

## **Abstract**

The BA thesis deals with the interpretation of the particle *náhodou* in polar interrogative clauses in Czech. These are viewed from the perspective of semantics and pragmatics, where modality, in particular epistemic and evidential bias, appears to be crucial for the interpretation of the particle. *Náhodou* acquires a specific status, as its distribution is limited to negative interrogative clauses that presuppose a positive epistemic bias.

Since negative interrogative clauses in Czech can express offers or requests, the question arises as to whether there is a possibility of using the particle *náhodou* in them. In the corpus, *náhodou* occurs exclusively in indirect requests and offers accompanied by modal means; for direct requests and offers, it can be inferred that the use of *náhodou* will be perceived as less natural, since it is not accompanied by any modal means and negation acquires a different status than in epistemic interrogative clauses.

To test the hypotheses, an acceptability judgement task experiment was conducted. The results showed that the particle *náhodou* is perceived as less natural; however, only in direct polar interrogative clauses. Moreover, for both direct and indirect polar interrogative clauses, an unpredicted interaction between the grammatical aspect of the verb and the epistemic and non-epistemic readings arose. The results thus provided insight not only into the use and interpretation of the particle but also into the differentiation of directive speech acts according to the grammatical aspect of the verb.

**Keywords:** interrogative clauses, polar interrogative clauses, speech acts, directive speech acts, particles, *náhodou*, politeness