



Ústav světových dějin FFUK

Master's Thesis Review

Student's name and surname: Aneta Klánová

Title of the thesis: Linguistic Identity in the English as a Lingua Franca Communication: Changing Perceptions of English Non-nativeness in the Context of an Erasmus Community of Practice

Reviewer's name and surname: Tamah Sherman

1. Heuristic (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

1.1 Evaluation of the selection of literature and sources	1-2
1.2 Complexity of used sources from the perspective of the state of the art	1

Short evaluation: This project required interdisciplinary exploration and readings, in both linguistics and various areas of the social sciences, particularly as concerned methodology (Communities of Practice, Grounded Theory). The author took a very responsible approach to this. She presents a very thorough overview of the recent literature on English as a lingua franca, including its various controversies. She also makes very good use of previous studies of ELF communities in universities (above all Kalocsai 2013, Smit 2010 and Gundermann 2014), using them as a springboard for her own investigation.

It should be pointed out, though, that at certain moments, the author could have been a bit more critical of the existing literature, e.g. of Seidlhofer's list of "misinterpretations" regarding ELF in section 2.1.7, which appear to represent somewhat unrealistic expectations concerning the language-ideological perspectives of learners in various parts of the world.



Ústav světových dějin FFUK

2. Research problem and its solution (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

2.1 Choice of the formulation of the research issue respects the task given to the student	1
2.2 The relevance of the goal from the perspective of research area methodology	1

Short evaluation: The topic was selected based on real-life issues and problems which had been experienced and systematically observed by the student for a longer period of time preceding the research. For this reason, it was a highly appropriate starting point for research in Applied Linguistics and/or Sociolinguistics, which presume social relevance of all issues explored. The author also presents a full and reflexive description of the research process.

3. Thesis structure evaluation (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

3.1 Is the structure of the thesis logical?	1-2
3.2 Does the thesis' structure work along the methodology and methods declared in the introduction	1

Short evaluation:

There are no major issues with the structure overall. The organization of the topics related to ELF seems to be slightly less logically structured at some points. For example, it is unclear why section 2.1.6., on "Future implications for ELF", is in the middle of the ELF chapter as opposed to at the end.

4. Quality of analysis and interpretation (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

4.1 Analysis of sources and literature	1-2
4.2 Interpretation of sources and literature in their interaction	1



Ústav světových dějin FFUK

Short evaluation: The analysis of a broad range of sociolinguistic and sociocultural topics is well-organized and interesting. The author reaches many of the same conclusions as previous research, for example, regarding the seemingly paradoxical divergence between how students evaluate standard English varieties (as superior to others) and how they view their own language (very positively, though non-native and/or non-standard). The extensive use of examples from the interview data also provide an interesting look at how other languages, including Czech, come into play and how some of the Erasmus students' acquisition of local languages may be more extensive than previously thought.

5. Quality of the text (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

5.1 Style and grammar	1
5.2 Use of terminology	1

Short evaluation:

The English of this thesis is the clear and intelligible language of a highly competent non-native speaker (whose status is in fact unrecognizable at certain points). There do not appear to be any incorrect interpretations of terminology. Here and there one can find a few very minor formal issues:

- the author Ute Smit is repeatedly cited as "Smith" in the text and her cited text from 2009 does not appear in the reference list.
- there are a few formatting issues in the PDF, e.g. in the list of references, or with some of the examples (e.g. on p. 93), where the use of cursive may not have been intended.



Ústav světových dějin FFUK

6. Synthetic evaluation (minimum 500 signs):

The research for this thesis was conducted thoroughly and with the proper degree of reflection on the part of the author. An extensive range of literature was considered and integrated. An appropriate amount of fieldwork was conducted, the data from which was analysed in an interesting way. The author also demonstrates awareness of the shortcomings of her research. In this respect, it should be highlighted that the project was a very feasible one from the perspective of the TEMA program. Overall, the thesis is a highly relevant addition to the growing number of student texts which focus on the evolving situation of multilingualism in Czech universities and in Czech society as a whole.

7. Questions and comments which should the candidate answer and discuss during the defence:

- 1) There is an ongoing discussion among ELF scholars about what makes individual ELF communities of practice different from one another, be it the character of the language used, the presence and role of languages other than English, or the type of activities in which the members engage. What makes CoPs like this one, located in the Czech and/or Central European context, different from similar CoPs at other universities throughout Europe and the world?
 - 2) How might it be possible to place the CoP examined here in a historical context, i.e. how is its character related to the changing roles of various languages in the Czech Republic over the past several decades?
-

Suggested grade: 1

Date: August 28, 2018

Signature: