

## Graduate Thesis Assessment Rubric

Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia

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Thesis Author: Tomáš Baloun

Title: Using Technology to Improve Student's Speaking Skills

Length: 51 pages

Text Length: 41 pages

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Scale</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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.	<b>Outstanding</b> Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	<i>The introduction provides a perfect frame for the whole thesis.</i>
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 <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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 <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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 <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
5. The thesis shows critical and analytical thinking about the area of study and the author's expertise in this area.	<b>Outstanding</b> Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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	Outstanding <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient	

author demonstrates high quality writing skills and uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	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 <b>Acceptable</b> Somewhat deficient Very deficient	<i>One repeating citation mistake: in APA citation style, the full stop comes after the bracket, e.g. (...) to help learners meet their learning goals (Palmer &amp; Christison, 2018). Appendices are not marked alphabetically in the thesis: There is a reference to Appendix B on pg 11, then on pg 14 – D and on pg 16 – C. the same repeats later - G comes after F. On pg 35 the first paragraph is not finished.</i>

#### Final Comments & Questions

I value Mr. Baloun's choice of the topic. Using technology in education is not only modern these days, but if used in a thought-out and organized way, it provides beneficial learning environment. The thesis aims to help with the choice of useful applications to support speaking skills.

The theoretical part discusses teaching speaking skills in connection with technology. Previous research in this field is mentioned as well, which is a strong point of the theoretical chapter. Nevertheless, there is not a clear justification of the applications selected for the research. It is only stated on page 21 that the five most promising platforms and applications were chosen based on mention in multiple articles. This statement is rather vague. As part of the defence, I would like Mr. Baloun to specify those articles as this is quite crucial for setting up the whole research. Another vague statement is about Sound Forge Pro, a tool proposed by various researchers. Which researchers specifically?

Confusion could further be spotted on page 14, where there is a reference to the focus of the thesis on Technology standards for language teacher although the actual research is based on learners' experience with the selected platforms and applications.

When discussing the research results, the part about iTranslate Converse lacks learners' comments, which are included in the results of all the previous applications. On a positive note, it is visible that the participants of the research enjoyed working with the different platforms and applications and benefited from using those tools.

Based on the points mentioned above, I suggest that the author is awarded the grade **"very good"**. As for the defence I would like Mr Baloun to address the following questions:

*How would you improve your research to be more objective? Give specific examples.*

*Has the overall implementation of technology into your English classes changed after completing this research? If so, how?*

reviewer: Mgr. Barbora Reynaert, Ph.D.

Date: August 26, 2022

Signature: