

Abstract

Pervasive in spontaneous informal conversation, general extenders (GEs) are vague multiword expressions (e.g. *or something (like that)*, *and stuff (like that)* vs. *nebo něco (takovýho)*, *a tak(ový věci)*) that have been shown to fulfil a number of communicative functions, ranging from propositional to expressive. But while the English extenders have received a lot of meticulous attention in nearly four decades of research, the corresponding Czech constructions remain largely overlooked (perhaps with the exception of Tárnyiková 2009 and Novotný & Malá 2018). The current study aims to (1) present a wide range of English and Czech GE forms (collected using the method of collocational frames (Aijmer 2015) and then categorised according to structural similarities, thus suggesting possible GE patterns); and (2) examine their communicative functions in contemporary English and Czech as represented in comparable corpora of informal spoken discourse (*Spoken BNC2014* and *ORAL2013*, respectively).

Relying extensively on functional frameworks introduced in previous research (e.g. Overstreet 1999, 2014), this study confirms what has been known about English GEs and investigates the degree of applicability to the respective Czech constructions. A close qualitative analysis of some of the collected GE forms (in total, 188 and 132 types of forms were extracted for English and Czech, respectively) revealed that both English and Czech GEs share a similar functional potential, regardless of whether the communicative function is objective, subjective or intersubjective. Regarding the differences, Czech GEs cannot express the agreement-soliciting function typical of *or what* located at the end of an evaluative question. Furthermore, while English speakers express evaluation with both modifiers and expressive nouns incorporated into the GEs, Czech seems to rely only on the latter. Finally, the English formulaic disclaimers used as a non-imposition politeness strategy do not seem to have a productive counterpart in Czech.

Key words: general extenders, vague language, collocational frames, (inter)subjective meaning, spontaneous informal dialogue.