

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

Thesis Author: **Jan Vála**

Title: THE COMPETITION OF INDIVIDUAL MEANS OF EXPRESSING GENERIC
 REFERENCE WITH ENGLISH NOUNS

Length: 49

Text Length: 22

<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 examined issue. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
2. The thesis shows the author's appropriate knowledge of the subject matter through the background/review of literature. The author presents information from a variety of quality electronic and print sources. Sources are relevant, balanced and include critical readings relating to the thesis or problem. Primary sources are included (if appropriate).	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
3. The author carefully analyzed the information collected and drew appropriate and inventive conclusions supported by evidence. Ideas are richly supported with accurate details that develop the main point. The author's voice is evident.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
4. The thesis displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
5. Conclusion effectively restates the argument. It summarizes the main findings and follows logically from the analysis presented.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient	See final comments

	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 author uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
7. The language use is precise. The student makes proficient use of language in a way that is appropriate for the discipline and/or genre in which the student is writing.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	See the final comments
8. 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	See the final comments

Final Comments & Questions

This undergraduate thesis deals with the topic which is generally viewed as very difficult, especially by Czech learners of English because it deals with one area of usage of the articles – the expression of the generic reference. That is why I consider this topic very challenging and appreciate the author's willingness to work on it.

The work is traditionally divided into three, resp. four main parts – Introduction, Theoretical background, Analysis and Conclusions.

The Introduction into the issue is very good; it is well balanced and provides a clear and accurate view of the structure of the work.

The Theoretical Background is designed to provide relevant theoretical information and aspects of the subject matter and a solid base for the actual analysis. In my opinion, this part of the work shows certain marks of simplism; e.g. the definition and explanation of "common nouns" is insufficient as contrasted to "proper nouns" (p.2); though essential from the point of view of the choice of a suitable determiner, "dual membership nouns" (i.e. nouns that can be used in countable or uncountable meaning) are mentioned very briefly – they would really deserve more profound explanation and description. Then, the mention of the types of articles (p.4) is inaccurate and even misleading since it does not mention the 3rd, fully-fledged zero article (the zero article is mentioned further in the text). Other parts of the Theoretical background (e.g. countability, reference, the scale of determiners used with English nouns ...) are treated quite well.

The chapter Analysis provides the description of individual steps in the process of analyzing individual excerpts (more than 200). The reasons why the author analyzed the excerpts from the point of view of individual nominal categories as well as the relevance of the description should have been explained in more detail. I quite appreciate the careful and exhaustive analysis of the excerpted noun phrases, which is in Appendix A, as well as the graphs, which follow.

The chapter Conclusion is far too brief. Rather than conclusions drawn from the actual analysis (worked out very carefully), it reminds of a simple statement of the results of enumeration. The language of the work is quite good, though there are occasional mistakes:

- inaccurate use of articles, e.g. p. iii "a Czech linguist Belán", "...the Quirk's problem..." p. 7 "...an indefinite article;

- the incorrect forming of the conditional – p. 7 “..if there would be an indefinite article used...”
- unsystematic, incorrect punctuation, e.g. p. 8 “He claims, that...”

From the formal point of view, the Abstract contains irrelevant details, which should have been mentioned in other parts of the work. There is a mistake in marking individual parts of the chapter Theoretical background – 2.2 Noun classes, 2.3 Dual membership nouns and again 2.2 Definiteness, which is further subdivided into 2.2.1 Uniqueness... The length of the work is problematic, too. It hardly meets the acquired number of text pages of an undergraduate thesis; nevertheless, the analysis placed in Appendix A contains the author's own ideas, and so do the graphs, which should be counted and thus enlarge the number of text pages.

On the whole, the work can hardly be considered a good piece of academic writing, but in my opinion, it can still be considered an acceptable one. The suggested evaluation: “dobře”.

Supervisor/Reviewer: PhDr. J. Petrlíková, Ph.D.



Date: July 18 2013

Signature: