

KDY?

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KDE?

Filozofická fakulta OU

Reální 5

Místnost E 305

Přednášku na téma

**SUSPICIOUS MINDS:
GENERICITY WITH EPISTEMIC
EFFECTS**

prosloví

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Anotace:

This talk concerns generalizations that are expressed by characterizing generic sentences (in the sense of Krifka et al. 1995). Specifically, it explores the contribution of different verb forms to their interpretation. The main empirical focus is on the expression of characterizing genericity in Czech (West Slavic). Just as other languages with grammatical aspect, imperfective forms are here often used to convey characterizing generic statements in interaction with context, but perfective forms are also common for this purpose. Most importantly, characterizing generic statements can also be expressed by specifically generic forms which are marked with the verbal suffix *-va-* (its standard citation form): e.g., *psávat* 'to write as a rule, often, usually ...', *zapisovávat* 'to write down as a rule, often, usually ...'.

The expression of characterizing generic statements by means of specifically generic forms, besides formally unmarked ones, is not uncommon across languages (e.g. Swahili, Arabic, see Dahl 1985, 1995). One question that this raises is: How do we motivate the use of formally marked generic forms to express characterizing generics, when they can also be expressed by related forms that are unmarked for genericity? For Czech, as I propose, the answer must include the speaker's stance on exceptions to the generically-predicated property. Here, formally marked generic verbs signal that the speaker's epistemic state is incompatible with categorical absence of exceptions or non-confirming cases to the expressed generalization. Specifically, either (i) the speaker is uncertain or genuinely ignorant about the facts that ground the generalization, and wishes to avoid the possible implication of commitment to no exceptions whatsoever (and hence to false or misleading claims) which would be sanctioned by corresponding unmarked generic forms, or (ii) the speaker is certain that there are exceptions or nonconfirming cases to the expressed generalization; here a special subcase involves the speaker's knowledge of known positive counterinstances (i.e., positive concrete alternatives to a given generic property, such as hardbacks to paperbacks).

POŘADATELÉ



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