

Abstract

The thesis "The Speech of Stigma and Its Impact on the Acceptance of Mental Illness" examines the power of speech in shaping the perception of mental illness in the Czech context. The study is based on the hypothesis that the way speech is used in relation to mental illness influences its acceptance and inclusion in broader society. The theoretical part of the thesis focuses on presenting approaches to speech and its role in constructing social reality, with an emphasis on concepts such as "people-first language," disability studies, and the mechanisms of stigma. It also explores the historical and symbolic image of mental illness and how negative stereotypes shape current public discourse. The empirical part of the thesis employs qualitative research, including discourse analysis of interviews with individuals with experience of mental illness and experts in the field of mental health. The findings show that the discourse of stigma is most prevalent in psychiatric institutions, media outlets, and interactions with doctors. The conclusion discusses the significance and challenges associated with the implementation of neutral speech in the field of mental health and recommends its sensitive use in a broader social context. Furthermore, it suggests that methods such as CARE (Recovery Speech), IPS, and Open Dialogue should be more thoroughly explored and integrated into communication in other types of institutions, as this could contribute to destigmatization and improved inclusion of people with mental health difficulties.

Key words:

speech, stigma, mental illness, ableism, inclusive speech, discourse analysis