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The Use of the Modal Verb Can in Newspaper Reporting

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Studentka se ve své bakalářské práci zaměří na užití a významy anglického modálního slovesa CAN. Nejprve na základě studia relevantní odborné literatury z oblasti lingvistiky popíše sémantiku slovesa CAN, dále uvede faktory a kritéria, na jejichž základě lze jednotlivé významy (neepistemické i epistemické) odlišit. Následně studentka provede analýzu vybraných novinových článků s cílem zmapovat užití a výskyt jednotlivých významů CAN. Analýza se bude soustředit na kontextové faktory, jejichž funkcí je signalizovat pravděpodobnou interpretaci jednotlivých výskytů zkoumaného modálního slovesa. Na závěr autorka objasní výskyt, užití a interpretace významu CAN v diskursu novinových článků.

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Abstract

This paper deals with the use of the modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting. Theoretical part describes concept of modality and particularly deals with the modal verb *can* and its meanings. It focuses on characteristics and rules linked with these meanings. The analysis examines and describes frequency of individual meanings and properties related to these meanings and also comments on individual kinds of modality linked with these meanings.

Key words

Modality, epistemic modality, deontic modality, modal verb *can*, newspaper reporting

Souhrn

Tato práce se zaměřuje na použití modálního slovesa *can* v novinových zprávách. Teoretická část popisuje concept modality a zabývá se konkrétně modálním slovesem *can* a jeho významy. Zaměřuje se na charakteristiku a pravidla spojená s těmito významy. Analýza zkoumá a popisuje četnost konkrétních významů modálního slovesa *can* a vlastností spojených s těmito významy a také komentuje jednotlivé druhy modality, které s těmito významy souvisí.

Klíčová slova

Modalita, jistotní modalita, dispoziční modalita, modální cloveco *can*, novinové zprávy

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	8
2. Modality.....	9
2.1. Kinds of modality.....	10
2.1.1. Epistemic modality.....	11
2.1.2. Deontic Modality.....	13
3. The modal verb <i>can</i>.....	15
3.1. Meanings of the modal verb <i>can</i>	17
3.1.1. <i>Can</i> : possibility.....	18
3.1.2. <i>Can</i> : ability.....	21
3.1.3. <i>Can</i> : permission.....	24
4. Analysis.....	27
4.1. Newspaper reporting.....	28
4.2. Modal verb <i>can</i> in newspaper reporting.....	30
4.2.1. Possibility meaning of the modal verb <i>can</i>	32
4.2.2. Ability meaning of the modal verb <i>can</i>	37
4.2.3. Permission meaning of the modal verb <i>can</i>	40
4.2.4. Undecidable occurrences.....	42
4.3. Summary of results.....	43
5. Conclusion.....	47
6. Resumé.....	49
7. Bibliography.....	53
8. Appendix.....	55

1. Introduction

This paper is dedicated to the study of the modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting. Its aim is to introduce modality and particularly the modal verb *can* and its meanings and state which particular meaning occurs most frequently in the discourse of newspaper reporting. The paper is also aimed at demonstrating that the modal verb *can* is frequently used in newspaper reporting and has some tendencies which are linked with the British news discourse.

The paper consists of two parts, a theoretical part and an analysis.

The main focus of the theoretical part is on epistemic and deontic kinds of modality and the modal verb *can* and its meanings. Therefore, the theoretical part is divided into two main chapters and several subchapters. The first chapter deals with modality and its kinds. The second main chapter, dealing with meanings of the modal verb *can*, was further divided into three subchapters according to individual meanings of the modal verb *can*, namely possibility, ability, and permission. These subchapters concentrate on characteristics and rules related to individual meanings of *can* and examples illustrating these rules. The theoretical background is based on books by Quirk (1985), Leech (1969), Palmer (1974), Coates (1983), Huddleston (2002), Biber (1999), and Tárnyiková (1985).

The findings mentioned in the theoretical part are further applied in the analytical part. Firstly, description of newspaper reporting with comments on its characteristics is mentioned in the analytical part. Furthermore, occurrences of the modal verb *can* are examined and commented on relating to their meaning and kind of modality. The occurrence of the modal verb *can* in approximately 60 newspaper reports is further analysed to give reliable data. The purpose of the analysis is to map the frequency of individual types of meanings of the modal verb *can* in English newspaper reports with comments on their properties in particular examples, and reveal possible links between newspaper reporting and the occurrence of the modal verb *can*.

Individual meanings, their frequency and characteristics linked with them are dealt with in relevant subchapters of the analytical part of this paper. The final chapter of the analytical part summarizes the results with comments on them.

The appendix provides a complete list of all occurrences selected from newspaper reports used for the analysis.

2. Modality

As the term modality is considered to be very important for this paper, it will be examined at first. Consequently, some terms related to modality will be explained.

In order to study the term modality thoroughly, two definitions by different grammarians will be mentioned and consequently compared.

Modality is centrally concerned with the speaker's attitude towards the factuality or actualisation of the situation expressed by the rest of the clause. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 173) Huddleston gives two examples which represent the term 'modality':

He wrote it himself.

He must have written it himself.

When we look back at the first statement, it is regarded as unmodalised because in normal use the speaker is committed, without qualification or special emphasis, to the factuality of the proposition expressed. By contrast, the second statement is modalised. The truth of the proposition is not presented as something that is directly known but as something that is inferred. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 173)

According to Quirk, at its most general, modality may be defined as the manner in which the meaning of a clause is qualified so as to reflect the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition it expresses being true. (Quirk, 1985: 219)

Comparing the two definitions, they express the same idea by different words. The definitions imply that modality refers to the way in which a text can express attitudes towards a situation. This characteristic of modality is what makes it different from a sentence expressing a directly known proposition.

To sum up, modality is a linguistic phenomenon, which allows one to make a judgement about situations that need not be real. To understand the phenomenon thoroughly, certain auxiliary verbs which express modality need to be studied. Therefore, modal auxiliaries, especially the modal verb *can*, and some other aspects concerning modality will be examined later in this paper.

2.1. Kinds of modality

To comprehend modality, major categories should be introduced at first. There are two main types of modality that can be distinguished in the modal system of English language. The two types are referred to differently by certain linguists. Some terms will be mentioned and compared to illustrate the difference between them and the most common terms will be selected and consequently commented on.

'Epistemic' and 'deontic' modality are the terms most frequently mentioned by English grammarians, namely Huddleston and Pullum, Lyons or Palmer. These two kinds of modality are occasionally referred to as 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic', e.g. by Quirk, where the term 'extrinsic' corresponds with the term 'epistemic' and the term 'intrinsic' corresponds with the term 'deontic'.

Jennifer Coates divides modality into 'epistemic' and 'non-epistemic' modality and uses the term 'root' modality standing for 'deontic'. (Coates, 1983: 20)

Basically, there are no or only slight differences between what the terms mean. The characteristics and descriptions of these two kinds of modality are often identical or very similar.

As Tárnyiková (1985: 10) claims, some linguist divide modality into three kinds, where one modality often corresponds to epistemic/deontic modality and both remaining kinds of modality represent the other kind of modality (epistemic/deontic). Some linguists also mention the opposite of a particular kind of modality, such as epistemic – non-epistemic, or root – epistemic. (Tárnyiková, 1985: 10)

Nevertheless, the idea remains the same. Therefore, the kinds of modality will be referred to as epistemic and deontic for it is the most frequent and familiar way of naming them and other terms will not be taken into account.

According to Dušková, the modal verb *can* is related to both epistemic and deontic modalities. (Dušková, 2006: 186) This suggestion will be taken into account as the aim of this paper is to examine the modal verb *can* and modalities it is linked with.

To illustrate the difference between epistemic and deontic modalities, the terms will be explained and examples given in the consequent sub-chapters. Furthermore, another kind of modality should be mentioned as it mainly concerns the modal verb *can*. This

kind of modality is called 'dynamic'. However, it is rather unknown kind of modality as it is omitted by majority of linguists who do not take this kind of modality into account at all and thus it will not be analysed in this paper.

2.1.1. Epistemic modality

Considering the epistemic modality, “it is the one which most clearly is relevant to normal language. It is concerned with the speaker’s assumption or assessment of possibilities and, in most cases, it indicates the speaker’s confidence (or lack of confidence) in the truth of the proposition expressed.” (Coates, 1983: 18)

Huddleston describes epistemic modality as the kind of modality which “involves qualifications concerning the speaker’s knowledge. The truth is presented as something I arrive at by inference or something I merely put forward as possibility.” (Huddleston, 2002: 178)

According to Quirk, the epistemic modality does not primarily involve human control of events, but does typically involve human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen. (Quirk, 1985: 219)

Not taking into account the fact that the ideas are expressed by different words, the three definitions are identical. To sum up the definitions, epistemic modality is related to assumptions or assessment of possibilities and expressing confidence/doubts.

To comprehend epistemic modality, some characteristics relating to it must be mentioned.

Jennifer Coates (1983: 19) claims that the negative form of the modal verb *can* represents epistemic modality when supplying the missing negative for *must*. (Coates, 1983: 19) Both verbs are marked as representing confidence.

Coates also mentions a grammatical feature which is associated with the epistemic modals. The feature is negation which affects the proposition and not the modality.

Paul can't be in Liverpool. (Coates, 1983: 20)

When we look at the above example by Coates and focus on its negation, the modality is not affected. Speaker expresses his reservations about asserting the truth of the

proposition. The example can be paraphrased as: *I'm sure/I confidently assume that Paul is not in Liverpool.*

Moreover, Tárnyiková (1985: 10) claims that epistemic modality relates to the proposition as a whole. On the contrary, deontic modality relates to a part of the proposition, especially to the verb.

She illustrates epistemic modality on the following example:

He can't be at home. (Tárnyiková, 1985: 12)

This example can be paraphrased as:

It is necessarily the case that he is not at home. / I am certain that he is not at home.

Thus, the modal verb can be separated from the proposition and moved it in front of the proposition as a paraphrase.

As for another characteristic of epistemic modality, Huddleston suggests that in its epistemic use *can* is restricted to non-affirmative contexts. (Huddleston, 2002: 180) This grammar rule is supported by Coates who claims that the modal verb *can* in its positive form is never epistemic. (Coates, 1983: 19) To illustrate this grammar rule, two examples were selected to represent it:

He can't have done it deliberately. (Huddleston, 2002: 180)

He cannot know it. (Dušková, 2006: 187)

The above mentioned definitions of epistemic modality and rules relating to it are clear. However, it might be helpful to give some more examples which represent epistemic modality and the definitions relating to it. Several examples were selected from Dušková:

He can't have done it deliberately. (Huddleston, 2002, p. 180)

He can't have been there yesterday. (Palmer, 1974, p. 103)

Paul can't be in Liverpool. (Coates, 1983, p. 20)

As the examples are all related to epistemic modality, these sentences express assumption or assessment of possibilities and indicate the speaker's confidence (or lack of confidence) in the truth of the proposition expressed. The above sentences also

represent the suggestion that modal verb *can* in its positive form is never epistemic. Thus, all examples are linked with the negative form of verbs.

To sum up, the characteristic related to epistemic modality that all sentences have in common is the fact that it indicates speaker's confidence, or lack of confidence, in the truth of the proposition. Moreover, epistemic modality is linked with the negative form of verb and relates to the proposition as a whole.

2.1.2. Deontic modality

To comprehend the term 'deontic modality', definitions by certain linguists will be examined and compared. Furthermore, some examples will be given to illustrate the mentioned definitions.

Huddleston's definition of deontic modality is consequent:

“‘Deontic’ is derived from the Greek for “binding”, so that here it is a matter of imposing obligation or prohibition, granting permission, and the like.” (Huddleston, 2002, 178) He gives consequent examples which represent the deontic modality:

You can attend the lectures. (Huddleston, 2002, p. 182)

We can borrow up to six books at a time. (Huddleston, 2002, p. 183)

Leech claims that “deontic modality is the ordinary, more basic type of modality denoting constraint and lack of constraint in situations (typically situations involving human behaviour) in our universe of experience.” (Leech, 2004, 84)

According to Palmer, deontic modality relates directly to the potentiality of the event signalled by the proposition. It is directive in that the event is controlled by circumstances external to the subject of the sentence. (Palmer, 2003, 7)

Palmer gives following examples of the deontic modality:

They may/can come in now.

They must come in now.

The definitions and examples are very similar in the way that these definitions all mention a control over an event. Nevertheless, there is one definition slightly different from other definitions. When focusing on Palmer's definition, he suggests that the control over an event is external to the subject while other definitions do not distinguish whether the control is external or internal to the subject. Palmer's basis for this claim is the fact that he distinguishes deontic and dynamic modality. Both deontic and dynamic modalities relate to the potentiality of the event signalled by the proposition, but with deontic modality, the event is controlled by circumstances external to the subject of the sentence. On the contrary, with dynamic modality, the control is internal to the subject. (Palmer, 2003, p. 7) He gives the following examples to illustrate these kinds of modality:

Deontic: *They may/can come in now.*

Dynamic: *They can run very fast.*

Even though dynamic modality is related to the modal verb *can*, Palmer is the only linguist who mentions it and examines this kind of modality thoroughly. Thus, it will not be taken into account when analysing newspaper reports and examining the modal verbs as the theoretical background based on grammar rules mentioned by one linguist only might not be considered relevant and thus will not be studied. Therefore, only epistemic and deontic kinds of modality will be distinguished in the analytical part of this paper and events controlled by circumstances external and internal to a subject will be both marked as deontic.

Some examples which represent deontic modality were selected for better comprehension:

He can speak English. (Quirk, 1972: 97)

You can smoke in here. (Leech, 1969: 203)

She can't keep a secret. (Dušková, 2006: 187)

As these examples illustrate deontic modality, they are all denoting constraint and lack of constraint in situations.

As for critical approaches to the deontic kind of modality, Jennifer Coates considers this term inappropriate, as "it refers to the logic of obligation and permission. Typical Root modals, such as MUST and MAY, cover a range of meanings, of which

‘Obligation’ and ‘Permission’ represent only the core.” (Coates, 1983: 21) However, Coates is the only linguist, of those whose books were used for this paper, who considers the term 'deontic' modality and its definition inappropriate. Thus, it will not be taken into account and the fact that many linguists call the modality 'deontic' and suggest clear and very similar definitions will be taken into account. The analysis of the modal verb *can* related to deontic modality will be based on theoretical background by Quirk (1985), Huddleston (2002), Leech (2004), Palmer (2003), Biber (1999), Dušková (2006), and Tárnyiková (1985).

In conclusion, the term 'deontic modality' basically relates to constraint and lack of constraint in situations. When examining the examples of deontic modality, it is visible that obligation, permission and other meanings are connected to it. The meanings connected to the modal verb *can* and the deontic modality will be examined later in the thesis.

3. The modal verb *can*

In this study, we shall be concerned only with the modal auxiliary *can*. Nevertheless, some formal characteristics that define all modal auxiliaries will be examined.

Firstly, a definition of modal auxiliaries must be mentioned to comprehend what these verbs represent.

“The modal auxiliaries are so called because of their contribution of meanings in the area known as modality (including such concepts as volition, probability, and obligation)” (Quirk, 1985: 120)

As suggested by Quirk, these verbs represent the area known as modality. For information concerning modality and examples illustrating this area, see chapter 2.

Secondly, all modal auxiliaries and their classification should be mentioned. Modal auxiliaries form a group of 9 verbs, particularly: *can*, *may*, *must*, *shall*, *will*, *ought*, *need*, *dare*, and *used to*, where the last verb mentioned in the list represents this group only marginally. (Dušková, 2006: 180)

Modal verbs are often found as a sub-group of auxiliary verbs. Nevertheless, some authors consider their semantic function, which distinguishes them from auxiliary verbs, and mark modal verbs as a hierarchically higher and independent category. (Tárnyiková, 1985: 14)

Thus, its classification can be different according to a linguist who examines it and his/her interpretation of this category. Similarly, the number of modal verbs included in the category can occasionally differ.

Lastly, to comprehend modal auxiliaries, some definitions and characteristics linked with these verbs must be mentioned.

According to Jennifer Coates, modal auxiliaries have the following characteristics: they take negation directly (can't), take inversion without DO (can I?), 'Code' (John can swim and so can Bill), emphasis (Ann COULD solve the problem), no -s form for third person singular (*cans), no non-finite forms (*to can), no co-occurrence (*may will).

Some of these properties draw a dividing line between auxiliaries and main verbs and help us distinguish between modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs.

Moreover, Dušková claims that modal verbs have a meaning. However, the meaning is not independent and cannot create a predication without a lexical verb. (Dušková, 2006: 182) The sense of modal auxiliaries thus rests on the modification of lexical meaning of a predication.

Considering the modal verb *can*, it is convenient to look at some of the specific uses. These individual uses will be examined in relevant chapters.

As Quirk claims, certain modals such as *can* and *will* are extremely common, whereas others, such as *shall*, *ought to* and *need* are relatively rare. (Quirk, 1985, 220) This claim indicates the fact that the use of modal verbs is a very problematic area in the English grammar.

He mentions another property of modal verbs which complicates the use of the modal verbs. According to him, the problem is consequent:

“Although historically, most of the modals can be paired into past and nonpast forms (can/could, may/might, will/would, shall/should), the 'past tense' forms are only in some

respects usefully classified as such from the point of view of meaning.” (Quirk, 1985, 220)

Supported by Quirk’s statements, grammar rules concerning these two forms are very complex. For this reason, only the modal verb *can* will be examined. Its preterit form *could* will not be analysed because the modal verb is rather complex and could not be explained and commented on properly due to length of this paper.

It might be also assumed that modal verbs belong among very problematic grammatical categories and that it might not be easy to clearly and intelligibly analyse them. For this reason, special attention will be paid on grammar rules concerning this category when studying them.

To sum up, this grammatical category is very complex. It is characterised by individual features, such as ‘no –s form for third person singular’, which help us define modal auxiliaries. Particularly, they contribute to the area called modality, which is a major part of this bachelor paper. The modal verb *can*, which is very important for this paper, will be examined thoroughly and its features and characteristics will be mentioned in relevant chapters of this thesis.

3.1. Meanings of the modal verb *can*

It is very difficult to classify meanings of the modal verb *can*, as the classification differs from grammarian to grammarian. Some meanings appear frequently and are mentioned by many grammarians whereas other meanings are mentioned by a few linguists only and are not taken into account by other linguists at all. For this reason, the most common and important division will be chosen for the consequent analysis of the newspaper reports. Majority of pieces of information important for this chapter are based on books by Quirk (1985), Leech (1969), Palmer (1974), Coates (1983), Huddleston (2002), and Biber (1999).

Considering the meanings of the modal verb *can*, these meanings might be considered the most frequent: possibility, permission and ability. These particular

meanings of *can* are examined by Leech (1969), Coates (1983), Tárnyiková (1985), and Quirk (1985).

Some of them examine the meanings more thoroughly and divide them into more categories, such as Leech. He divides the ability meaning into 'ability' and 'capability' (Leech, 1969: 203) However, the modal verb *can* will be analysed to find its possibility/ability/permission meaning as these are the most common meanings of *can*.

As for frequency of individual meanings, Leech claims that the 'Possibility' meaning of *can* is very common, the 'Ability' meaning is common and the 'Permission' meaning is less common. (Leech, 2004, p. 74)

To illustrate these three meanings and their use, the following triad by Coates can be given as an example:

I can do it = PERMISSION – human authority/rules and regulations allow me to do it

I can do it = POSSIBILITY – external circumstances allow me to do it

I can do it = ABILITY – inherent properties allow me to do it (Coates, 1983, p. 93)

To sum up, three meanings of the modal verb *can* are considered most frequent and common. The analysis will be based on these three meanings, namely possibility, ability, and permission. Each individual meaning has many properties which will be described in the following chapters and taken into account when analysing the modal verbs. The properties are considered very important as the analysis depends on the

3.1.1. CAN: possibility

As for the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can*, it will be examined first because it is suggested the most frequent meaning of the three (e.g. by Leech).

At first, some examples must be mentioned to comprehend this meaning of *can*. For better comprehension, paraphrases of individual sentences should be mentioned as in this sense, *can* is generally paraphrasable by 'it is possible' followed by an infinitive clause. Leech and Quirk give the consequent examples to illustrate this meaning:

Electricity can kill. ('It is possible for electricity to kill')

Can I be dreaming? ('Is it possible that I am dreaming?') (Leech, 1969: 203)

Even expert drivers can make mistakes. ('It is possible for even expert drivers to make mistakes.')

 (Quirk, 1985: 221)

Furthermore, some basic characteristics of this meaning must be mentioned to comprehend this sense of *can* thoroughly.

Leech mentions an important characteristic of this meaning, namely the passive voice, which frequently occurs with the possibility meaning. Coates adds that "it is when the speaker cannot presuppose the willingness of the subject to carry out the proposition that the passive is found, and the written texts in particular are marked by the association of passive voice with *can*." (Coates, 1983: 96) She gives consequent examples for better comprehension of this characteristic:

We believe that solutions can be found which will prove satisfactory. ('We believe that it is possible to find solutions which will prove satisfactory.')

 (Coates, 1983: 96)

The particle size can be varied by regulating the distribution. ('It is possible to vary the particle size by regulating the distribution.')

 (Coates, 1983: 96)

This rule is supported by Biber who claims that the use of *can* with passive avoids overt identification of the human agent of the main verb – the person who is able to carry out the reported action. As a result, the understood meaning is that the reported action or situation is logically possible. (Biber, 1999: 499)

As represented by the above examples of the passive voice, the human agent of the main verb is not mentioned and therefore cannot be identified.

Furthermore, Jennifer Coates claims that the possibility meaning is more neutral than the other two. Thus, there is no necessary association of this meaning with an agentive subject function, whereas both permission and ability meanings are associated with agentivity. Agentive subject function can be illustrated on the consequent sentence:

John flew through the air. (Lyons, 1968: 356) Lyons claims that John is an agent in case he is flying an aeroplane, for instance. On the other hand, he is not regarded as an agent in case he was thrown across a room by someone else. This implies that an agent is the participant who denotes the action.

Moreover, Coates adds that the possibility meaning is most simply described as the unmarked meaning with respect to the two gradients of restriction and inherency. (Coates, 1969: 93) Thus, it can be assumed that when there are no properties of subject indicating restriction or inherency, the possibility meaning might be appropriate. The gradients of restriction and inherency will be explained in the consequent chapters dealing with ability and permission meanings of the modal verb *can* as the gradients are closely related to these particular meanings.

As for another characteristic of the possibility meaning, Coates (1983) claims that this sense of *can* is closely linked with external circumstances. The enabling or disabling external circumstances can be illustrated on the following example:

Can you pick your own trousers up?

No, I cannot pick them up. I've got this meeting at three thirty.

The above statement can be paraphrased as 'The meeting at three thirty makes it impossible', where the meeting is a disabling external circumstance.

Nevertheless, this meaning often occurs when there are no external circumstances specified at all, as in:

We believe that solutions can be found. No enabling external circumstances are specified in this sentence, which is explained by Coates who claims that this information is often omitted.

Considering the external circumstances, Jennifer Coates (1983: 96) states that negative forms are often linked with disabling circumstances and that these circumstances are often specified. On the other hand, the external circumstances in positive examples are often not specified. This suggestion is illustrated on the above examples.

Considering another characteristic of possibility meaning, Leech and Quirk suggest that this meaning is used especially in negatives. Therefore, *can* is often found with *cannot* or *can't*:

She can't be working at this hour! ('It is not possible, i.e. impossible,...')

Some other examples by Huddleston are given consequently to represent this suggestion:

He can't have done it deliberately. (Huddleston, 2002: 180)

He can't have read it. (Huddleston, 2002: 175) ('It is not possible that he read it.')

As regards another characteristic of the possibility meaning, *can* often has a habitual meaning which can be paraphrased by the use of the adverb *sometimes*:

Lightning can be very dangerous. ('Lightning is sometimes very dangerous.')

 (Leech, 2004: 74)

Leech also claims that the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can* occurs in declarative sentences (as represented by the above example) and that it occurs with an inanimate subject (as represented by the following examples). This implies that the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can* might occur most frequently with inanimate subject as both ability and permission meaning are linked with animate subject. (Leech, 2004, p. 74)

The consequent examples by Huddleston and Dušková were selected to illustrate the inanimate subject:

It can easily be shown that the argument is fallacious. (Huddleston, 2002: 184)

Can that remark have offended her? (Dušková, 2006: 187)

To conclude, the possibility meaning is considered the most frequent meaning of the modal verb *can* and relates to inanimate subject, passive voice, external circumstances, negatives and questions. On the other hand, it is not necessarily associated with agentivity and is not linked with gradients of restriction and inherency.

3.1.2. CAN: ability

Concerning the 'ability' meaning of the modal verb *can*, it will be examined as the second one as it is often suggested (e.g. by Leech) as the second most common meaning of the modal verb *can*. Firstly, some examples representing ability meaning must be given to illustrate this sense of *can*.

Our team can easily beat your team. ('Our team is capable of beating your team.')

He can speak six languages. ('He is capable of/knows how to speak six languages.')

I can speak English. ('I know how to speak English.')

The above examples were mentioned for better comprehension of this sense of *can*. Possible paraphrases of the examples were mentioned as it is often considered a useful tool of analysis when identifying this meaning. Nevertheless, some general characteristics and features linked with this meaning must be mentioned.

An important characteristic of the ability meaning of the modal verb *can* is mentioned by Jennifer Coates. The property related to the ability meaning is called the gradient of inherency. It is explained consequently and examples are mentioned to comprehend the gradient more clearly:

The gradient of inherency is restricted to inherent properties of the subject. Coates mentions the ability to sing and the learnt ability to type as inherent characteristics of the human subjects of the following sentences:

It is now getting quite difficult to find choirboys old enough to behave in church who can still sing treble. (Coates, 1969: 92)

I can only type very slowly as I am quite a beginner. (Coates, 1969: 92)

Furthermore, Tárnayková claims that the ability meaning can be expressed as mental power, physical power and skill or knowledge. The difference is evident in the following examples:

I can remember it.

I can carry heavy loads.

I can speak English. (Tárnayková, 1985: 23)

As for the above mentioned examples, first sentence represents mental power, second sentence represents physical power and the third example represents knowledge.

The ability meaning also has the consequent characteristics: subject is animate and has agentive function. The possibility of the action is determined by the inherent properties of the subject (this includes what the subject has learnt). As regards another property of the modal verb *can* expressing the ability meaning, the verb denotes action/activity. (Coates, 1983: 89)

I can walk far, mister Brook. I can walk all the way to the mine.

I can only type very slow as I am quite a beginner. (Coates, 1983: 89)

These examples represent all the above mentioned characteristics. The first example particularly represents the inherent property of the subject and the second example illustrates the learnt property of the subject.

Several examples by Palmer were selected to illustrate the properties of the ability meaning of the modal verb *can* and to support characteristics mentioned by Coates:

He can lift a hundredweight.

I can read Greek. (Palmer, 1974: 115) Palmer also suggests that the most familiar use of *can* expresses ability to perform an action.

Considering another characteristic of this meaning, Tárnyiková claims that the ability meaning is often linked with an activity which is accepted as positive/desirable such as: *I can swim. / I can play the piano.*

On the contrary, an activity, which is undesirable, is often interpreted as a possibility: *I can make mistakes.* (Tárnyiková, 1985: 26)

Furthermore, “*Can* in this sense is more or less synonymous with *be capable of*. When it refers to an acquired ability (as in *Can you speak Greek?*), *can* is also more or less equivalent to *know how to*.” (Leech, 2004, 74)

Leech’s suggestion is supported by Quirk as he also claims that the ability sense may be paraphrased by *be capable of* or *know how to*. (Quirk, 1985: 222)

Following examples were selected to illustrate the above mentioned paraphrases:

He can lift a hundredweight. (He is capable of lifting a hundredweight.)

I can read Greek. (I know how to read Greek.)

Moreover, Leech states that the ability meaning of the modal verb *can* is restricted to the active voice.

When we look back at the two paraphrased examples of the ability meaning, both sentences are written in active voice.

Tárnyiková adds that the passive voice prevents the subject from being the feisor and thus from demonstrating its ability. The following example represents the above mentioned rule:

I can be pushed too far. (Tárnyiková. 1985: 23)

Furthermore, Tarnyiková (1985) claims that the ability meaning is linked with human or animate subject, as in:

He can lift a hundredweight.

I can read Greek.

Nevertheless, Tarnyiková suggests that the ability meaning can be used with inanimate subject when representing figurative language. In this case, inanimate subject represents animate subject. Consequent example by Tarnyiková (1985: 24) was selected to illustrate this grammar rule:

It is wonderful what science can do. In this case, the term 'science' stands for 'scientists' who are animate.

This suggestion is supported by Coates, who claims that ability meaning can be linked with inanimate subject. Although the subject is inanimate, *can* can clearly refer to inherent properties of the subject. (Coates, 1983: 90) She illustrates the above mentioned grammar rule on the following sentence:

The plane has a built-in stereo tape recorder which can play for the whole four hours it will take to fly to Majorca.

To conclude the ability meaning, it is represented by the gradient of inherency, animate subject, agentive function of subject, verb which denotes action/activity, and paraphrase.

3.1.3. CAN: permission

To comprehend the permission meaning of the modal verb *can*, its characteristics and important properties have to be mentioned. Examples will be given to support the characteristics and to illustrate them. Firstly, some typical examples and paraphrases of these examples must be mentioned.

You can smoke in here. ('You are permitted to smoke in here.')

Can I open the window? ('Will you permit me to open the window?')

Can we call you Sue? (Will you permit us to call you Sue?')

Furthermore, some properties and characteristics of this meaning will be mentioned and illustrated on examples.

The permission meaning of the modal verb *can* is closely related to the gradient of restriction. Coates explains the gradient as “implying a universe of possible worlds, ranging from the most restricted (where human laws and rules are in force) to the least restricted (where everything is permitted except what is contrary to so-called natural laws).” (Coates, 1969: 88) She illustrates the gradient of restriction on the consequent examples:

You can start the revels now. (Personal authority)

Poppy can't drive her car because she hasn't got any insurance on it. (Law)

There are three answers they can give. (Rules and regulations) (Coates, 1969: 88)

She claims that the above mentioned sentences “all refer to clearly restricted worlds and would be paraphrased with *permit* or *allow*.” (Coates, 1969: 89) Thus, the above mentioned examples illustrate the permission meaning of the modal verb *can*.

Furthermore, the permission meaning of the modal verb *can* has the following characteristics: subject is animate, verb is agentive, and the utterance can be paraphrased with the words ‘permitted’ or ‘allowed’ (Coates, 1983: 87) She adds that most examples are concerned with the description of ‘rule and regulations’, as in:

There are various types of tests they give them. They give them a sentence and there are three answers they can give.

Poppy now can look at her little car which she can't drive because she hasn't got any insurance on it.

The above examples demonstrate the three above mentioned characteristics and also the fact that they are concerned with the description of ‘rule and regulations’.

Moreover, Quirk suggests the possibility to paraphrase this meaning of the modal verb *can*. It is possible to paraphrase *can* in the sense of permission by *be allowed to*:

Are we allowed to borrow these books from the library? (Quirk, 1985: 222)

He also claims that the modal verb *can* in its permission meaning is often combinable with the adverbial *tomorrow*. Thus, the example can be consequent: *Can we borrow these books from the library tomorrow?*

Furthermore, an important characteristic of this meaning is the animate subject. Several sentences were selected to represent this rule:

You can smoke in here. (You are permitted to smoke in here.)

Can I open the window? (Am I permitted to open the window?) (Leech, 1969: 203)

Moreover, the permission meaning can be expressed by a question as illustrated in the above example. Asking for permission is linked with 1st person singular, or plural, as in:

Can I sit with you? / Can we call you Sue? (Tárnyiková, 1985: 30)

To sum up, the modal verb *can* in its permission meaning can be identified by the gradient of restriction, animate subject, agentive verb, paraphrase or description of ‘rule and regulations’. Furthermore, it can be found in questions when asking for permission.

4. Analysis

The aim of the analytical part of this paper is to observe the use of the modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting. Particularly deontic and epistemic kinds of modality and three major meanings (the possibility meaning, the ability meaning, and the permission meaning) will be examined.

Particular attention is paid to quantitative aspect of the analysis. Its aim is to comment on the frequency of the modal verb *can*, frequencies of individual meanings and kinds of modality.

We suggest that the possibility meanings of the modal verb *can* prevails, as this meaning is generally considered the most frequent and can be linked with almost unlimited number of various contextual factors. On the contrary, the ability and permission meaning are often restricted do some contextual factors. These factors will be commented on in relevant subchapters dealing with individual meanings.

Besides general grammar rules, which are dealt with in the theoretical part of this paper and which can be applied to the individual meanings of the modal verb *can* irrespective of the discourse, some findings concerning the use of the modal verb *can* in particular texts, such as informal texts, are mentioned. Such findings in this paper are based mainly on corpus findings carried out by Biber.

The occurrences were linked with various contexts, i.e. affirmative and non-affirmative contexts, and questions. The modal verbs very frequently occurred in declarative sentences.

As for the occurrence of the modal verb *can*, 100 modal verbs were analysed. The analysis was carried out from selected articles from British tabloid newspapers The Sun, The News, Daily Mirror, The Mail, and Daily Mail. Each individual occurrence was examined and classified with regards to grammar rules mentioned in the theoretical part. The occurrences are dealt with in 4 different subchapters of this analytical part, namely 'possibility meaning of the modal verb *can*', 'ability meaning of the modal verb *can*', 'permission meaning of the modal verb *can*', and 'undecidable occurrences'.

The individual meanings are illustrated on examples. Each sentence where the modal verb *can* occurred is labelled with a number 1-45 according to newspaper report from which it was selected. It is further labelled with a letter (a, b, c) as there were often

found more than one modal verbs *can* within one newspaper report. Within the sentences, individual modal verbs are underlined. All sentences are included in the Appendix. All sentences mentioned in the analytical part of this paper are marked with a particular number and also labelled with a number, eventually with a number and a letter, according to newspaper report in which they occurred.

As regards tools of analysis used for demonstrating different meanings, that of paraphrase was often used. As it is usually possible to paraphrase an utterance by different words, the analysis also focused on this way of identifying various meanings. Furthermore, some important properties of the modal verb *can* relating to different meanings were examined and applied when analysing newspaper reports. All characteristics linked with individual meanings will be mentioned in relevant chapters and illustrated on examples.

Lastly, a table representing the meanings and kinds of modality according to their frequency will be created to illustrate the findings.

4.1. Newspaper reporting

The aim of the analysis is to examine the occurrence of the modal verb *can* in newspaper reports and analyse its meanings and kinds of modality this verb is linked with. To comprehend the language of British newspapers, major categories and the term 'newspaper reporting' must be mentioned and explained.

British readership generally distinguishes newspapers called tabloid from newspapers called broadsheet. However, a more detailed division can be found:

According to Reah, there are 3 kinds of newspapers: broadsheets (the Telegraph, the Times, the Guardian), middle range tabloids (the Express, the Daily Mail), and tabloids (the Sun, the Mirror) (Reah, 2003, p. 2)

To understand the categories thoroughly, its characteristics and basic descriptions cannot be omitted.

According to Crystal (2003), broadsheet language is similar to a formal written language, since it involves words of Latin origin.

On the contrary, Crystal (2003) claims that the vocabulary in tabloids comprises predominantly words of Anglo-Saxon origin hence it conveys a resemblance to spoken informal language.

Therefore, tabloid is considered more informal than broadsheet which is characterized by a high formality. Crystal (1969) compares tabloids to storytelling.

This implies that the two types of British newspapers address different audience and have different aims.

The former characterization of broadsheet and tabloid may serve to comprehend the major difference between them. It would be reasonable to focus only on the tabloid newspapers and characterize the term 'newspaper report' as this thesis deals with it.

The reason why British tabloid newspapers were selected for this paper is clear when examining the formal written language represented by broadsheets and the language of tabloids, which is less formal. It might be assumed that modal auxiliaries representing a speaker's attitude towards the factuality or actualisation of a situation might appear more frequently in the language of British tabloid newspapers, which is not as objective and less formal than the popular press.

Now, some definitions of newspaper reporting will be mentioned to provide an overview of this stylistic unit.

Newspaper reporting could be described as the most frequent unit of the publicistic style. It is informative and descriptive. It states facts, data and is authentic. (Knittlová, 1990, p. 86)

According to Reah, newspaper reports provide "information about recent events". (Reah, 2003, p. 4) He adds that editorials comment, speculate and give opinion. Some texts give very little factual material directly and thus the main part of the content is opinion and speculation. (Reah, 2003, p. 87)

Urbanová claims that the language of media not only informs but above all persuades the readers about the information. (Urbanová, 2002, p. 81)

When we examine the above characteristics of newspaper reporting, a newspaper report can be described as an informative and descriptive unit which is often linked with speculations and editorial's opinions.

When we look back at the Reah's definition of newspaper articles and take into account the fact that editorials comment, speculate and give opinion and some texts give very little factual material directly, it can be assumed that the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can* might appear very frequently.

Moreover, taking into account the fact that the aim of newspaper reports is to state facts about recent news, it might be assumed that deontic modality will occur more frequently than epistemic modality.

To sum up, this thesis is based on newspaper reports from British tabloid newspapers. This kind of newspapers is considered rather informal and is related to speculations, comments and an editorial's opinion. Newspaper reports generally deal with recent events, describe, and state facts. The definition of newspaper reports, particularly newspaper reports selected from British tabloid newspapers, and the definition of the modal verb *can* imply that the modal verb *can* might appear frequently in the discourse of the British tabloid newspapers.

This suggestion is supported by Biber et al. (1999) who claims that occurrence of *can* in different texts is very common.

4.2. Modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting

This chapter deals with the modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting. As already mentioned, the data corpus consisted of 45 newspaper reports containing 100 modal verbs *can*. 16 more newspaper reports where the modal verb *can* did not occur were examined. This implies that *can* occurred in 73.77% of selected articles.

So far, it was proved that the modal verb *can* occurs frequently in the discourse of British tabloid newspapers. However, individual meanings of these occurrences were examined and kinds of modality linked with individual occurrences were analysed. Firstly, kinds of modality relating to the modal verb *can* in the discourse of newspaper

reporting must be mentioned. Then, individual meanings which occurred in the analysed newspaper reports will be commented on.

Considering deontic and epistemic modality, each modal verb *can* was examined in relation to these two categories. Therefore, 100 modal verbs *can* were analysed from this point of view, 99% out of which were deontic and 1% was marked as epistemic.

The occurrence of epistemic modality is inconsiderable in comparison with the numerous occurrence of deontic modality. It may result from the fact that “*can* in its positive form is never epistemic”. (Coates, 1983, p. 19) Coates also claims that this modal verb in its negative form represents the missing negative form for *must*.

This grammar rule is supported by the fact that the majority of the examined modal verbs were in their positive forms and were deontic.

The epistemic modality was linked with the modal verb *can* in its negative form and expressed confidence:

1. *‘It can’t have been a random act because it would need to have been planned. The thieves obviously knew what they wanted.’ (25b)*

The modal verb *can* represents this kind of modality as it involves human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen. The example can be paraphrased as: *It is necessarily the case that it wasn’t a random act*. Thus, it represents a negative parallel to the modal verb *must* as its negative form is missing.

On the contrary, deontic kind of modality, which relates directly to the potentiality of the event signalled by the proposition, was predominantly used in British tabloid newspapers. This finding is supported by Leech (2004, p. 84) who claims that deontic modality is the ordinary, more basic type of modality.

Several examples were selected to illustrate deontic modality:

2. *The temperature in a car can rise to as much as 47c (116f) in less than an hour, he added. (1c)*
3. *When the dog’s breathing starts to settle it can be taken to a vet. (1d)*
4. *Fit, healthy boys will see off rivals and can potentially father hundreds of children, ensuring the survival of the family line. (8)*

To sum up, deontic modality was used very frequently in the discourse of British tabloid newspaper reports. On the contrary, epistemic modality was linked with 1 occurrence only and is thus considered less frequent and ordinary kind of modality. It might be due to the fact that the epistemic modal verb *can* can only express the possibility meaning as the ability and the permission meanings are always deontic. Therefore, the epistemic modality is restricted to one particular meaning only. Furthermore, epistemic *can* is restricted to the negative form of verb which could also contribute to its low frequency. On the contrary, deontic *can* is linked with all the possibility, the ability and the permission meanings and can be linked with both positive and negative forms of verbs.

Furthermore, meanings of individual occurrences were examined. Particular meanings, number of occurrences these meanings were linked with and characteristics related to them will be commented on in the following subchapters.

4.2.1. Possibility meaning of the modal verb *can*

As regards the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can*, it occurred in 63 cases out of 100. This implies that it was represented most frequently by the analysed occurrences. As it occurred in 63%, it is considered the most frequent and common meaning represented by the modal verb *can*. It was recognised due to several important characteristics which will be mentioned and illustrated on examples consequently.

In 62 out of 63 cases it was linked with deontic modality. Thus, as it occurred in 98.41%, it implies that deontic modality is more frequently linked with the possibility meaning in newspaper reports than the epistemic modality.

Difference between these two kinds of modality linked with possibility meaning is illustrated on following the examples:

5. *'It can't have been a random act because it would need to have been planned. The thieves obviously knew what they wanted.'* (25b) ('I am certain that it wasn't a random act.')

6. *The temperature in a car can rise to as much as 47c (116f) in less than an hour, he added. (1c)* ('It is possible for the temperature to rise.')

When we look at the above examples, particularly the first one representing epistemic modality and the second one representing deontic modality, it is evident that epistemic modality relates to the proposition as a whole. On the contrary, deontic modality relates to a part of the proposition, particularly the verb. To comprehend this grammar rule, the above sentences must be examined.

In the first example, modality is related to the proposition as a whole. Thus, the modal verb can be separated from the proposition and be moved in front of the proposition as a paraphrase: *It is necessarily the case that it wasn't a random act. / I am certain that it wasn't a random act.*

In the second example, the modal verb *can* is embedded in the proposition as a plot modification expressed by infinitive of the following verb (rise): *The temperature in a car can rise to as much as 47c.*

Furthermore, epistemic modality is represented by a verb in its negative form and deontic modality is represented by both positive and negative forms of verbs. Considering this grammar rule, epistemic possibility was represented by a negative form. Furthermore, 49 occurrences related to the deontic possibility were represented by a positive form and 13 occurrences representing deontic possibility were linked with a negative form. This implies that the epistemic possibility was only represented by a negative form and deontic possibility was represented by both positive and negative forms.

As link of the possibility meaning with two major kinds of modality were mentioned above, important characteristics relating to analysed modal verbs must be explained and illustrated on examples consequently.

As mentioned in the chapter 3.1.1. in the theoretical part, the possibility meaning of the modal verb *can* is often linked with an inanimate subject. This grammar rule is supported by the fact that it occurred very frequently in the analysed sentences

representing the possibility meaning. Majority of sentences representing possibility meaning were linked with inanimate subject.

Following examples were selected to illustrate the above mentioned finding:

7. *Animal lovers react with disbelief at the officer's apparent lack of common sense and seeming ignorance of the RSPCA's simple warning that 'a hot car can be a death trap for dogs'. (1a) ('It is possible for a hot car to be a death trap for dogs.')*
8. *The brain has many chemical reactions, one of which is the release of dopamine. This is associated with immediate sensual gratification, and can influence the prefrontal cortex. (21c) ('It is possible for this chemical reaction to influence the prefrontal cortex.')*

The inanimate subject is represented by 'a hot car' and 'this' which stands for 'a chemical reaction', particularly 'release of dopamine'. Inanimate subjects often represent commonness. Some linguists suggest that inanimate subjects with the verb in passive are found in more formal contexts. However, it was also used in the discourse of informal British newspapers where inanimate subject in combination with passive voice was used in 13.16% of cases. Remaining 86.84% occurrences were represented by inanimate subjects and active voice.

As for another contextual factor, the possibility meaning is often linked with a passive voice. This grammar rule is supported by the fact that a large proportion of the analysed modal verbs *can* in its possibility meaning were represented by a passive voice.

Following examples selected from the analysed newspaper reports represent the above mentioned suggestion:

9. *When the dog's breathing starts to settle it can be taken to a vet. (1d) ('it is possible for the dog to be taken to a vet' / 'it is possible to take the dog to a vet')*
10. *But the strategy to retain his services can safely be judged a failure as the chief constable announced his retirement earlier this year before standing down this week. (3) ('it is possible for the strategy to retain his services to be judged a failure')*
11. *Criminals freed early on licence can be sent back to jail if they reoffend, or breach the terms of their early release. (6) ('it is possible for criminals freed early on licence to be sent back to jail' / 'criminals freed early on licence are sometimes sent back to jail')*

This is often due to the fact that the passive voice supports the possibility interpretation of the modal verb *can* or “it is when the speaker cannot presuppose the willingness of the subject to carry out the proposition that the passive is found” (Coates, 1983: 96) as in sentence 10. Generally, active and passive verbs occur with a roughly equal frequency in the written material. Many analysed modal verbs were linked with a passive voice. Nevertheless, the analysed occurrences were more often represented by an active voice. This might be due to the fact that passive voice is more often found in formal texts.

Subject in a sentence where passive voice is found is in a sentence with active voice expressed as an object in its active equivalent. The object is often influenced, either directly or indirectly, by an action. Thus, to emphasize the influenced object, which is more important than the subject, as in sentence 11, passive voice can be used. The subject is often not known or is generally known.

Moreover, the possibility meaning of *can* is often linked with a negative form of the verb.

A positive form of *can* was predominantly used in the analysed reports, however, negative forms occurred relatively frequently in the articles. Particularly, 14 negative forms of verb occurred in the analysis. Several examples were selected to represent the negative form of *can*:

12. *‘We can’t just fully rely on the UK MoD and the Royal Navy. (34) (‘It is not possible for us to fully rely on the UK MoD and the Royal Navy.’)*
13. *‘But just as we are told feminism has gone too far when, in fact, women still earn less than men and can’t walk the streets at night safely, so gay people are being incorporated into the system as long as they don’t want to change it. (17b) (‘It isn’t the case that nothing prevents women walking the streets at night safely.’)*

Furthermore, the possibility meaning of *can* relates to external circumstances. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the following sentence can be applied to *can* representing the possibility meaning: “external circumstances allow me to do it”. (Coates, 1983, p. 93) Coates adds that the possibility meaning often occurs when there are no external circumstances specified at all. As represented by the above sentences (34 and 17b), external circumstances are often not specified. The disabling circumstances

were only specified in 2 examples. Remaining 12 negative examples were not supported by specified external circumstances.

14. *The missing head, worth £1,000 alone, means that the boat cannot be used during the busy summer which could lose staff up to £60 a day in profits. (25a)*
(‘External circumstances do not allow me to use the boat.’)

It can be assumed that the boat can generally be used. However, the external circumstances, which are marked as the missing head, do not allow to use the boat now.

15. *But just as we are told feminism has gone too far when, in fact, women still earn less than men and can't walk the streets at night safely, so gay people are being incorporated into the system as long as they don't want to change it. (17b)*
(‘External circumstances do not allow women to walk the streets at night safely.’)

In the above sentence, the external circumstances are not specified and it can only be assumed what the external circumstances could be. This supports the above mentioned proposal that external circumstances are often not specified.

To sum up, the above mentioned findings imply that the possibility meaning occurred very frequently in the analysed modal verbs. This might be due to the fact that it is linked with both active and passive voices, negative and positive forms and with both animate and inanimate subjects. Thus, it is not restricted by the context as e.g. ability meaning. This implies that there are much more occasions for the possibility meaning to occur. It can be used in nearly all contexts.

At the same time, the possibility meaning is frequently used in different texts. It is not restricted to formal language and can frequently occur in the discourse of informal British tabloids.

Its high occurrence is also supported by Huddleston (2002: 182) who claims that deontic possibility is expressed by the modal verb *can* in an informal style. As British tabloids are considered rather informal, Huddleston's suggestion could be corresponding to the results of the analysis, particularly to the fact that the possibility meaning was very frequently used in the discourse of British tabloid newspapers. It can also be assumed that the fact that editorials comment, speculate and give opinion and some texts give

very little factual material directly contributes to the high frequency of the possibility meaning.

4.2.2. Ability meaning of *can*

This chapter deals with the ability meaning of the modal verb *can*, its frequency in the analysed articles, and characteristics relating to this meaning. The most important characteristics linked with this sense of *can* will be mentioned to illustrate that the general rules mentioned in the chapter 3.1.2. in the theoretical part can be applied to analysed modals selected from British tabloid newspapers.

The ability meaning occurred in 26 cases. This means that it was linked with 26% of occurrences. This number makes it the second most frequent meaning of the modal verb *can* used in newspaper articles. The ability meaning related to the deontic kind of modality in all occurrences.

Particularly, negative form of verb was found in 5 sentences. The remaining 21 sentences were represented by the verb in its positive form.

Firstly, typical examples of the ability meaning must be mentioned.

18. *'The Human Shrub was quite amusing at first, but I think he's a bit potty if he thinks he can do all 200 planters. (2) ('he thinks he is able to do all 200 planters')*

19. *Another said a pupil who is brilliant at creative writing was given the same marks as a classmate who cannot write in sentences. (9) ('a classmate who is doesn't know how to write' / 'a classmate who is not capable of writing in sentences')*

As represented by above examples, *can* is not only paraphrasable by *be able to*, but it is also more or less synonymous with *be capable of* and *know how to*. The above examples are also represented by properties which will be examined and illustrated on examples consequently.

As mentioned in the chapter 3.1.2. in the theoretical part, the ability meaning is often restricted to animate subjects. This statement is supported by the fact that 80.77% of the analysed modal verbs *can* in their ability meaning are represented by animate subjects.

As Tárnyiková (1985) suggested, it can be used with inanimate subject when representing figurative language. In this case an inanimate subject represents animate subject. Following examples were selected to represent this finding:

20. *Experts say “fast fashion” clothes stores also gain a huge advantage by being able to change styles regularly. Some of the biggest clothing chains can get new designs in store within weeks of commissioning them.* (40) ('the biggest clothing chains are able to get new designs')

21. *It took them 2,500 man-hours and \$250,000 to construct, and although their replica cannot fly, it was radar-tested by placing it on a 50ft articulating pole and exposing it to electromagnetic waves.* (7) ('their replica is not able to fly')

22. *He cites 17 areas of science, ranging from tectonics to meteorology, which need to be utilised in analysing climate change. No computer I have ever heard of can do this meaningfully.* (5a) ('no computer is able to do this')

The above mentioned sentences are examples of occurrences marked as ability, where the inanimate subject is used. In the first case, the term 'the biggest clothing chains' represents an animate subject 'people working in the biggest clothing chains'. In this case, inherent or learnt properties allow them to get new designs. The following examples represent the sub-group where, although the subject is inanimate, *can* clearly refers to the inherent properties of the subject. The properties which the computer/replica gained when it was constructed illustrate the inherent properties and thus it can be assumed that the inherent properties do not allow them to fly or cite 17 areas of science.

However, as already mentioned, these exceptions are inconsiderable in comparison with the numerous occurrence of animate subject in sentences relating to ability meaning.

The following examples were selected from the analysed articles to illustrate the link of the animate subject with the ability meaning:

24. *It takes nine weeks of training and costs more than £7,000 before they can go out on patrol.* (1) ('before they are able to go out on patrol')

25. *'The Human Shrub was quite amusing at first, but I think he's a bit potty if he thinks he can do all 200 planters.* (2) ('he thinks he is able to do all 200 planters')

In the first sentence, the subject 'they' stands for 'dogs' as discovered when examining the preceding sentences and thus illustrates animate subject. The second example illustrates a human subject.

Furthermore, the ability meaning is represented by the active voice. This characteristic can be illustrated on the following examples:

26. *What I get is a helliday – the transporting of all your domestic problems to a foreign abode where you can't work the cooker, the air conditioning smells of dead dog and days are spent in the local supermarket trying to learn the Greek for Ant Killer.* (4) ('you are not able to work the cooker')
27. *I don't know what it is but I can deal with accidents. I've always been able to.* (42) ('I am able to deal with accidents')

As the active voice of a verb describes the relationship between the action that the verb expresses and the participant (subject), the subject is the agent or doer of the action. On the contrary, the subject is not the doer of the action when linked with passive voice. Therefore, ability meaning is not linked with passive voice as the subject loses its possibility to approve its ability.

As the findings prove, the active voice is closely linked with the ability meaning. All occurrences linked with the ability meaning were represented by this characteristic.

Furthermore, this sense of *can* is often linked with gradient of inherency. As mentioned in the chapter 3.1.2. in the theoretical part, the sentences can be represented by the statement 'Inherent properties allow me to do it.' This grammar rule not only refers to inherent properties, but also refers to the learnt ability. It can be illustrated on the following examples:

30. *It takes nine weeks of training and costs more than £7,000 before they can go out on patrol.* (1) (It takes nine weeks of training before learnt properties allow them to go out on patrol.)
31. *'We are looking for people who can think outside the box, do what we want to be done, be accountable and provide the people of Norfolk with the best possible police force.* (3) (We are looking for people whose inherent properties allow them to think outside the box.)

The gradient of inherency is restricted to inherent or learnt properties of the subject. E.g. the ability to think outside the box and the learnt ability to go out on patrol are inherent characteristics of the human/animate subjects of the above sentences.

To conclude, this particular meaning was marked as the second one considering its frequency. This finding is supported by Leech (2004, p. 74) who claims that the ability meaning is less common than the possibility meaning but more common than the permission meaning. The ability meaning is also linked with less formal text or informal spoken language, which explains its relatively high frequency in the discourse of British tabloid newspaper reports.

Furthermore, it is very often used with animate subjects and it is only used with an active voice. As these characteristics are often linked with less formal/informal language; it suits the discourse of the British tabloids.

4.2.3. Permission meaning of *can*

As for permission meaning, it is the least common of the three analysed meanings of the modal verb *can*. It was represented by 4 out of 100 modal verbs *can*. Thus, its occurrence might be considered very low. This meaning of the modal verb *can* was least frequent and occurred with active voice, both positive and negative forms, and once occurred in a question -> asking for permission.

Considering the typical characteristics which were used when analysing individual occurrences, these characteristics will be mentioned and illustrated on examples in this chapter.

Firstly, most common properties of this meaning must be mentioned. These properties are an animate subject and a gradient of restriction and appeared in all occurrences.

32. But the government has stopped shy of imposing a blanket ban, and critics say this will render the new law as ineffective as the two previous ones. All hospitals and health services will be smoke-free – apart from mental institutions, where patients will be able to smoke under prescription ‘for purely curative purposes’. Smokers can also indulge in casino gaming areas. (34) (‘smokers are also allowed to indulge in casino gaming areas’)

Considering this example, the subject is animate and the gradient of restriction was identified owing to context. The gradient of restriction is evident as it refers to a clearly restricted world and can be paraphrased with *permit* or *allow*. When examining the fragment thoroughly, the government can be marked as the authority.

As for animate subject, it is represented by smokers.

For better comprehension, another example was selected to illustrate an animate subject and gradient of restriction.

33. 'Can we build a swimming pool in the garden?' he inquired menacingly. (4)
(‘Do you give us permission to build a swimming pool in the garden?’)

The speaker asks a human authority, the speaker’s mother, for permission. Context was vital when identifying the authority. Furthermore, it is represented by the 1st person plural which is, as mentioned in the theoretical part, an important indicator of the permission meaning, especially when asking for permission.

Secondly, possible paraphrases of this meaning were examined. On one hand, the occurrences are often paraphrasable by *permitted* or *allowed to*. On the other hand, the sentences can be represented by the sentence: Human authority/rules and regulations allow me to do it.

34. *Smokers can also indulge in casino gaming areas.* (34) (‘smokers are permitted to indulge in casino gaming areas’ / ‘smokers are allowed to indulge in casino gaming areas’) It can also be paraphrased as: ‘Rules and regulations allow smokers to indulge in casino gaming areas.’

To conclude, this meaning of *can* is least common. It is supported by the fact that the permission meaning is generally least common. The fact that the permission meaning is restricted to some contextual factors i.e. animate subjects may also contribute to its low occurrence.

4.2.4. Undecidable occurrences

This special chapter of the analytical part deals with undecidable occurrences. As Biber (1999: 492) claims, it is often unclear as to whether the modal verb *can* marks logical possibility, ability, or permission.

It is often due to the lack of properties indicating particular meanings that an occurrence cannot be classified.

7 occurrences were classified as undecidable. As 100 occurrences were examined, the undecidable occurrences appeared in 7% of them.

Several examples were selected to represent this category.

35. *'I have spoken to the chairman Daniel Levy and we've decided if we can't get players who will improve the team we're not going to bother.* (16)

36. *Detective Sengeant Martin Crocker said: 'The victim has not been able to give us any more details of this incident, so we are hoping that there may have been witnesses to it who can come forward and provide us with a more accurate picture of what happened.* (27)

When examining the above mentioned occurrences, it is not clear whether they indicate possibility or ability meaning.

According Reah, "as is true of most aspects of language, context is vital to meaning." (Reah, 2003: 91) However, neither of the above mentioned occurrences could be identified via the context.

Taking into account the first example (example from the article number 16), it is not clear whether the sentence can be paraphrased as:

If we are not able to get players who will improve the team we're not going to bother. In this case, the occurrence would express inherent or learnt properties and thus ability meaning.

On the other hand, it can be paraphrased as: *If it is possible for us to get players who will improve the team we're not going to bother.* In this case, the speaker would express some external circumstances that do not allow to do it. Nevertheless, the external circumstances are not specified.

The second example (example from 27th article) can similarly express either the ability, the permission or possibility meanings. It can be paraphrased as:

We are hoping that there may have been witnesses to it who is able to come forward and provide us with a more accurate picture of what happened.

We are hoping that there may have been witnesses for whom it is possible to come forward and provide us with a more accurate picture of what happened.

We are hoping that there may have been witnesses who are allowed to come forward and provide us with a more accurate picture of what happened.

The first paraphrase represents inherent properties which allow it. On the contrary, the second example represents external circumstances which allow it and the third example represents an authority which allows it.

Above all, there are no gradients of inherency indicating the ability meaning, no gradients of restriction indicating the permission meaning and no external circumstances specified.

Thus, it can only be assumed whether the speaker expresses the ability, the permission, or the possibility meaning.

Characteristics such as active voice or animate subject were not considered vital when not supported by other important characteristics. On one hand, they are restricted to the ability meaning. However, they can also represent the possibility meaning whereas this meaning is not restricted to the passive voice or inanimate subject.

The relatively high number of undecidable occurrences is supported by various linguists, such as Biber, who suggest that it is often difficult to draw a dividing line between the ability and the possibility meaning. Lack of contextual factors indicating particular meanings also contribute to this number.

4.3. Summary of results

To sum up the results, the analysed modal verbs *can* were selected from the newspaper reports from British tabloid newspapers. 100 modal verbs *can* were analysed from 45 newspaper reports from the above mentioned British newspapers. 16 more

newspaper reports where the modal verb *can* did not occur were examined. Thus, the modal verb *can* occurred in 73.77% of the newspaper reports. This implies that it occurs frequently in the discourse of British newspaper reports. Furthermore, the analysis focused on individual kinds of modality and meanings related to the modal verb *can*. The results were summed up and a conclusion was made.

Tab. 1

CAN	Deontic Possibility	Epistemic Possibility	Ability	Permission	Undecidable Occurrences
Frequency	62	1	26	4	7

The above table illustrates the results of the analysis. As demonstrated in the table, the modal verbs *can* were divided into: 1 occurrence representing epistemic possibility, 62 occurrences representing deontic possibility, 26 occurrences representing ability, 4 representing permission, and 7 representing undecidable occurrences which were all marked as deontic.

As regards deontic and epistemic modality, the deontic modality was used very frequently in the discourse of British tabloid newspaper reports. On the contrary, epistemic modality was linked with 1 occurrence only and is thus considered less frequent and ordinary kind of modality. It might be due to the fact that the epistemic modal verb *can* can only express the possibility meaning as the ability and the permission meanings are always deontic. Therefore, the epistemic modality is restricted to one particular meaning only. Furthermore, epistemic *can* is restricted to the negative form of verb which could also contribute to its low frequency. On the contrary, deontic *can* is linked with all the possibility, the ability and the permission meanings and can be linked with both positive and negative forms of verbs.

As for the analysis of individual meanings, particular contextual factors, such as active/passive voice or positive/negative form of verb, and many characteristics of individual meanings, such as gradients of restriction and inherency, and other tools of analysis, e.g. paraphrase, were used to identify meanings of the modal verb *can*. The

analysis was based on information mentioned in chapters 2 and 3 in the theoretical part of this paper.

As regards the most frequent meaning of the modal verb *can*, the possibility meaning, it occurred in 63% of the sentences. It was linked with some important features, e.g. negative form, inanimate subject, passive voice. It was also identified due to paraphrase. It was classified as the most frequent meaning with regards to the fact that it is linked with both active and passive voices, negative and positive forms and with both animate and inanimate subjects. Thus, it is not restricted by the contextual factors, such as e.g. ability meaning. This implies that it can be linked with nearly all contexts. At the same time, the possibility meaning is frequently used in different texts. It is not restricted to formal language and can frequently occur in the discourse of informal British tabloids.

The ability meaning, which occurred in 26 sentences, represents the second most frequent meaning of the modal verb *can*. It was often used with animate subjects and only used with the active voice. These contextual factors were helpful when identifying this meaning. Other tools of analysis were used to identify this meaning, such as paraphrase. This meaning was classified as the second most frequent with regards to the fact that the ability meaning is generally less common than the possibility meaning and more common than the permission meaning. This sense of *can* is also linked with less formal text or informal spoken language, which explains its relatively high frequency in the discourse of British tabloid newspaper reports, which are considered rather informal. Moreover, it is very often used with animate subjects and it can only be used with an active voice. As these characteristics are often linked with less formal/informal language; it suits the discourse of the British tabloids. On the other hand, this sense of *can* is restricted by contextual factors, e.g. by passive voice, which explains its relatively low frequency in comparison with the possibility meaning.

As for the least frequent meaning, the permission meaning, it was only used in 4% of occurrences. It is thus considered the least common and frequent meaning. It is supported by the fact that the permission meaning is generally least common.

It was linked with some characteristics, e.g. active voice and the fact that the permission meaning is restricted to some contextual factors, such as the above mentioned animate subject, may also contribute to its low occurrence.

It should be taken into account that it was not always clear which meaning occurred in certain sentences as the ability meaning can be sometimes considered a part of the possibility meaning. As Leech claims, “if someone has the ability to do some activities, then these activities in a sense are possible”. (Leech, 2004: 74) Therefore, it is often difficult to identify a particular meaning. These occurrences were classified as ‘undecidable’ and commented on in chapter 4.2.4.

For the most typical features of individual meanings, see the theoretical part, particularly chapters 3.1.1., 3.1.2., and 3.1.3.

For the most typical features linked with the analysed modal verbs and more detailed information concerning individual analysed occurrences, see chapters 4.2.1., 4.2.2., and 4.2.4.

To conclude, epistemic modality is inconsiderable in comparison with the numerous occurrence of deontic modality and the possibility meaning is the most frequent meaning of the modal verb *can* occurring in newspaper reports.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyse and comment on the use of the modal verb *can* in newspaper reporting. It dealt particularly with meanings of the modal verb *can*, and epistemic and deontic kinds of modality.

In the theoretical part of this paper the categorization of these grammatical aspects introduced by various grammar books was mentioned, commented and compared. This paper, following the above-mentioned grammar books, subdivided modality into epistemic modality and deontic modality. As regards other types of classifications and different conceptions, these were also mentioned and commented on in the theoretical part and the decision not to take them into account was commented on. This implies that this paper described and compared several conceptions and the most appropriate one, division of modality into epistemic and deontic, was taken into account and used as theoretical background of the analysis.

The process of classifying meanings of the modal verb *can* in this paper was based on the same principles. Thus, various conceptions were examined and the most appropriate and frequent were taken into account. The meanings of the modal verb *can* were divided into the possibility meaning, the ability meaning and the permission meaning. The paper later studied individual meanings of the modal verb *can* in greater detail.

As regards particular kinds of modality and meanings of the modal verb *can*, the attention was given to characteristics and properties which define them. Theoretical background was considered very important as it was the basis for a correct analysis.

In the practical part the frequency of occurrence of the examined modal verbs *can* was given. As for the frequency of individual occurrences of the modal verb *can*, it occurred in the following sequence: possibility, ability, and permission meaning. It was found out that the reports contained a large number of modal verbs *can* in its possibility meaning. The analysis also proved that it is often very difficult to recognize whether an occurrence represents possibility or ability meaning. For this reason, a special chapter named 'undecidable occurrences' was created.

To summarize the outcome of this paper, 100 occurrences were examined, where 63 occurrences represented the possibility meaning, 26 represented the ability meaning, and 4 occurrences represented the permission meaning. The undecidable occurrences were represented by 7 modal verbs *can* which were impossible to be marked as either 'possibility' or 'ability'.

Concerning deontic modality, it occurred in 99% cases in the overall analysis. Thus, the epistemic modality was inconsiderable in comparison with the numerous occurrence of deontic modality.

6. Resumé

Tato práce zkoumá užití modálního slovesa *can* v novinových člancích. Konkrétně se zaměřuje na užití a významy anglického modálního slovesa *can* v diskurzu britských bulvárních novin.

Cílem této práce je zjistit užití jednotlivých druhů modaloty a významů anglického modálního slovesa *can* v diskurzu novinových zpráv. Práce se zabývá pouze zprávami z britských bulvárních novin, konkrétně *The Sun*, *The News*, *Daily Mirror*, *The Mail* a *Daily Mail*.

Práce se nejprve soustředí na popis modaloty a jejích druhů. Dva základní druhy modaloty, konkrétně modalita dispoziční (deontic modality) a modalita jistotní (epistemic modality), jsou popsány. Vzhledem k tomu, že modální sloveso *can* vyjadřuje oba dva druhy modaloty, tyto druhy jsou detailně popsány a ilustrovány na příkladech. Palmer (2003) zmiňuje další druh modaloty, modalitu dynamickou, ta ale není zahrnuta v praktické části této práce. Vzhledem k tomu, že je modalita dispoziční popsána jako častější a více neutrální druh modaloty a je spojována s oběma, kladnou i zápornou formou modálního slovesa *can*, je předpokládáno, že se bude vyskytovat častěji. Modalita jistotní je podle Coates (1983) a jiných autorů spojována pouze se zápornou formou modálního slovesa *can*. Tato forma vyjadřuje protějšek k modálnímu slovesu *must*, jež netvoří zápornou formu. Můžeme tudíž předpokládat, že se, vzhledem k jejímu omezení, bude vyskytovat pouze zřídka.

Práce se následně zaměřuje na popis modálních sloves. V příslušné kapitole jsou zmíněna všechna anglická modální slovesa a jejich klasifikace, charakteristiky a také vlastnosti, jež je odděluje od lexikálních sloves.

Dále se práce zabývá jednotlivými významy modálního slovesa *can*, konkrétně možnost (possibility), schopnost (ability) a povolení (permission). Tyto významy jsou popsány v jednotlivých kapitolách a ilustrovány na příkladech. Každá kapitola zkoumá bližší definici konkrétního významu, jeho charakteristiku a jednotlivé vlastnosti, které jsou

pro daný výraz typické. Konkrétní faktory, na jejichž základě je možné jednotlivé významy rozpoznat jsou uváděny na příkladech.

U slovesa *can* vyjadřující možnost (possibility) je předpokládán nejvyšší výskyt, jelikož je tento výskyt nejméně omezený kontextem. Také je popsán jako nejvíce neutrální a nejčastěji používaný ve všech druzích textů. Faktory, jež indikují tento druh významu, jsou například neživotný podmět, nebo trpný rod.

Schopnostní význam modálního slovesa *can* (ability) je popsán jako druhý nejčastější. Pro tento význam jsou typické vlastnosti životný podmět a činný rod. Tento význam je také popisován jako častý v méně formálních textech a tudíž lze předpokládat jeho poměrně častý výskyt v britských bulvárních novinových zprávách. Dva výše zmíněné významy se však mohou překrývat a vzhledem k nedostatku kontextových faktorů občas není možno určit, o který konkrétní význam se jedná. Věta lze tudíž být chápána jako vyjadřující možnost a také jako vyjadřující schopnost. V případě, že lze výskyt označit jako jak možnost, tak schopnost, je význam označen jako "nerozhodnutelný", a zařazen do podkapitoly reprezentující všechny neurčitelné výskyty.

Can vyjadřující povolení (permission) je popsáno jako třetí a nejméně častý význam modálního slovesa *can*. Tento význam je spojován s životným podmětem a omezením/zákazem/povolením ze strany určité autority.

Čtvrtou kapitolu této práce tvoří vlastní analýza jednotlivých výskytů modálního slovesa *can* v novinových zprávách. K rozboru bylo vybráno několik britských bulvárních novin. Konkrétně bylo analyzováno 45 novinových zpráv, ve kterých se modální sloveso *can* vyskytlo a dalších 16 novinových zpráv, ve kterých se toto sloveso nevyskytlo. Z tohoto poznatku vyplývá, že se modální sloveso *can* vyskytovalo v 73,77% novinových zpráv. Ve výše zmíněných 45 zprávách bylo nalezeno 100 modálních sloves *can*, jež byly dále analyzovány. Konkrétní věty vybrané z bulvárních novinových zpráv jsou k nahlédnutí v příloze této práce. Věty jsou rozřazené do tří částí. Každá část reprezentuje určitý význam modálního slovesa *can*. Věty jsou dále číslované (čísla od 1 do 45), podle článku, ve kterém se vyskytly. Některé věty jsou dále opatřeny písmenem (např. 1a, 1b, 1c) vzhledem k tomu, že v některých člácích se modálních sloves vyskytovalo více. Je tudíž jasné, že věty 1a, 1b a 1c se všechny

vyskytly v prvním analyzovaném článku. U každé věty je dále uvedený konkrétní zdroj a stránka, na které se novinová zpráva a tudíž i konkrétní výskyt nacházel.

Diskurz novinových zpráv je popsán v první podkapitole analýzy.

Dále se analýza zaměřuje již výhradně na modální sloveso *can* a jeho konkrétní výskyty. Jako první je vzhledem k jeho četnosti analyzován možnostní význam tohoto slovesa. Tento význam byl spojen s 63 ze 100 modálních sloves. Pouze v jednom z těchto 63 výskytů byl spojen s modalitou jistotní. Zbýlých 62 modálních sloves reprezentujících možnostní význam bylo spojeno s modalitou dispoziční. Kontextové faktory, jež byly s tímto významem nejčastěji spojovány, jsou uvedeny a rozebrány v analýze. Každý z těchto faktorů je dále ilustrován na konkrétních příkladech, jež byly vybrány z analyzovaných výskytů. Tento význam je všeobecně označován jako neutrální a nejvíce častý. Analytická část této práce výše zmíněnou teorii potvrzuje. Tento význam se objevoval ve spojení s činným i trpným rodem, životným i neživotným podmětem a také ve spojení s kladnou i zápornou formou slovesa. Lze tedy označit jako nejvíce neutrální a rozmanitý z hlediska kontextových faktorů.

Dále je analyzován schopnostní význam modálního slovesa *can*. Ten byl spojen s 26% výskytů a ve všech případech vyjadřovat modalitu dispoziční. Vzhledem k jeho četnosti byl označen jako druhý nejčastější. Jeho poměrná četnost je připisována jeho spojení s mluveným/neformálním jazykem. Tento význam se často objevoval ve spojení s životným podmětem a činným rodem.

Jak již bylo zmíněno, občas je velmi obtížné určit konkrétní význam anglického modálního slovesa *can*. Jak někteří autoři zmiňují, tyto dva významy se často překrývají a není tudíž možné určit jeden konkrétní význam. Výskyty, jež nebylo možné přiřadit k žádnému z nadcházejících významů byly tudíž označeny jako "nerozhodnutelné" a zařazeny do stejnojmenné podkapitoly analytické části. Tyto výskyty se objevily v 7% ze všech analyzovaných výskytů. Tyto výskyty, jejich možná interpretace a důvody, proč je není možné zařadit do konkrétní kategorie jsou popsány v příslušné kapitole.

Jako třetí a nejméně časté bylo určeno *can* ve významu povolení. Tento význam se vyskytl pouze ve 4% výskytů a je výhradně spojován s modalitou dispoziční. Jeho nízký výskyt je přisuzován jeho všeobecně nízkému výskytu a omezeními z hlediska kontextových faktorů.

Poslední částí analytické části této práce je shrnutí výsledků. V tabulce jsou znázorněny veškeré výsledky analýzy výskytů modálního slovesa *can*, které jsou dále okomentovány.

Konkrétní věty, ve kterých se analyzovaná modální slovesa vyskytla jsou seřazeny podle jejich významů a očíslována podle novinových zpráv, ve kterých se vyskytly. Tyto výskyty jsou zařazeny v příloze této práce.

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The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009.

The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009.

The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009.

The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009.

The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009.

8. Appendix

POSSIBILITY

(1a) Animal lovers react with disbelief at the officer's apparent lack of common sense and seeming ignorance of the RSPCA's simple warning that 'a hot car can be a death trap for dogs'.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 10)

(1b) 'A hot car can be a death trap for dogs, it is as simple as that. Leaving your dog in a car, even on an average warm, even cloudy summer day, can put your pet at huge risk of suffering and even death. 'This is not a new warning, but sadly too many people still don't appreciate how dangerous it can be to leave a dog in a hot car, conservatory or caravan.'

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 10)

(1c) The temperature in a car can rise to as much as 47c (116f) in less than an hour, he added.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 10)

(1d) When the dog's breathing starts to settle it can be taken to a vet.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 10)

(3) But the strategy to retain his services can safely be judged a failure as the chief constable announced his retirement earlier this year before standing down this week.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 5)

(6) The findings were made available on Monday, in a statement to Parliament.

Criminals freed early on licence can be sent back to jail if they reoffend, or breach the terms of their early release.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 17)

(8) Scientists have unearthed a fascinating link between the financial status of a woman and the proportion of boys and girls she can expect to have.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 28)

(10) 'All of us are very shocked by these revelations. We cannot be expected to check the record of every single war hero. We just accepted what Mr Manoian told us.'

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 37)

(11) A campsite for caravans or tents costs £20 a night and you can hire a caravan from £200 a week. Tents can cost as little as £32.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, p. 53)

(12a) There is no set BMI limit to qualify and volunteers can set their own targets.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 11)

(12b) The Asda vouchers they earn can only be spent on healthy goods such as fruit and vegetables.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 11)

(15) These high-cost loans, often sold on the doorstep, can carry punishing annual rates of 10,000 per cent.
(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 17)

(16a) 'If you're clever you can still get good players. Look at Sir Alex Ferguson's signing of Michael Owen.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(16b) We can push to finish in the top six.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(17a) Gordon 'you can't legislate love' Brown is hosting a reception in Downing street but did not attend yesterday's Pride march, apparently for security reasons.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 18)

(17b) But just as we are told feminism has gone too far when, in fact, women still earn less than men and can't walk the streets at night safely, so gay people are being incorporated into the system as long as they don't want to change it.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 18)

(18a) 'Even casual use of homophobic language in schools – such as the worryingly prevalent use of the word "gay" as a derogatory term – can create an atmosphere that isolates young people and can be the forerunner for more serious forms of bullying,' he said.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 5)

(18b) 'Homophobic bullying creates an ugly climate of intimidation and can make it harder for young people to come out.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 5)

(18c) 'Growing up can be challenging enough for young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender,' he said. 'Being bullied and discriminated against at school as well can make life miserable and sometimes fearful, too.'
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 5)

(19) Barrister Neil Addison argued that new equality laws that guarantee gays 'equal access to goods and services', including fostering, can be overruled by older laws designed to protect children.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, p. 7)

(20a) Manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) claims it can boost weight loss by up to 50 per cent, helping dieters lose an extra 1lb for every 2lb shed.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, p. 11)

(20b) The FDA can ban the sale of drugs and can also order changes to labelling or prescription guidance.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, p. 11)

(21a) Science does not invalidate other ways of perceiving things, but it can help explain what we see. And it can do so with regard to young people who spend several hours of the day playing computer games, or in online chatrooms.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21b) The human brain is exquisitely sensitive to every event. We cannot complacently take it that our ways of learning and thinking will remain constant.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21c) The brain has many chemical reactions, one of which is the release of dopamine. This is associated with immediate sensual gratification, and can influence the prefrontal cortex.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21d) It is crucial: it is your life. You cannot live your life backwards or start again. The notion of narrative is that you cannot go either way with a click of the mouse and then go backwards again. But in a computer game, you can. You can start again.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21e) One can look at the world through experience or poetry, or one can view it in terms of science.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(22) Those in poor health or facing financial hardship can apply to have their case fast-tracked.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 55)

(23) An RNLI spokesman warned people who were tempted to jump to think again. 'It's strongly recommended that people do not jump from a height into water,' he said.

'Remember the tide can go in and out very quickly, so while the water can be deep during parts of the day, it can soon become shallow.

(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 9)

(25a) The missing head, worth £1,000 alone, means that the boat cannot be used during the busy summer which could lose staff up to £60 a day in profits.

(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 13)

(25b) 'It can't have been a random act because it would need to have been planned. The thieves obviously knew what they wanted.'

(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 13)

(26) 'It's certainly not easy making such a decision and it can bring real mixed emotions, given that your son or daughter wants to break away from you but you want them to be safe.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 3)

(28) Grants can be used to improve facilities, buy new equipment and generally invest in the sustainability of their club.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 11)

(30) For £5 each residents can buy the titles and then write inscriptions on them.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 17)

(31a) 'Encouraging people to seek help for their alcohol misuse can only be good for the individuals, their families and the wider community.'

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 18)

(31b) 'Too much alcohol can impact on relationships, parenting, work as well as health.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 18)

- (34) ‘We can’t just fully rely on the UK MoD and the Royal Navy.
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 4)
- (35a) Dispersal orders have also been introduced to Tamworth Park and Baffins Pond. Those who ignore them can be fined up to £5,000 and face three months in prison.
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 8)
- (35b) ‘The issues around Baffins Pond are wheelie bin fires, youths being drunk and rowdy, as well as graffiti and litter.
‘We clearly cannot allow this sort of behaviour to continue.’
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 8)
- (36a) Health officials are now warning the weather could pose significant health risks, especially for the elderly, very young people and those with chronic or long-term medical conditions. It can also cause heart and respiratory problems to worsen.
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 11)
- (36b) ‘Heat exhaustion can happen to anyone and if it isn’t treated it can lead to heat-stroke, which can be dangerous and even fatal.’
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 11)
- (36c) Do not store sunscreens in very hot places as extreme heat can destroy their protective chemicals.
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 11)
- (38) Lee Hefferman: ‘Words cant describe how upset and angry we all are will always remember u ginge,, love to ur family xxxxxx’
(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 4)
- David Hunter: ‘Words cant say it mate. I will remember our football days you will always be a ginger gazza to me mate R.I.P love dave x x x’
- (39) And the self-assured songbird reckons her dates with the hip-hop titan will go down in history. She said: “I can’t give any details but it will be one of the most important moments in music ever.”
(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 14)
- (41) The mum, who cannot be named, came to live with him in Tower Hamlets, East London, but spoke no English and had no job.
(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 11)
- (43) “We rely completely on donations and can only continue this vital work with people’s support.”
(Daily Mirror, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 8)
- (44) “Being in the water with 30 or more lemon sharks can be a little intimidating at first.
(Daily Mirror, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 15)
- (45) And it insists it will “stress test” the finances of applicants to check they can afford it.
(Daily Mirror, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 7)

ABILITY

(1) The dogs, which had been donated to the force by the Dogs Trust charity, were among 26 operational dogs whose job includes tracking down criminals and providing security at major events. It takes nine weeks of training and costs more than £7,000 before they can go out on patrol.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 10)

(2) ‘The Human Shrub was quite amusing at first, but I think he’s a bit potty if he thinks he can do all 200 planters.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 5)

(3) Stephen Bett, chairman of Norfolk police Authority, said: ‘We are looking for people who can think outside the box, do what we want to be done, be accountable and provide the people of Norfolk with the best possible police force.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 5)

(4) What I get is a helliday – the transporting of all your domestic problems to a foreign abode where you can’t work the cooker, the air conditioning smells of dead dog and days are spent in the local supermarket trying to learn the Greek for Ant Killer.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 15)

(5a) He cites 17 areas of science, ranging from tectonics to meteorology, which need to be utilised in analysing climate change. No computer I have ever heard of can do this meaningfully.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 16)

(5b) The only importance the serious scientists can attach to such a figure is that less serious people think it meaningful. My own science teacher would have kept me in after school for saying this was a valuable figure.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 16)

(7) It took them 2,500 man-hours and \$250,000 to construct, and although their replica cannot fly, it was radar-tested by placing it on a 50ft articulating pole and exposing it to electromagnetic waves.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 25)

(8) Fit, healthy boys will see off rivals and can potentially father hundreds of children, ensuring the survival of the family line.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 28)

(9) Another said a pupil who is brilliant at creative writing was given the same marks as a classmate who cannot write in sentences.

(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 36)

(13a) Alisha can still walk, but their mother Jayne knows that the youngster faces an equally bleak future.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 33)

(13b) Now she cannot speak, she is in a wheelchair and has to be tube fed.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 33)

(14) John Huston, one of the owners of the Sears Tower, admitted to feeling ‘a little queasy’ the first time he went on to one of the extensions – which can hold five tons and have glass which is 1.5 inch thick.

(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 40)

(16a) We’ve got to improve the away results next season. If we can do that, we can push to finish in the top six.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(16b) I think we can pick up from where we left off at the end of last season,’ he said, having guided Spurs to eighth after joining them when they were in the bottom three.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(16c) That has to be our aim and I believe we can achieve it.’

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21a) When you read a book, the author takes you by the hand and you travel from the beginning to the middle to the end in a continuous narrative of interconnected steps. We can then compare one narrative with another and so build up a conceptual framework that enables us to evaluate further journeys which, in turn, will influence our individualised framework.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(21b) We can place an isolated fact in a context that gives it a significance.

(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(24) She said: ‘It’s a real honour to be elected as president. I’m certain we can have a real impact, improving the competitiveness of all businesses in the region.’

(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 8)

(29) She has been holding regular house sales for over four years and can see hundreds of people through her doors over a weekend.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 14)

(34a) ‘Nobody can predict the future but BVT will be supporting the fleet here at Portsmouth for multiple years to come’ he said.

(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 4)

(34b) ‘Which company in this country can give you a prediction for seven to 10 years out?’

(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 4)

(34c) ‘My design is to develop a sustainable business for the future, something that we can see as being there over a protracted period of time.

(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 4)

(37) I suppose I thought what he’s done, I can do too.’

(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 16)

(40) Some of the biggest clothing chains can get new designs in store within weeks of commissioning them.

(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 13)

(42) I don’t know what it is but I can deal with accidents. I’ve always been able to.

(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 16)

(44) But underwater photographer Eric Cheng who took these spectacular images in the tropical waters of the Bahamas – just can't help himself.
(Daily Mirror, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 15)

PERMISSION

(4a) It was all going to be perfect. And then I told the children. The Daughter reacted much like Paris Hilton told she has to choose between her Chihuahua and her Blackberry. 'WHATTTT? You mean we're not going on a hot holiday. How am I going to get a tan?' she squealed. Her brother was even less impressed. 'Can we build a swimming pool in the garden?' he inquired menacingly.
(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 15)

(4b) 'No, we can't,' I replied gaily. 'We will be going on day trips to local museums and, er, places of interest.'
(Daily Mail, Wednesday, July 8, 2009, page 15)

(33) But the government has stopped shy of imposing a blanket ban, and critics say this will render the new law as ineffective as the two previous ones. All hospitals and health services will be smoke-free – apart from mental institutions, where patients will be able to smoke under prescription 'for purely curative purposes'. Smokers can also indulge in casino gaming areas.
(The News, Thursday, July 2, 2009, page 4)

(42) You can't think about it otherwise it holds you back.
(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 16)

UNDECIDABLE

(12) 'I can honestly say that it doesn't bother me, though I do worry that I'll get so comfortably fat that I won't be able to walk any more,' the French and Saunders star told Woman's Weekly.
(Daily Mail, Friday, July 3, 2009, page 11)

(16) 'I have spoken to the chairman Daniel Levy and we've decided if we can't get players who will improve the team we're not going to bother.
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 13)

(17) 'We got it wrong. It was an emotional issue. I hope you can forgive us.'
(The Mail, Sunday, July 5, 2009, page 18)

(27) Detective Sergeant Martin Crocker said: 'The victim has not been able to give us any more details of this incident, so we are hoping that there may have been witnesses to it who can come forward and provide us with a more accurate picture of what happened.
(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 3)

(32)Although Patric Howe, in particular, and Lauren Phelan deliver Oberon and Titania's lines precisely, one cannot believe an argument between these two would cause the crops to rot and the rivers to flood.

(The News, Wednesday, July 1, 2009, page 19)

(38)School friend Melanie Bell said: 'Sleep tight Matt! You were one in a million all those laughs at school...cant believe it xxxxxx'

(The News, Saturday, July 4, 2009, page 4)

(39) She added: "I truthfully adore Kanye. I always poke fun at him and joke around. We have a lovely creative relationship. He's so sweet. I can't say enough good things. He's undeniably brilliant."

(The Sun, Friday, July 10, 2009, page 14)