ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to compare and contrast the use of hyperbole or exaggeration in spoken Czech and English language. The research is based on comparative approach to two samples accounting for 100 hyperbolic instances in Czech and 100 instances of hyperbole in English. The Czech sample has been randomly excerpted from the oral part of the Czech National Corpus ORAL2008, whereas the English sample has been randomly excerpted from the “spoken context-govern” and “spoken demographic” sections of The British National Corpus. The two samples are subject to analysis. Firstly, the formal realization of hyperbole is examined. Secondly, the occurrences are classified semantically (quantitative versus qualitative hyperbole) and, thirdly, the lexico-semantics is examined (hyperbolic source domains). By this, the present study tests the hypothesis of universal hyperbolic source domains by examining the situation in Czech and English. Finally, the occurrence of conventionalized instances of hyperbole as opposed to creative instances of hyperbolic nonce-usages is examined. Last but not least, it is the aim of this study to provide the overall frequency figures of hyperbole in both languages.