

Graduate Thesis Assessment Rubric (Methodology, Linguistics)
Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia

Thesis Author: Ondřej Kačán
 Title: Second Language Acquisition
 Length: 64pp
 Text Length: 58pp

<i>Assessment Criteria</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Introduction is well written, brief, interesting, and compelling. It motivates the work and provides a clear statement of the problem. It places the problem in context. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
2. Literature review is comprehensive and complete. It synthesizes a variety of sources and provides context for the research. It shows the author's understanding of the most relevant literature on the subject matter.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	I appreciated that the student engaged with a wide range of theories.
3. The methodology chapter provides clear and thorough description of the research methodology. It discusses why and what methods were chosen for research. The research methodology is appropriate for the identified research questions.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	<p>While the theoretical overview seems in general to me competent and informed, it is not clear to me what point is being pursued in the context of the overall thesis.</p> <p>When the student moves from the discussion of language acquisition theories, and SLA theories, I am not sure what the Questionnaire sets out to investigate. Only slowly did it become clear that he wished to see how convincing these theories were for respondents.</p> <p>I question this methodology. We do not test the validity of scientific research through opinion polls, as its propositions are often counter-intuitive (Theory of General Relativity), or simply beyond our ability to assess (how would respondents have evaluated Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle?). Obviously, normal people have a greater degree of competence in assessing theories of language</p>

		acquisition, but that does not mean that a crowd-sourced consensus has any subsequent validity in SLA theories. The student's questionnaire may well show what people <i>want</i> from SLA, but that might well be different from a workable <i>theory</i> of SLA. I may not be aware of the theory that $F=ma$, but it nevertheless applies to me when somebody punches me in the nose. The student, then, perhaps should have asked to what degree knowledge of SLA theories is necessary to a person's SLA.
4. The results/data are analyzed and interpreted effectively. The chapter ties the theory with the findings. It addresses the applications and implications of the research. It discusses strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the research.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See commentary to pt 3 above.
5. The thesis shows critical and analytical thinking about the area of study and the author's expertise in this area.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	In parts, very good, especially when assessing the theories; in others, weaker. Again, see pt 3 above.
6. The text is organized in a logical manner. It flows naturally and is easy to follow. Transitions, summaries and conclusions exist as appropriate. The author demonstrates high quality writing skills and uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
7. The thesis meets the general requirements (formatting, chapters, length, division into sections, etc.). References are cited properly within the text and a complete reference list is provided.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	Often the punctuation around references to long quotes is incorrect, but in general this is acceptable.

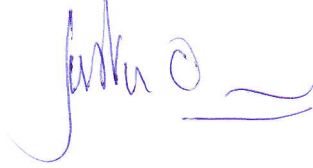
Final Comments & Questions

This was an interesting thesis in which the student has invested a good deal of effort. I look forward to his defence and hearing how he answers the points raised above. I propose a grade of **2-3**, dependent on his defence.

Supervisor/Reviewer: doc. Justin Quinn Ph.D.

Date: 15 May 2014

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justin Quinn", with a stylized flourish underneath.