, she could not do anything about her passion towards Martin Eden. Even the talk of Browning and Swinburne could not change Martin’s thoughts about his desire to close the gap, at least for one small step, between his and Ruth’s education. Later, he confessed that “behind his ability to learn was the indomitability of his nature and his love for Ruth” (London 2004: 47). In addition to that, he also comprehended that he “was not fit to carry water for her” (London 2004: 16), but his “ambition soared on mad wings, and he saw himself climbing the heights with her, sharing thoughts with her, pleasuring in beautiful and noble things with her” (ibid.). Those women he met before “had often bothered him, [but] he had never bothered about them” (London 2004: 21), but with Ruth it was different. Martin Eden was blinded with his desire to conquer Ruth’s heart. His will “he had for fame was largely for Ruth's sake” (London 2004: 118), not because of his inner will to become famous.

1.3.2 Desire towards Knowledge

As a consequence, Martin Eden’s will towards studying began developing one morning when he caught a Telegraph Avenue car that was crowded with young male students who studied at the same university as Ruth. Martin perused every person in a car – their clothes, their faces, their countenance. He compared himself with them, and eventually

made a conclusion that “he was physically their master” (London 2004: 17). However their brains were overflowing with knowledge:

But what was a brain for? He demanded passionately. What they had done, he could do. They had been studying about life from the books while he had been busy living life. His brain was just as full of knowledge as theirs, though it was a different kind of knowledge. How many of them could tie a lanyard knot, or take a wheel or a lookout? His life spread out before him in a series of pictures of danger and daring, hardship and toil. He remembered his failures and scrapes in the process of learning. He was that much to the good, anyway (ibid.).

The next morning, Martin went to the library in order to read about etiquette. However, when he started walking through infinite rows of bookshelves, he discovered that his knowledge was barely enough to understand English – he could not comprehend a word, even despite the fact that he knew and read in English. The similar happened with trigonometry and mathematics – the numbers, figures and formulas looked meaningless to him. One way or another, Martin accepted the fact that in the library “was work for the vigor of his brain” (London 2004: 27), and concluded that “there were other men, many men, who had mastered it” (ibid.). He decided that he could cope with all the vast amount of knowledge he desired to get. He was spending hours in the libraries reading about etiquette, poetry, and unfamiliar grammar rules; then he discovered somehow the new word ‘psychology’, and even bought a dictionary of psychological terminology to develop his vocabulary.

Every Martin’s self-educational action was subconsciously dedicated to Ruth. Fired with love and stimulated by desire to see Ruth, Martin was eagerly reading more and more books every day; and the more he attempted to read the books, the more he understood that “they required years of preliminary specialization” (London 2004: 34). Every time he visited library he heard many new words with which he was not familiar, such as ‘socialism’, ‘anarchism’, and so forth – hundreds of words that were new to him. His realisation of the wide gaps in his knowledge only pushed him towards learning more. Martin also confesses that “all his childhood and youth had been troubled by a vague unrest; he had never known what he wanted [...]” (London 2004: 41); however after meeting Ruth, he eventually comprehended that “the beauty, and intellect, and love” (ibid.) are the certain qualities he must have. Little by little, Martin started to make progress on some basic knowledge of literature and philosophy. Also, Ruth agreed to help him with English, and explained to Martin his mistakes and taught him English grammar rules. Martin’s “swift development was a source of surprise and interest” to Ruth (London 2004: 43). As time passed by, she was reading Browning aloud to Martin, then playing to him, sometimes even singing to maintain not only the mental development, but also to support his musical sense. The process of reading, learning grammar and analysing

complex grammar structures was hard for him. When he went to sea for a job, his studying process had not stopped. Vice versa, it only enhanced his will to learn, study and read to the limit: “After he had been through the grammar repeatedly, he took up the dictionary and added twenty words a day to his vocabulary” (London 2004: 47). After the eight months he spent at sea, he learned new words, unlearned the words he spoke before he met Ruth, and returned to California with “a lover's desire” (London 2004: 46).

It can be concluded, that the main goal of Martin Eden's will to study was Ruth. However, Ruth would not have played a significant role in Martin's process of self-education, if he had not had a strong self-discipline to obtain that level of achievement.

1.3.3 The Fighting Spirit

The part of the novel that is connected to the topic of the fighting spirit represents Martin's determination towards being an individualist since he was a six-year-old little boy when “he punched away with the tears running down his cheeks while the other boy, two years his elder, had beaten and pounded him into exhaustion” (London 2004: 80). However he mentions that the battle he faced with when he was a boy was not the first or the last one; he claims while having a conversation with himself that “there will be a second battle, and a third battle, and battles to the end of time” (ibid.). One of the battles Martin Eden started was his fighting against Ruth's doubts and her family's disbelief in his success.

Returned from sea, Martin craved to start his path as a writer. He worked at the edge of the abilities that were possible to a human. He spent days and nights writing, sending drafts to publishing houses, waiting answers, and thinking of how Ruth would be proud of him when his short stories would be published in magazines. Moreover, he took Ruth's advice to continue receiving the education and going to high school. However, he failed the exams except for the grammar test. Even under these severe circumstances, Martin Eden did not give up. Reflecting about how to become worthy of Ruth's heart and her family's respect, he decided to continue his early career as a writer. However, he understood that in order to become a successful writer he needed to fill in the gaps in his knowledge. His determination pressed him to fight towards self-education despite the fact that he was a seaman with no high-school and university education behind his back.

For Martin Eden, the days were too short. 24 hours a day were not enough for him to study articles, physics, algebra, and a variety of different subjects, because “there was [too] much he wanted to study” (London 2004: 57). He only slept for five hours and the hardest part of that was to close “the algebra or physics, put note-book and pencil aside, and close his tired eyes in sleep” (ibid.) because “he never had the spirit of adventure

lured him more strongly than on this amazing exploration of the realm of mind” (London 2004: 59). Any other man would have already given up in these conditions, but not Martin Eden. The hardships only triggered him and motivated to move forwards:

He lived every moment of his waking hours, and he lived in his sleep, his subjective mind rioting through his five hours of surcease and combining the thoughts and events of the day into grotesque and impossible marvels. In reality, he never rested, and a weaker body or a less firmly poised brain would have been prostrated in a general break-down (London 2004: 60).

As days passed by, Martin was still receiving one rejection slip after another. Editors were returning his manuscripts. One day he read that “manuscripts should always be typewritten” (London 2004: 58), and made a conclusion that he should typewrite all the manuscripts that were sent back to him. He thought he had found the reason of his failures, because editors were too busy to read manuscripts. Therefore, he rented a typewriter and spent long hours typewriting his earlier returned manuscripts. One way or another, while retyping his old short stories, he did not stop to write new ones. However, his scripts still were not being published. Moreover, he could not send his manuscripts to editors because he did not have money to buy post stamps and he had failed to pay the rent for typewriter “which he could not pay, having barely enough for the week's board which was due and for the employment office fees” (London 2004: 79).

Time went on, but no story Martin wrote was issued by publishing houses. Martin was getting more and more skinny, his cheeks had shrunk, and “the fire of hunger [left] his eyes” (London 2004: 128). Desperate and pointless, he was already close to losing his fight. Although, soon the Transcontinental Monthly agreed to publish one of his horror stories. However, instead of the promised \$100 for this story, the Transcontinental evaluated his labour only on five dollars. Morally depressed and physically exhausted, Martin became sick with the flu.

1.3.4 Success

By the time fortune smiled on Martin Eden and editors finally started publishing his stories, his young wings were already scorched with the long path of becoming famous. Moreover, he was strongly disappointed in Ruth’s refusal to wait for him when he was suffering in poverty and traumatized by endless rejections. However, after Martin’s sudden success, Ruth came to him by herself and offered her hand and heart. He could not understand why Ruth came to him only after years of his torments to become a popular and successful person:

"Why didn't you dare it before?" he asked harshly. "When I hadn't a job? When I was starving? When I was just as I am now, as a man, as an artist, the same Martin Eden? That's the question I've been propounding to myself for many a day – not concerning

you merely, but concerning everybody. You see I have not changed, though my sudden apparent appreciation in value compels me constantly to reassure myself on that point. I've got the same flesh on my bones, the same ten fingers and toes. I am the same. I have not developed any new strength nor virtue. My brain is the same old brain. I haven't made even one new generalization on literature or philosophy. I am personally of the same value that I was when nobody wanted me. And what is puzzling me is why they want me now. Surely they don't want me for myself, for myself is the same old self they did not want. Then they must want me for something else, for something that is outside of me, for something that is not I! Shall I tell you what that something is? It is for the recognition I have received. That recognition is not I. It resides in the minds of others. Then again for the money I have earned and am earning. But that money is not I. (London 2004: 241).

In a way, Martin's process of self-perfection mostly started with meeting Ruth Morse. In the meantime, that process stopped when he had achieved the success and became worthy of her heart. However, by this time he understood Ruth's real relation towards him that changed because of his new social status. Ruth's love was based on Martin's money and success, now he knew that. In the first time they met, he was blinded by her purity and innocence, but now he could comprehend what a pragmatic and selfish lady Ruth Morse was in fact.

He lived a life which he was dreaming about: "Money poured in on him, fame poured in on him; he flashed, comet-like, through the world of literature, and he was more amused than interested by the stir he was making" (London 2004: 228). Editors sent requests to collaborate with their publishing houses, he wore the most expensive clothes, ate in the best restaurants, and lived without any limits. The editors offered him hundreds of dollars for publishing his stories. Martin Eden, who recently was close to depression because of the constant rejections he received from publishing houses, forgot the word 'rejection'. As a successful and famous writer, Martin Eden was welcomed wherever he went. His life looked like a scene of a Hollywood film, unfortunately, with the "inhuman editorial machine" (London 2004: 123) broke down. Martin's life changed to the infinite seeking of the meaning of life, of answering the question of who he was, and why he felt so unhappy.

People recognised him instantly, invited him to dinner parties, "he ate in the Japanese restaurants where meals were served for ten cents, [...] he no longer abused himself with short sleep, overwork, and overstudy. He wrote nothing, and the books were closed" (London 2004: 215). However, success was not enough for Martin because he had lost his interest in life. He realised that he thrived for "some impulse, from he knew not where, to put his stopped life into motion again" (ibid.). His life had stopped at the point of Martin Eden's personality cult. Nothing could give him a sense of fulfilment.

Idolised but empty, he had lost his swinger spirit. Martin Eden, who once was fighting desperately for the right to reach the wealthy life, had turned to the person who

could not even explain to himself what he wanted to do in life now. He was traumatised by his success so much that he could not be as sociable as he used to be. No longer able to endure the sense of frustration and depression, Martin committed suicide. In a state of confusion, disorder, and isolation, Martin Eden overpowered the will to live and “fell into darkness” (London 2004: 253).

Martin Eden’s story of pursuing can be taken as an example that confirms Hall’s theory of self-development. As it can be seen from the analysis of Martin’s growth mentioned above, his story comprises the general phases of the process described by Hall (2017), except for college life. It is true to say that Martin Eden’s process of reaching self-perfection through self-education consisted in such parts as self-knowledge, self-reliance, self-denial, individuality, discipline, the perceptive faculties, the imagination, the memory, the will, reflection and reasoning, studying, habits, and manners (ibid.). Moreover, his succeeding in becoming a famous writer is associated with Hall’s point of view that consists in having a purpose because “purpose is so generally written upon all created things, that, by inductive reasoning it may be adopted as a rule” (ibid.). Therefore, “to stand purposeless, with purpose on every hand, would be an anomaly” (ibid.). According to Hall, it can be concluded that Martin had succeeded because of his deliberate and free-will desire to educate himself, and secondly, because of his precise vision of his goal:

Voluntary effort, on our part, is required to bring out the faculties; the necessity to do so must be felt; the purpose must be clear; and the motive power finished by us; hence at the very outset the beginner should be impressed with the fact that the cause of all advancement, its incentive, and its purpose, must originate with himself; and that teachers, books and appliances are simply helps in his progress, and instruments for his use (ibid: 2-3).

As Hall remarks, there are only two types of educations. The first kind of education is receiving knowledge from other peoples’ experiences and the second one is studying from your own practice. Both statements can be applied to Martin Eden because he was taught by sailors with whom he was working, and in the meantime learned lessons from his life experience and mistakes. Hall (ibid.) also mentions that one of the most significant subjects in achieving a high level of knowledge is a person’s keen interest in education. The more man practises, the faster he or she would form good habits: “Cleave to the habits which help, and when you find a habit that cumbers your path; put it by promptly and for all time. You will soon know, that habit makes the man” (ibid: 50). In conclusion it can be said that “Martin Eden” by J. London has a connection with Hall’s theory of self-development.

CHAPTER II

“SELF-PERFECTION” VOCABULARY IN “JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL” BY R. BACH AND “MARTIN EDEN” BY J. LONDON

2.1 Usage of Vocabulary to Reveal Characters’ Process of Self-Perfection (nouns, verbs, adjectives)

In this chapter, the vocabulary choices in “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach and “Martin Eden” by J. London are going to be examined in order to reveal the main characters’ processes of self-perfection based on the chapters that are associated with the topic of protagonists’ pursuing. This chapter examines such parts of speech as nouns, verbs, and adjectives to understand how the authors use the language to show the process of protagonists’ self-perfection and self-development. The process of self-development can be described by naming important characteristics, stages and outcomes of it with the help of nouns; these stages, characteristics, etc. can be characterised and described with the help of adjectives and corresponding action/states expressed with the help of certain verbs. The use of nouns, verbs and adjectives highlights the process of self-development of the protagonists of the stories, and it reveals what the authors imply in the stories about Jonathan Livingston Seagull and Martin Eden.

The language (nouns, verbs, adjectives) used in “Martin Eden” was analysed in chapters 1-27 and 41-45, while “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” was analysed in chapters 1-3. The choice of these chapters for the analysis is based on the authors’ portrayal of Martin Eden’s and Jonathan Seagull’s self-developmental growth that is described profoundly in both books in the named above chapters.

Nouns of Self-Perfection

Nouns name the process of self-development and its qualities. Moreover, nouns used in the novel reveal characteristics in characters’ lives. Nouns used in “Martin Eden” and “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” are presented in semantic groups to follow Martin’s and Jonathan’s processes of the beginning of self-perfection, the desire for knowledge, their fighting spirit, and their success.

Table 1. Nouns.

“Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach	“Martin Eden” by J. London
The beginning of self-perfection	
<p>Difficulties at the beginning of the process of self-perfection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pain 2. Resolutions 3. Velocity 4. Speed 5. Failure 6. Boredom 7. Fear 8. Anger 9. Limit <p>Rewards at the beginning of the process of self-perfection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strength 2. Victory 3. Breakthrough 4. Joy 5. Speed 6. Horizons <p>Hard work and persistence in the process of self-development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Force 2. Challenge 3. Practice 	<p>Difficulties at the beginning of the process of self-perfection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hardship 2. Failures 3. Scrapes 4. Hunger 5. Limitations 6. Effort <p>Rewards at the beginning of the process of self-perfection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development 2. Stride 3. Knowledge <p>Hard work and persistence in the process of self-development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ambition 2. Determination 3. Desire
The desire towards knowledge	
<p>Difficulties at the beginning of the self-educational process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limitations 2. Injustice <p>The willing towards knowledge and self-education:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fighting <p>Hard work and persistence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice 2. Kindness 3. Forgiveness <p>The result of the persistence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom 2. Power 3. Victory 4. Experience 5. Perfection 	<p>Difficulties at the beginning of the self-educational process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conviction 2. Humbleness 3. Pursuits 4. Middle class <p>The willing towards knowledge and self-education:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indomitability 2. Desire 3. Faith 4. Vision 5. Eagerness <p>Hard work and persistence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Library 2. Fighter 3. Creation 4. Practice <p>The result of the persistence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievement 2. Prosperity

	3. Change 4. Stir
The fighting spirit	
Motivational factors towards self-perfection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hunger 2. Striving 3. Flight The emerged hardships in the fighting process towards self-perfection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critique 2. Injustice The assets that helped to survive under severe circumstances: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Force 2. Ability 	Motivational factors towards self-perfection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poverty 2. Money 3. Debts 4. Love The emerged hardships in the fighting process towards self-perfection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rebound 2. Poverty 3. Hackwork 4. Debts 5. Rejections 6. Battle The assets that helped to survive under severe circumstances: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resiliency 2. Stubbornness 3. Passion 4. Vigor
Success	
Professional mastery: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wizard 2. Flying 3. Overcoming 4. Limitations Position in society: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outcast 2. Devil 3. God 	Professional mastery: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fame 2. Manuscripts 3. Attainment 4. Contracts Position in society: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No satisfaction Financial achievement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Money 2. Bills 3. Wealth

Based on the table presented above, it can be stated that the nouns used in the novels reveal Martin Eden's and Jonathan Seagull's self-developmental growth precisely. The nouns mentioned in the table define the process of self-development. Moreover, specified nouns give an accurate submission about protagonists' hardships and their process of becoming successful and independent people. These particular nouns have been chosen because they characterise the characters' process of self-development in different stages. For instance, the words *challenge*, *practice* and *force* opened to Jonathan the *horizons* and the *joy* of flying at the beginning of the process of self-perfection. The nouns *ambition*, *determination* and *desire* describe Martin's self-development towards the achieved rewards at the beginning. Moreover, these particular nouns characterise the

progress in self-development distinctly in every stage of self-improvement because of the words' distribution into separate groups, i.e. the words *wizard*, *flying*, *overcoming*, and *limitations* portray Jonathan Seagull's achievement of the professional mastery in the last stage of development. In the meantime, the nouns *fame*, *manuscripts*, *attainments*, and *contracts* were chosen to identify Martin Eden's reaching of the professional mastery. Thereby, the chosen nouns depict Martin Eden's success and attainment. Thus, it can be stated that each sub-group comprises the nouns that define protagonists' processes of self-improvement based on their actions. The chosen nouns both confirm and reveal their significance in relation towards protagonists' difficulties on their way to self-perfection, demonstrate characters' hard work and stubbornness explicitly on stages of the willing for knowledge and the fighting spirit.

Verbs of Self-Perfection

Verbs define characters' actions and state in the process of self-development. The verbs used in "Martin Eden" and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" were also divided into semantic groups to reveal Martin's and Jonathan's processes of the beginning of self-perfection, the desire for knowledge, their fighting spirit, and their success.

Table 2. *Verbs.*

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach	"Martin Eden" by J. London
The beginning of self-perfection	
Verbs describing actions taken towards self-development at the beginning of the process: 1. Was practicing 2. Tried 3. Discovered 4. Learned The protagonist's hard work at the beginning of the process: 1. Was experimenting 2. Floated 3. Learn 4. Was banished The success at the beginning of the process of self-development: 1. Rejoiced 2. Had reached 3. Wanted to share 4. Wanted to show	Verbs describing actions taken towards self-development at the beginning of the process: 1. Suffered 2. Hurried to 3. Attempted 4. Studied 5. Reviewed The protagonist's hard work at the beginning of the process: 1. Concentrated on 2. Learned 3. Continued 4. Wanted to know The success at the beginning of the process of self-development: 1. Developed 2. Had enjoyed 3. Had mastered
The desire towards knowledge	

Actions taken towards self-development: 1. Analyze 2. Press 3. Reach out 4. Learned 5. Understand 6. Overcome	Actions taken towards self-development: 1. Had mastered 2. Memorized 3. Learned 4. Toiled 5. Wrote 6. Spent 7. Tried 8. Studied 9. Overwhelmed 10. Never rested
The fighting spirit	
Protagonist's fight towards self-development: 1. Forced 2. Fly 3. Practise Hardships on the fighting way towards self-improvement: 1. Understand (flying)	Protagonist's fight towards self-development: 1. Studied 2. Learned 3. Wrote 4. Worked 5. Had devoted Hardships on the fighting way towards self-improvement: 1. Ached 2. Was rejected 3. Ran out 4. Had pawned
Success	
The success in the fight towards self-development: 1. Had discovered 2. Overcame 3. Conquered Position in society: 1. To practice 2. To help	The success in the fight towards self-development: 1. Had discovered 2. Had achieved 3. Was published Position in society: 1. Cashed 2. (Money) poured in

The verbs mentioned in table 2 define Martin Eden's and Jonathan Livingston's actions and their will to achieve their goals. The verbs chosen at the beginning of self-developmental process portray characters' deeds that were taken in order to start their self-growth. Apart from that, both columns indicate verbs portraying protagonists' hard work and persistence at the beginning of the process, and the achieved success in the particular process. For example, at the very start of Jonathan Seagull's self-improvement such verbs as *was practising*, *tried*, etc. (see table 2) were chosen. In the meantime, the verbs *suffered*, *hurried to*, *studied* etc. were used as essential words in describing the process of Martin's self-developmental growth. It is tremendously significant to notice that the most characteristic verb of Martin's process of self-development was *hurried to the library*, because his self-education began from his daily visits to the library, where he

attempted to read, *reviewed* articles and magazines, *suffered* from the misunderstanding of the words and the language used. The verbs chosen in the next subchapter depict protagonists' actions in their endeavours to self-educate themselves. "The fighting spirit" includes the list of verbs describing the protagonists' fighting towards self-development and the difficulties they faced while fighting for the right to achieve their dreams. The reason for choosing the verb *understand* in the column referred to Jonathan Seagull in the subchapter of "The fighting spirit" consists in the special meaning of the word for the character. In this case, the verb *understand* does not reflect the literal meaning but reveals Jonathan's importance of understanding that flying was not what he saw with his eyes, but what his heart was able to see. It is significant to point out that it was not possible to define success for both characters because for Jonathan Livingston success expressed in his position in society which reposed in his desire *to practice* his skills and *to help* other gulls to understand that there were no limitations in achieving their dreams. In Martin's case, the main attainment consisted in his ability to *cash* checks. Moreover, it was decided to add a subgroup about his feelings towards success showing that he *no longer abused* himself with work, *did not laugh*, *did not write*, and simply *drifted*. Therefore, it was decided to distinguish the subgroups. Thereby, the verbs provided in the second table demonstrate the four stages of protagonists' growth.

Adjectives of Self-Perfection

Adjectives used in the novels "Martin Eden" and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" were considered from an aspect of distributing them into semantic groups in order to display characters' processes of the beginning of self-perfection, the desire for knowledge, their fighting spirit, and their success.

Table 3. *Adjectives.*

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach	"Martin Eden" by J. London
The beginning of self-perfection	
Obstacles that Jonathan Seagull faced: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not ordinary 2. Banished 3. Painful 4. Hard 5. Hungry 6. Alone 7. Tired Assets that helped protagonist to overcome the hardships:	Obstacles that Martin Eden faced: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Middle-class 2. Bourgeois 3. Unusual Assets that helped protagonist to overcome the hardships: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restless 2. Swift

1. Happy 2. Free	
The desire towards knowledge	
Obstacles that Jonathan Seagull faced: 1. Difficult 2. Heavy 3. Young Personal qualities that assisted protagonists to endure severe obstacles: 1. Unlimited 2. Powerful	Obstacles that Martin Eden faced: 1. Defeated 2. Depressed 3. Young Personal qualities that assisted protagonists to endure severe obstacles: 1. Creative 2. Erratic 3. Invincible 4. Fanciful 5. Excited 6. Enthusiastic 7. Curious 8. Whole-souled
The fighting spirit	
Hardships Jonathan Seagull faced with: 1. Exhausted Actions taken to overwhelm the difficulties: 1. Determined 2. Demonstrating 3. Suggesting 4. Pressuring 5. Guiding	Hardships Martin Eden faced with: 1. Desperate Actions taken to overwhelm the difficulties: 1. Stubborn 2. Economical 3. Cheap 4. Expensive
Success	
Position in society: 1. Condemned 2. Misunderstood Achievement: 1. Advanced	Position in society: 1. Lonely 2. Miserable 3. Sick 4. Lost Mental well-being: 1. Tired 2. Passive 3. Planless 4. Empty 5. Idle

The adjectives used in the subgroups of “Martin Eden” and “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” demonstrate their significance in characters’ self-development and achievement of success. Moreover, the adjectives exemplify Martin Eden’s and Jonathan Seagull’s attitudes towards self-perfection. The adjectives chosen in “The beginning of self-perfection” display obstacles that protagonists faced with, and the assets that helped them to overcome the hardships. The reason for choosing words *middle-class* and *bourgeois* is explained by the fact that the main difficulty for Martin Eden reposed in his belonging to the middle-class and his disability to correspond to a *bourgeois* lady. The second stage

portrays protagonists' desire towards knowledge; this stage describes two subgroups – obstacles that they faced with, and their personal qualities that helped them to endure severe circumstances. The word *young* was chosen because Jonathan was a young gull pursuing perfection; such assets as being *unlimited* and *powerful* strongly helped him in his attempts. The main reason for selecting the words *defeated* and *depressed* consists in their suitability in the description of this stage. Adjectives as *creative*, *erratic*, *invincible* etc. were also included in the list. The process depicting Martin and Jonathan's fighting spirit portrays two subgroups – hardships they had faced with, and the actions taken to overwhelm them. The general difficulty for Jonathan lay in his *exhaustion*, and for Martin in his *despair*. However, both characters had taken some action to overcome the hardships. Jonathan Seagull was *determined*. Moreover, he was *demonstrating*, *suggesting*, *pressuring*, and *guiding* his students in the toughest times. Martin Eden's success in surviving under hardships consisted in being *stubborn*, *economical*, and buying *cheap* food instead of *expensive* food and clothes. As far as protagonists' success is expressed differently in the novels, it is hard to distinguish them into one subgroup. Therefore, it was decided to refer Martin Eden's success to the group of mental condition (*tired*, *passive*, *planless*, *empty* etc.) and his position in society (*lonely*, *miserable*, *sick*, *lost*). Jonathan Seagull's success was observed from two perspectives – his position in society, and his achievement that conveyed in the reaching of the *advanced* level in the art of flying.

2.2 Common Search for a Better-Self via the Usage of Vocabulary

Based on the conducted analysis of vocabulary in the novels, it can be said that a lexicon referred to self-perfection is mainly similar between "Martin Eden" and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull". Nouns, verbs and adjectives were observed in the analysis. Each stage of protagonists' self-development was matched with levels of self-development, i.e. the beginning of the self-developmental process, the desire towards knowledge, the fighting spirit, and success. It also must be pointed out that the different volume of the books influenced the amount of the parts of speech in every section. The common search for a better-self via the usage of vocabulary was based on the looking for the same ideas expressed either with the same words or their synonyms.

Among the nouns in the chapter "The beginning of self-perfection", the words *failure* and *limits* appeared in both columns. The word *resolutions* has a synonymous meaning with *determination*; *breakthrough* expresses the same meaning as *stride*. Considering the nouns in "The desire towards knowledge", it was marked that there were

one common sense noun – the word *practice*. In addition to that, the nouns *fighting* and *fighter* has a common root and meaning. It is significant to notice that other words expressing the same meaning were not found in this subchapter. Reviewing the nouns in the “Fighting spirit”, it was noted that in the table there were a few words conveying the same ideas. For example, the words *hunger* and *poverty*; *force* and *vigor*; *joy* and *love* (these nouns have a common sense because for Jonathan the real joy consisted in loving for what you do, and for Martin, the word *love* meant a joy he got from the ability to love). In the stage of “Success” there were not revealed neither common sense nouns nor their synonyms. This is partly due to the different meaning of success for protagonists; for Jonathan Seagull, the real success reposed in achieving of the advanced level of flying, while for Martin, the meaning of success consisted in the financial attainment.

Analysing the verbs considered in the second table it can be marked that the first level of self-development “The beginning of self-perfection” does not have any similar verbs, however, there are several verbs with the meaning conveyed with their synonyms, such as *tried* and *attempted*, *learned* and *studied*. The second stage has one common verb, *learned* and *had learned*; the synonyms were not found. Considering the verbs chosen in “The fighting spirit”, it can be assumed that the verbs *practised* and *learned/studied* might have a synonymous meaning from the perspective of their sense to protagonists. In the stage “Success” there was indicated one common noun – *to discover* and *had discovered*. There were not noticed any synonymous verbs because of the protagonists’ different comprehension of the definition of success.

Analysing the data in the third table there was discerned one adjective that was expressed with the synonym, i.e. the words *no ordinary* and *unusual*. The other adjectives do not have any similarities neither in the same words nor their synonyms. The next subchapter “The desire towards knowledge” reveals a few commonalities between the words used in the third table. For example, in both columns the word *young* appears, which importance is emphasised by the fact that the main difficulty both for Jonathan Livingston and Martin Eden consisted in their youthfulness and inexperience. Moreover, there is one word that conveys a synonymous meaning, i.e. *unlimited* and *invincible*. These two qualities assisted them to survive tough times. Reviewing the adjectives chosen in the subchapter “The fighting spirit”, it can be said that the words *exhausted* and *desperate* may be observed from their equal synonymous meaning for the characters. While *desperate* Martin was fighting for the right to become a writer, Jonathan was *exhausted* from the daily lessons. The last subchapter “Success” does not have any adjectives or their synonyms which is mainly due to the characters’ distinction in

understanding of success. Martin Eden was *tired*, *passive* etc. from success and from losing a goal in his life; in the meantime, Jonathan Seagull was happy that he achieved the *advanced* level in flight, even despite the fact that he was *condemned* by society. Therefore, the difficulty in comparison of the protagonists' successes appeared.

In conclusion it can be stated that the conducted analysis of vocabulary's usage referred to the topic of self-perfection in the novels "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London has shown that various parts of speech have both common words and their synonyms in order to express the same idea of their meanings. The use of nouns, verbs and adjectives in "Martin Eden" and "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" emphasises their significance in the protagonists' self-development and display the process of the protagonists' desire and fighting towards self-perfection, and their success in achieving it.

CONCLUSION

The topic of self-development plays a significant role in modern society; the majority of people are willing to reach it. For some of them, self-development consists in the improvement of the inner world. For others, it means demonstrating their financial achievements to other people. One way or another, the subject of self-perfection still remains a hot topic today.

The analysis of background sources has shown that there are synonyms to the word *self-perfection*, such as *self-improvement*, *self-development* and *self-help*. These words are interchangeably used in literature on topics of self-development. Self-perfection and self-help books are popular among readers who need practical advice of how to develop themselves. Self-help books are a non-fiction variety of literature works about self-development, and they offer criteria to analyse the process of character's self-development, such as being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, putting first things first, thinking win-win, seeking first to understand then to be understood, synergizing, and sharpening the saw (Covey, 2013). The analysis of these criteria suggests a basis for a comparative analysis of the novels of "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London. The novels were written in the 20th century, and they both examine the topic of self-perfection. The analysis of critical reviews written about the novels (Walker, 1965; Martin, 1967; Ousby, 1979; Carey, 1972; Caffey, 1972; Palmisano, 2006, etc.) shows that some of the critics praised the novels for the seriousness and limitless of the topic they explored, while others harshly criticised them for approaches to the topic of self-development.

The comparative analysis of the novels included two stages. First, the plot and characters' lives were analysed to reveal protagonists' way of self-perfection and their actions to achieve their dreams. The analysis comprises four stages to follow four criteria of the self-development process defined during the study of background sources: the beginning of the self-developmental process, desire towards knowledge, the fighting spirit, and the success. Second, to compare the expression of the idea of self-perfection in "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" by R. Bach and "Martin Eden" by J. London the analysis of nouns, verbs and adjectives used in both novels to define the four stages of the self-perfection process was conducted.

The study demonstrates that Jonathan Seagull and Martin Eden were both strong in their desire to achieve the dreams they were absorbed by, and they both experienced the joy of finding their path in life despite the rejection and non-acceptance by environment.

The analysis of the novels' vocabulary has revealed that the stock of words used to discuss the concept of a better self in the novels has many words in common which highlight the process of self-perfection.

Thus, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed – the concept of a better self as it is depicted in “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” by R. Bach and “Martin Eden” by J. London is manifested in common meaning of self-perfection for both characters which is expressed in the authors' descriptions of their thoughts and actions in the books through vocabulary and comparative analysis.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Enesetäiendamise teema mängib olulist rolli tänapäeva maailmas; paljud inimesed tahavad tegelda enesearenguga. Mõnede inimeste jaoks enesetäiendamine seisneb oma sisemise maailma täiustamises. Teiste jaoks enesetäiendamine tähendab rahaliste saavutuste demonstreerimist. Ühel või teisel viisil enesearendamine on aktuaalne teema nii noorte kui ka täiskasvanute hulgas.

Tausta analüüs näitas, et terminil „enesetäiendamine“ on mõned sünonüümid, nagu *eneseareng*, *enesekasvatus* ja *enesearendamine*. Analüüsist ilmnas, et need sõnad on omavahel vahetatavad. Eneseareng ja eneseabiraamatute teema on populaarne, sest eneseabiraamatud aitavad inimestel tegelda enesekasvatusega. Uuring näitas, et eneseabiraamatud on mittekirjanduslik variant ilukirjanduslikest teostest. Lisaks, annavad eneseabiraamatud kriteeriumi peategelaste enesearendamise protsesside analüüsimiseks, nagu olla proaktiivne, alustada lõppeesmärki silmas pidades, seada esmatähtis eeskoht, võidan-võidad mõelda, luua sünergiat jne (Covey, 2013). Eelnimetatud kriteeriumid annavad aluse Richard Bachi novelli „Jonathan Livingston Kajakas“ ja Jack Londoni novelli „Martin Eden“ võrdlevaks analüüsiks. Need romaanid on kirjutatud 20. sajandil ja uurivad enesearendamise võimalusi. Kriitiliste ülevaadete analüüs romaanidest (Walker, 1965; Martin, 1967; Ousby, 1979; Carey, 1972; Caffey, 1972; Palmisano, 2006 jne) näitas, et mõned kriitikud kiitsid romaane enesearengu teema käsitlemise eest, kuid teised kritiseerisid karmilt autorite lähenemisviisi.

Võrdlev analüüs koosneb kahest osast. Esiteks, süžee ja peategelaste elu uuriti, et saada teada tegelaste enesearengu viie ja nende tegevusi enesetäiendamise saavutamiseks. Esimene peatükk peegeldab peategelaste enesetäiendamise protsesse, mis avatakse nende enesearengu etappide jaotuses: enesekasvatuse protsessi algus, soov õppida, võitlusvaim ja edu. Teiseks, uuriti enesekasvatuse väljendamise ideed romaanides eesmärgiga analüüsida raamatutes kasutatud nimi-, tegu- ja omadussõnu, et defineerida peategelaste enesetäiendamise protsessi etappe.

Uuring näitab, et Martin Eden ja Jonathan Kajakas püüdsid kangekaelselt viia ellu oma unistusi ja nad mõlemad kogesid rõõmu oma elutee otsimisel, vaatamata sellele, et keskkond ei võtnud neid omaks. Romaanide sõnavara analüüs näitas selliste sõnade mitmekesisust, mis rõhutavad kangelaste enesearendamist.

Järelikult, hüpotees leidis kinnitust – enesetäiendamise kontseptsioon, nagu seda on kirjutatud Richard Bachi ja Jack Londoni romaanides „Jonathan Livingston Kajakas“

ja „Martin Eden“, avaldub enesearengu sarnases tähenduses romaanide peategelaste jaoks.

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