

## Undergraduate Thesis Assessment Rubric

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

Thesis Author: *Galina Kratochvílová*

Title: Tense Simplification as a New Trend in International English or a Lack of Education of Lower Classes

Length: 48

Text Length: 66

| <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 examined issue. It presents and overview of the thesis.   | Outstanding<br><b>Very good</b><br>Acceptable<br>Somewhat deficient<br>Very deficient | This is the only part of the thesis that is more or less APA style. It would be good if you clearly indicated you disagree with David Crystal's vision of Global English for a more conservative one, where correct usage "is the prerogative of the native speakers whose perception of their knowledge of the language is close to absolute."   |
| 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<br>Very good<br><b>Acceptable</b><br>Somewhat deficient<br>Very deficient | The author seems quite knowledgeable about the theory involved only it is unclear if the many explanations and examples are of her own creation or influenced by some other author. After the introduction, references seems to fall away.  |
| 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<br>Very good<br>Acceptable<br><b>Somewhat deficient</b><br>Very deficient | I am quite confused as to what the author wants to say. The titled indicates a sort of schizophrenic attitude to the subject. I am still unclear about her attitudes to "lower class" prejudices indicated by tense simplification. Adding this sociolinguistic aspect to a thesis which otherwise seems to focus on issues of descriptive grammar seems odd. Again, there is very little secondary research in the diploma work. |
| 4. The thesis displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.  | Outstanding<br>Very good<br><b>Acceptable</b><br>Somewhat deficient<br>Very deficient | The author has worked very hard with her research, but there is little reference to any academic authorities.   |
| 5. Conclusion effectively restates the argument. It summarizes the main findings and follows logically from the analysis presented.  | Outstanding<br>Very good<br><b>Acceptable</b><br>Somewhat deficient<br>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<br>Very good<br><b>Acceptable</b><br>Somewhat deficient<br>Very deficient | The author writes well, but elaborate prose often seems to obfuscate her points rather than clarify them.  |
| 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<br><b>Very good</b><br>Acceptable<br>Somewhat deficient<br>Very deficient |  |
| 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<br>Very good<br>Acceptable<br><b>Somewhat deficient</b><br>Very deficient | The diploma work does not meet APA format. References seem to be almost completely lacking. It is impossible to know where the author's ideas begin and end. |

#### Final Comments & Questions

The author has done an impressive amount of research, but it is presented with little academic or authorial context. APA format is largely ignored. The author seems to cling to conservative notions about prescriptive grammar while at the same time framing her argument in the worldview of David Crystal, the most famous descriptivist in the English speaking world. It would be helpful if the author would announce in the introduction that she disagrees with Crystal's vision of "New Englishes," most of which would certainly incorporate tense simplification into their dialects as much as the Czechs do. By adding the reminder that tense simplification is a "low" class marker, you seem to be saying that native speakers practice a tense hypocrisy in which they judge other native speakers harshly for tense simplification while commonly committing the crime of tense simplification themselves. The teachers do not judge nonnative speakers negatively because it does not obscure clarity and because non-natives exist in a culture largely free of the class markers present in England and even America. Crystal would say this is evidence that tense simplification would probably be a good thing and that we should certainly avoid bringing our native prejudices to the international scene. Yet the author seems to argue that we should continue with this highly complex system of class markers in the Global setting. Why exactly? To validate the English language mastery that only a few nonnative speakers can achieve (and thereby perpetuate the native class divisions)? I ask the question because the author has not provided a critical framework of prescriptivists that I am sure could help the author articulate her position.

Suggest mark 3

Supervisor/Reviewer:  Brad Vice, Ph.D.

Date: 12.05.2014

