

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

Thesis Author: **Pavlna Sluková Křištofová**
 Title: *Cricket and the Commonwealth: England and India Compared*
 Length: 51 pages
 Text Length: 30 pages

Assessment Criteria	Scale	Comments
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	
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	
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	
4. The thesis displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.	Outstanding Very good 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 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 author uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good 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 Very good 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 Somewhat deficient Very deficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a problem with the page numbering as the list of contents is out of sync with the main body of the text – which in any case should start from “1” and not “9” (or “10”). - Each chapter should start on a new page.

This bachelor thesis investigates a most interesting topic and, by a neat coincidence, the current report is being finalised shortly after the England cricket team has secured victory on home soil in a series of test matches against India, having taken a 3-1 lead with just one match to play. Inevitably the repercussions of this defeat are the subject of much analysis in the Indian media, which is further evidence of just how much the game means to Indians.

The primary focus of the work is cultural, one aspect of which is the question of identity. In the early pages of the work, the author refers repeatedly to *British* and *Britishness*, which misses the subtle distinction between *British[ness]* and *English[ness]*. That said, it would be unfair to criticise the author for this since the terms are often conflated by native English people themselves, though, significantly, this is less likely to occur in Scotland or Wales. It is one of the quirks of the UK that it is represented by one team at the Olympic Games but breaks up into its constituent parts for soccer and rugby. Cricket then further confuses the issue since England is the only country in the union to play cricket at the highest international level; however, down the years the England team has been captained by players of both Welsh and Scottish origin.

The research is well founded, using a rich variety of sources. As regards the practical part, the author herself admits that too few questionnaire responses were obtained for any definitive conclusions to be drawn. Nevertheless, there are some useful pointers towards what might be worth further research. It is noteworthy that only 3% of respondents considered cricket a symbol of Britishness; one can only speculate as to what difference using *Englishness* in the question would have made to the answers. Maybe not much: after all, it was the *British* Empire, not the *English*, which once ruled such large sections of the world and there is no way of knowing the extent to which non-UK citizens would differentiate between the two terms.

Nor is the cultural element confined to national identity. For English people, cricket has always been associated with a sense of fair play so that, historically at least, the result of a match was generally less important than adherence to not only the laws of the game but also a certain unwritten code of norms and civilised behaviour on the field. The author mentions this aspect on pp. 17-18, though the incident she refers to involving Australia and South Africa was a flagrant case of ball-tampering, which is explicitly forbidden by the laws, so the moral aspect does not play such a significant role here.

For the English, cricket was traditionally a gentleman's game – even to the extent that until 1962 English county cricketers were divided into “gentlemen” (amateurs) and “players” (professionals). Despite being members of one and the same team, the two groups would use different changing rooms, eat separately during meal breaks and even have different formats for their names on the scorecard. Much has changed in the past 56 years, with English cricket becoming more professional in all senses of the word. Some would argue that, for better or worse, the original spirit of the game has long since been lost, so that anyone looking for typical symbols of Britishness in today's cricket might be hard pushed to identify them.

Another interesting point to emerge from the author's survey is the respondents' attitude to Twenty20 cricket: 65% stated this was their favourite form of the game. Again, this reflects the drastic changes cricket has undergone in recent years in efforts to reach a wider audience: the crash-bang-wallop of T20 is a far cry from the traditional five-day test, which for many middle-aged and older observers remains the pinnacle of the sport. As regards the abomination of 100-ball cricket, mentioned by the author on p. 13, the less said the better. It is worth noting that, in a recent online interview (published after the bachelor thesis under review had been submitted), Indian captain Virat Kohli has expressed serious doubts about the entire concept. Alas, it seems that modern cricket, just like so many other aspects of our lives, is becoming far too commercialised.

Recommended grade: **v ý b o r n ě**

Supervisor: Andrew Tollet

Date: 3rd September 2018

Signature:

