

**Undergraduate Thesis Assessment Rubric**  
**Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia**

Thesis Author: **Martina Řepíková**  
 Title: *Encyclopaedia – compendium of human knowledge*  
 Length: 41 pages  
 Text Length: 34 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 examined issue. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good <b>Acceptable</b> Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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 <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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 <b>Acceptable</b> Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
4. The thesis displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.	Outstanding <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
5. Conclusion effectively restates the argument. It summarizes the main findings and follows logically from the analysis presented.	Outstanding Very good <b>Acceptable</b> 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 author uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
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 <b>Very good</b> Acceptable Somewhat deficient 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 Very good Acceptable <b>Somewhat deficient</b> Very deficient	

There is no denying that this bachelor thesis displays a considerable degree of originality. First of all, the Acknowledgements indicate that once the topic had been approved by the official supervisor named in the Abstract, the work was actually supervised by someone else outside the English Department. Secondly, the author states in her Introduction that she will examine why lexicography has become the poor relation in linguistics but, alas, in what follows, this potentially interesting hypothesis seems to have been forgotten about since the word "lexicography" never appears again in the entire main text. Thirdly, there is some discrepancy between the theoretical background, with its emphasis on the early development of encyclopaedias – specifically those by Chambers and Diderot, and the practical part, which is concerned with how school pupils and students use online encyclopaedias, in particular the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *Wikipedia*. True, mention is made in the theoretical part of electronic sources but relatively speaking, in the context of the whole, one might suggest that too little attention is paid to this area. On the positive side, the author deserves much praise for having managed to obtain so many responses to her questionnaire, as well as for the way she maintains a very good level of language throughout the work.

The list of references suggests the background has been well researched; however, there are problems with certain items:

- O'Connor (1910) and Tomeš (2008) are listed but not referred to in the main text. (Incidentally, in the case of the former, problems with capitalisation extend all the way through the reference.)
- Only one Schwab (1969) reference is listed, though the citation on p. 14 has two from the same year (Schwab, 1969a, p. 240-45, Schwab, 1969b, p. 370-438).
- In the case of Winters, Stanley B. (2002), the same title is listed twice.

Nor are in-text citations always as conscientiously formatted as they should be. For instance, the passage below is unreferenced in the main text:

The Greeks wanted to record the spoken word, but on the other hand, the Romans were looking to epitomize the existing knowledge in a readable form. The most important and influential Roman contribution was a work of Pliny, the Elder, called *Historia Naturalis* [...] it served as major source for other encyclopaedias for the next 1500 years. Even today it continues to be an important record of Roman sculptures and paintings.

However, there does appear to be rather more than just a passing resemblance between this and the following extract from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/encyclopaedia/History-of-encyclopaedias>:

The Greek approach was to record the spoken word. The Romans, on the other hand, aimed to epitomize existing knowledge in readable form [...] The most important Roman contribution was the *Historia naturalis* of Pliny the Elder [...] the *Historia naturalis* served as a major source for other encyclopaedias for at least the next 1,500 years. Even today it is still an important record for details of Roman sculpture and painting.

This is not to accuse the author of deliberate plagiarism, but rather to justify the rating for item 8 in the table overleaf.

The following two specific issues could perhaps be clarified at the defence:

1. On p. 9 we are told: *The authors of this paper however tried to deal with possible objections and also to provide explanations of logical and systematic relations between different fields of knowledge.* It is not immediately obvious from the context which particular paper is being referred to here or who its authors are.
2. With respect to her survey, the author says on p. 2: *From the point of view of developmental psychology, the differences between boys and girls will be also very interesting.* But then this aspect of the investigation is not referred to at all in the Discussion section. So are readers expected to study the numbers themselves and draw their own conclusions ... or did any differences ultimately prove to be of rather less interest than the author had originally anticipated?

Recommended grade: **velmi dobře**

Reviewer: Andrew Tollet

Date: 3rd September 2018

Signature:

