

THESIS REVIEWER'S OPINION						
Student's full name	Natalie Bartošiková					
Thesis title	Synchrony and Diachrony of the English Pronoun 'You'					
Reviewer's name	Jeffrey Keith Parrott					
Degree course	English for Business Administration					
Mode of study	Full-time					
Thesis evaluation criteria	Classification grade according to ECTS					
Structure						
Outline and division	A	B	C	D	E	F
Language level	A	B	C	D	E	F
Formatting (citations, presentation)	A	B	C	D	E	F
Content						
Thesis statement formulation	A	B	C	D	E	F
Sources and their utilization	A	B	C	D	E	F
Methods of processing the research problem	A	B	C	D	E	F
Level of analytical and interpretive components	A	B	C	D	E	F
Formulation of conclusions and meeting the objectives	A	B	C	D	E	F
Originality and vocational contribution	A	B	C	D	E	F
Evaluation justification (strengths and weaknesses of thesis):						
<p>The thesis is about the 2nd person pronoun in English, from both a historical and contemporary perspective. The overall structure of the thesis follows from its topic, but the motivation for the organization of some subsections appears arbitrary, and again other subsections are unnumbered. The English academic style is mostly acceptable for the BA level, if excessively personal with overuse of the first person; there are multiple basic errors in formatting, such as the lack of either indentation or linespacing for paragraphs, the inconsistent numbering of examples, including a reset of the example numbers in the second section, and the use of square brackets instead of parentheses for numbered examples.</p> <p>There is no clearly stated research question, so the thesis reads like a collection of paraphrases transcribed from a handful of mostly descriptive, mostly ternary sources. Those do not seem to have been well understood, because linguistic technical terminology is not used consistently or correctly, and there are omissions, contradictions, and non-sequiturs throughout the thesis. Citations are placed at the end of nearly every paragraph, so that attribution is obscured; direct quotes from sources are often used in place of an explanation by the author.</p> <p>The second part of the thesis presents some data observed on social media, namely videos on Instagram. An attempt is made to correlate the usage of 2nd person forms with geographical regions, but this is hindered by some fundamental problems with the analysis. First, as implicitly acknowledged, where a speaker grew up is doubtlessly more important for their usage of linguistic variants than where they live at the time of observation. Second, the thesis does not at all acknowledge a more serious issue: there is no way to tell whether the attested usages of <i>you</i> are singular (the so-called "generic" <i>you</i> is not even mentioned) or plural (as might be expected when addressing one's audience), so ambiguously singular or plural <i>you</i> cannot be compared with overtly plural forms such as <i>y'all</i> or <i>you guys</i>, and the percentages reported are meaningless.</p>						

Questions to be answered by student:

1. The author makes multiple assertions about the frequency of various linguistic expressions; for example, on page 29, it is stated that “*You guys* is spread across Chicago, and is also widely used amongst British speakers”, and later on the same page that “*You two* is specific for the US, *you three* commonly used in Canada and *you four* is mainly utilized by people in Great Britain”. What is the evidence (not the source cited) for all these frequency claims in general? Specifically, the statements from page 29 mentioned here are highly dubious, would you please reconsider them? Do you really think that the form *you guys* is localized to Chicago, or that it is more frequent in the UK than the US, as implied? Moreover, is the analytic pronominal form *you guys* actually comparable to the syntactic phrase *you* [NUMERAL]? How could it possibly be determined that *you two* is “more commonly used” than *you three*, *you five*, *you six*, and so on for all the numerals?

2. On page 27, it is stated that “The origin [of *y'all*] is sometimes said to be in Black American English, dated back to the 1880s and then spread across [sic].” Who said this and when? What is the evidence for this claim? What does it mean for the competing hypotheses on the historical origins of African American English?

Overall mark*

A	B	C	D	E	F
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Date: 26/5/2024

Signature: Jeffrey Keith Parrott

* Overall mark is not a mathematical average of individual marks.