



POSUDEK VEDOUcí BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **A Sociolinguistic Study of the New York City English and its Lexis**

Autorka práce: **Karolína Dvořáková**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Helena Lohrová, Ph.D.**

Oponent bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Petr Kos, Ph.D.**

Short characteristics of the thesis

The thesis explores the New York City English dialect with an aim to account for the richness and use of selected lexis and phrases. To complete this task, the author draws on past research and designs her own online survey to examine the use of four lists of NYCE lexis: Yiddishisms, Italianisms, Other words of foreign origin, and New Yorkisms. Through online dissemination of the survey, the author collects nearly 140 responses from 3 considerably balanced cohorts: This data set up facilitates an appreciably robust data analysis through which the author is able to establish a number of potentially indicative findings, e.g., generational usage with some traditional NYCE expressions being absent from the lexicon of the younger generation of respondents or findings regarding regional preference for the use of certain expressions. Such findings are exciting and encourage further research.

Overall assessment

A sociolinguistic module is not offered as part of the English Language and Literature study programme at the School of Arts (USB). It is only in the Introduction to Linguistics (Y1) course that students become aware of key sociolinguistic orientations. The author, nevertheless, ventured to explore a truly sociolinguistic topic – New York City English; a dialect of American English initially researched and described by no one else but the founder of variationist sociolinguistics himself, William Labov. Hence, deciding to carry the research baton forward by designing and undertaking a study into the contemporary use of selected NYCE lexis was a brave move.

Overall, the thesis has all components expected and required of an undergraduate dissertation. It is written in a coherent manner (with only occasional demands for editing), the literature review is undertaken comprehensively and establishes a relevant frame for the examination of NYCE lexis. The study design is clear with the methodology section articulating the purpose of the survey, setting out the questionnaire design and structure. Graphs and diagrams visualising social demographics are presented systematically, assisting the reader in forming a picture of the diversity featured across the three cohorts of respondents.

The analysis, in my view, forms the strongest part of the thesis. The challenge of any small-scale sociolinguistic field study is to resist the temptation to correlate the sociodemographic data obtained with interpretation of what may appear to be tendencies indicative of language variation or change. In this sense, Karolína has been both very disciplined and thorough. She maintains her focus on the analysis of language use when she diligently extracts, sorts, aggregates and compares the survey data. The



detail of the analysis is impressive. So is the quality of factual information generated from the study.

My reservations regarding this submission are minor and have little impact on the merit this bachelor thesis deserves.

Finally, as part of the overall academic assessment, I would like to state that Karolína's research independence as well as responsiveness to comments during our supervision meetings have been exemplary. As a clear sign of her professionalism, she has also always honoured deadlines. These I believe are assets that cannot be reflected as part of her BA thesis assessment but that certainly shall forward Karolína's future academic or career development.

Areas for discussion:

- 1) On p. 24 you state that "The lexical items used in the questionnaire were collected from various sources that deal with New York City English". Can you specify to what extent you drew on the *American Heritage Dictionary* online and what other relevant sources informed your choice of lexical items surveyed?
- 2) What has been for you the greatest challenge in analysing the sociolinguistic variation of the NYCE lexis? How would you like to incorporate this learning into your future academic work?

I do recommend the thesis for defence and I propose the evaluation "excellent" (výborně).

Práci **doporučuji** k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: **výborně**

30th May 2022

Datum

Podpis