



REVIEW of MA diploma thesis

Author of the work: Bc. Jitka Křivohlavá

Name of work: Impoliteness as a Means of Comedy in the TV Series *The Nanny*

Supervisor: Mgr. Markéta Janebová, Ph.D.

Opponent: Mgr. Michaela Čakányová

Author of this review: Mgr. Michaela Čakányová

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Points /results (for each section & proposed classification)

<i>excellent</i>	5	A
<i>very good</i>	4	B
<i>good</i>	3	C

<i>acceptable</i>	2	D
<i>weak/sufficient</i>	1	E
<i>insufficient</i>	0	F

In the following paragraphs fill in the numeric value. You can also add a short NOTE (comment) - alternatively you write concluding remarks to the summary in the end.

	Points
<p>1. <i>Originality and new contribution to the field, up-to-date presentation of the problem.</i> The topic of the thesis is quite original as it focuses on the impoliteness with comical effect in the given TV series as opposed to real world. Though there are other works that focus on impoliteness on TV, there is not one that would focus on this particular TV series. Since the theory of impoliteness is the matter of the last couple of decades it is an up-to-date topic, however, the TV series <i>The Nanny</i> and its language is almost a quarter a century old and though it is still being aired (because, yes, it is hilarious) the author could have picked something more current.</p>	4
<p>2. <i>Awareness of treatments in the field (literature).</i> The author critically judges the previous research done in the field and chooses what she thinks is the most relevant theoretical approach. The author shows sufficient knowledge of the up to date theoretical literature.</p>	5
<p>3. <i>Clarity of the topic, research question(s), hypotheses</i> The topic of the thesis is how impoliteness is used for comical effect in the selected TV series. The author makes this clear from the very introduction, and the research question is being dealt with gradually after introducing enough theory. The hypotheses that the impoliteness phenomena introduced in the thesis are to be found in the TV series more often than in the real-world is not sufficiently addresses and it is not even mentioned in the conclusion.</p>	4
<p>4. <i>Methodology.</i> The thesis has two major parts, theoretical and practical. The first part is written as a critical summary of previous theories. The practical part works with the transcribed (by the author) examples from a random sample of episodes of the TV series and the author applies the theory on them. The outcome brings some interesting assumptions, even though it is not really clear, to what extend they are absolute and conclusive. The method of selection of the examples is not described enough. As such, it is not really possible to draw any definite conclusions nor compare the situation in this sitcom with the research results from the real world.</p>	3
<p>5. <i>Argumentation, discussion, interpretation of the results, summary.</i> The first part of the thesis is very well written with logical structure and critical approach from the author. The second, practical part is supposed to be the key part of the whole thesis, yet it is considerably shorter than the first part. As a result, there is not sufficient material for the author to draw any substantial</p>	3

conclusions. All the examples that are presented are analysed well and in detail. One of the hypotheses introduced by the author (the difference between real-life and TV series usage of sarcasm and banter) is not interpreted or addressed in any way.	
6. <i>Formal aspects of the work: format, graphics, bibliography formatting.</i> The thesis is very well structured with all formally required parts.	5
7. English (language correctness, style) There are some minor mistakes like: missing articles, extra words left after editing, commas in wrong places, several typos throughout the text. These, however, do not prevent the reader from understanding the intended meaning (except for p. 55 “disregards” is used instead of regards; p.56 sentence beginning on line 2 does not have a predicate). On page 63 there is the same eleven-line long chunk of text that appears again on page 72. I will presume that the author forgot to delete one of the two. The style of the paper is coherent, divided into logical portions of text corresponding to individual ideas.	4
8. <i>For the supervisor (if not applicable, write " Not applicable ")</i> NOT APPLICABLE	NA

Summary: Overall evaluation, other comments:

(5-15 lines for BA, 10-30 lines for MA thesis)

The thesis is overall well and coherently written with the sufficient amount of literature presented, discussed and evaluated. Regarding its form and language, there are several mistakes that do not influence the message of the text significantly. Formatting is done very well.

Regarding the content, there are two drawbacks; the first, minor one, is the age of the selected TV series which consequently presents a rather dated language. The second, more serious one, is the methodology the author uses for acquiring the sample examples. The data was chosen randomly as the author says in the introduction, but I am not sure what was the overall scope of the analysed episodes. In other words, it is difficult to judge the ratio of the usage of the above-mentioned phenomena and there is a danger that the results were the fruits of a “cherry picking” method.

It is also a pity that the author did not include any comparison of the real-world impoliteness (especially banter) with the fictitious one since she already introduced this topic.

The analysis of the presented examples, however, is done skilfully and in detail and it leads to logical conclusions that the author correctly draws. I believe that if the author had more time for writing this thesis the result could have been even better.

Topics / Questions for the defence:

1. You say that there are almost no examples of banter in the TV series *The Nanny* and the reason is probably the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Could there be any other factor influencing the use of banter? Or who are the typical users of banter according to your research?
2. Why did you choose this particular TV series? Were you aware of the FCC before you started analysing the examples of impolite means of comedy?
3. Example 11 on p. 41 – is it really sarcasm? Is Niles’s comment polite on the surface? According to your definition of sarcasm: it is “communicating meaning in a form that overtly sounds polite, but the covert meaning is a negative (impolite) one”.

(2-4 specific questions which should be answered at the defence)

I recommend the work for the defence **YES**

Proposed classification:¹ **C**

Date: 8.1.2018

Name (and signature): Michaela Čakányová

¹ The itemized number evaluations above do **NOT** provide automatically the final evaluation - some weaknesses are more crucial than others and some cannot be compensated at all. The proposed classification is therefore independent on these statistics. It is the complex evaluation of the presented written work and it can be still modified during the defence to become the result of the defence.