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The Use of Can and May in Administrative Style

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Annotation

This bachelor paper deals with the modal verbs *can* and *may* in administrative style. The theoretical part describes the term modality and introduces different kinds of modality. Furthermore, it focuses on the description of characteristic and rules of the modal verbs. It also introduces individual meanings of *can* and *may* in detail and synonymous occurrence of overlapping meanings of *can* and *may*. In the practical part, findings from the theoretical part are applied to the particular documents of administrative style for stating the results of the analysis.

Keywords

Modality; can; may; possibility; ability; permission; administrative style

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá modálními slovesy *can* a *may* v administrativním stylu. Teoretická část vysvětluje termín „modalita“ a různé druhy modality. Následně se tato část zaměřuje na charakteristiku a pravidla modálních sloves. Dále jsou podrobně představeny jednotlivé významy modálních sloves *can* a *may* a synymní výskyt překrývajících se významů sloves *can* a *may*. V praktické části jsou poznatky z teorie aplikovány na určité dokumenty administrativního stylu za účelem stanovení výsledků analýzy.

Klíčová slova

Modalita; can; may; možnost; schopnost; dovolení; administrativní styl

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1. Introduction

This bachelor paper focuses on the use of modal verbs used in administrative style. Closely, it concentrates on the occurrence of particular modal verbs in specific documents. The modal verbs included in my paper are *can* and *may* and the documents used for analysis are particular British Command Papers. The aim of this paper is to work up relevant theory and apply it to the analysis itself to state the results, to state which modal verb and which particular meaning is used mostly in administrative style, in British Command Papers. The aim of this paper is also to analyse and evaluate the synonymous occurrence of two overlapping meanings of the modal verbs *can* and *may* – deontic possibility and permission.

The thesis consists of two main parts, a theoretical and an analytical part. The theoretical part is further divided into two main chapters and several subchapters. The first chapter of the theoretical part concentrates on modality. At first, the term modality is explained. Consequently, different kinds of modality are described. The main principles, relevant examples and the difference between deontic and epistemic modality are explained afterwards. As the modal verbs *can* and *may* express both deontic and epistemic modality, it is necessary to include both kinds of modality in the theoretical part.

The second chapter of this part focuses on the modal verbs. At first, it describes some characteristics and rules typical for the modal verbs. Another part of the chapter looks in much more detail at the modal verb *can*. This part characterizes the use and different meanings of *can*. Each meaning of the modal verb is explained, described and there are typical features illustrated on particular examples afterwards. Similarly, this part also introduces the use and different meanings of *may*. To conclude the whole chapter about the modal verbs, the last subchapter concentrates on relation between *can* and *may*, their difference and also their overlapping meanings which are deontic possibility and permission meanings.

The third chapter of this paper represents practical part. The findings from theoretical part are applied in this analytical part. At first, some characteristic features typical for administrative style are introduced. After that, both modal verbs *can*

and *may* and their particular meanings are analyzed, evaluated and their features are commented on with suitable illustrations. The final part of the chapter summarizes the results of the analysis.

2. Modality

2.1. Definition of modality

To begin with, the term modality will be explained. The term modality can be used in various senses. “Most generally, it 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, p. 219). Similarly, according to Tárnyiková, modality can be characterised as a semantic category which clarifies an attitude of the speaker to a potential realization of the proposition (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 12).

2.2. Kinds of modality

In the following chapter, different kinds of modality will be described. Two main kinds of modality are generally known as deontic and epistemic. Not all the linguists use this terminology for these two kinds of modality. For instance, Biber et al. (1999) use terms intrinsic and extrinsic modality instead of deontic and epistemic modality. Coates (1983) applies terms root and epistemic modality, where the term root modality is intended to substitute term deontic modality. Moreover, Tárnyiková divides modality in a bit different way. At first, she distinguishes communicative modality and modality proper. The modality proper is further divided into intra-propositional and extra-propositional modality which are terms used for deontic and epistemic modality. Deontic modality is also indicated by the author as non-complex modality (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 12). Several linguists claim, for instance Facchinetti (Facchinetti, 2003, p. 7), that there is one more kind of modality – dynamic. This kind of modality will not be included in my thesis, for details concerning dynamic modality see Facchinetti (2003).

To sum up kinds of modality, it should be mentioned that we can distinguish two main types of modality, deontic/intrinsic/root/intra-propositional/non-complex modality and epistemic/extrinsic/extra-propositional modality. For my bachelor paper, I will use the most common terms, deontic and epistemic modality.

2.2.1 Deontic vs. epistemic modality

As it has been already mentioned in the previous chapter, there are two basic kinds of modality – deontic and epistemic. Biber et al. say that deontic modality refers to actions and events that humans directly control. They add that these meanings are related to permission, obligation, volition or intention (Biber et al., 1999, p. 485). Tárnýiková claims deontic modality refers only to a part of a proposition, mainly to a verb. For better understanding she states the following example and adds a useful explanation.

[1] I must go home.

(Tárnýiková, 1985, p. 10)

The author points out that the modal verb *must* in this example modifies only the process which is expressed by the infinitive of the lexical verb *go*. This is the reason why deontic modality is often termed intra-propositional.

Concerning epistemic modality, Biber et al. claim that epistemic modality refers to the logical status of events or states, usually relation to assessments of likelihood: possibility, necessity or prediction. They add that modal verbs with extrinsic meaning usually occur with non-human subject and/or with main verbs having stative meanings (Biber et al., 1999, p. 485). As Quirk points out, epistemic modality does not involve human control of events, but typically involves human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen (Quirk, 1985, p. 219). This theory can lead to the idea that epistemic modality can be imagined as a scale of different grades of certainty which is the result of a logical reflection (Tárnýiková, 1985, p. 11-12). Coates confirms the theory written by Tárnýiková and adds that modals in epistemic modality can be placed at the two ends of a scale – confidence and doubt. The author also adds one principal definition: “In most cases epistemic modality indicates speaker’s confidence or lack of confidence in the truth of the proposition” (Coates, 1983, p. 18).

To sum up the difference between deontic and epistemic modality, examples [2] and [3] are stated below.

[2] You *must* write your homework.

[3] a. He *must* be at home.

b. He *may* be at home.

c. He *might* be at home.

d. He *can't* be at home.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 11-12)

The example [2] represents deontic modality as the speaker imposes obligation. The sentence can be paraphrased as *It is necessary for you to write your homework*. As well as in this example, deontic modality refers to actions and events that humans directly control.

As it was already mentioned, epistemic modality expresses a scale of different kinds of certainty. It can be clearly explained on the example [3]. The example [3] a. can be paraphrased as *It is necessarily the case that he is at home* and it denotes to the speaker's judgement of the proposition that he is at home. To all examples in [3] Tárnyiková adds: "A considerable degree of certainty is represented by the verb *must*, decreasing certainty by the verbs *may* and *might* and negated certainty mainly by the form *can't*. However, even the usage of *must* is not identical with the total certainty. The absolute certainty is expressed only by the indicative *He is at home*. The situation is the same with *He can't be at home* \neq *He is not at home*" (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 11-12).

To conclude this chapter, the main difference between deontic and epistemic modality should be mentioned. Whereas deontic modality expresses mainly speaker's permission, obligation or intention, epistemic modality presents different degrees of speaker's confidence about the proposition.

Deontic and epistemic modality will be mentioned in detail during the analysis of different meanings of *can* and *may* as they can express both kinds of modality.

3. Modal verbs

3.1 Characteristics and rules of modal verbs

This chapter will include a list of modal auxiliaries and description of typical characteristics of the modal verbs. As modal auxiliaries have a wide range of qualities, only the most important features will be mentioned.

To begin with, the list of the modal auxiliaries should be stated. Many linguists, for instance Biber and Lewis, claim that there are nine modal auxiliaries. As Lewis says, these particular modals can be identified in this way: All verbs which can fill the space in this short sentence: *He...come.*, belong to the list of the modal auxiliaries. These are *can, could, shall, should, may, might, will, would* and *must* (Lewis, 1986, p. 100). Biber et al. confirm that all the mentioned verbs belong to nine central modal auxiliary verbs (Biber, 1999, p. 483).

Next part will deal with the characteristics and rules of the modal verbs. Their characteristics can be divided into two parts. Firstly, modal verbs have some features which are the same for all auxiliaries. Secondly, they have several specific features that can be applied only to the modal auxiliaries.

One of the features, which are shared by all auxiliaries, is an operator in negation with *not*. Dušková adds that modal verbs and negative particle *not* in its reduced form *n't* create one unit. The exception is the modal verb *can* which creates one unit also with a full negative particle → *cannot*. Next feature that all auxiliaries have in common is that they admit inversion of subject and operator when making questions.

Now, several morphological and syntactic criteria which apply specifically to modal verbs will be introduced. The first and very important feature is that modal verbs are followed by infinitive without *to* (bare infinitive). Another important characteristic is that the modal verbs cannot occur in non-finite forms. Modal verbs can basically occur in two, finite, forms and these are present and preterite form. The infinitive and other forms are expressed by paraphrases, which are generally known

as *be able to* for can and *be allowed to* for may. Modal verbs also do not form imperative and passive structures. Quirk points out that there are some more specific features of the modal verbs, for instance there is no inflexion in 3rd person. The omission of *-s* has historical origin (Quirk, 1985, p. 128). Quirk also states the term *abnormal time reference* which means that not only the present forms, but also past forms can refer to present or future as it is in the example [4].

[4] I think he may/might retire next May.

(Quirk, 1985, p. 128)

At the end, Dušková presents the last important characteristic: “Modal verbs differ semantically from other auxiliaries and lexical verbs. Whereas auxiliary verbs do not have their own meaning, modal verbs have their own meaning, but not independent. Meanings of the modal verbs lie in modification of a lexical meaning (Dušková, 1994, p. 182).

More detailed information about the characteristics of the modal auxiliaries can be found in Quirk (1985), Tárnyiková (1985) or Dušková (1994).

3.2 Meanings and usage of can

In this part, different meanings of the modal verb *can* will be introduced. The following subchapters will deal with particular meanings of the verb. Palmer has suggested that searching for meanings of each individual modal is a messy area (Palmer in Lewis, 1986, p. 103). And the situation is not different when talking about the modal verb *can*. Tárníková says that each modal verb can be divided into several components. For instance, *can* includes these components: ability, possibility, contingency, request, permission, suggestion, offer, command or willingness. She adds that these are not close series of components because it must be counted with the extinction of the old component and with the creation of new ones (Tárníková, 1985, p. 20-21). As all these components are too detailed, *can* change or become extinct, I will analyze three major meanings presented by Quirk.

Quirk points out that *can* has three major meanings, these are possibility, ability and permission (Quirk, 1985, p. 221). Consequently, these meanings will be analyzed in a detail. It should be taken into account that *can* in its positive form never expresses epistemic modality. The negative form of *can* (*can't*, *cannot*) is epistemic when it is used as a negative for the modal verb *must* as *must not* is used only for non-epistemic meaning (Coates, 1983, p. 19). Biber et al. claim that generally occurrence of *can* is extremely common. According to the author, *can* is very common in conversation and academic prose (Biber et al., 1999, p. 487). Leech explains similar idea in more detail. The use of possibility meaning of *can* is very common, ability meaning is common and at the end he mentions that the use of permission meaning is less common (Leech, 2004, p. 73-74). Coates agrees with the classification and highlights that *can* – deontic possibility has primary use, whereas *can* – ability and permission have secondary use (Coates, 1983, p. 5).

3.2.1 Can – possibility meaning

First meaning of *can* which will be analyzed closely is the possibility meaning. *Can* in its possibility meaning primarily expresses deontic modality so it would be convenient to mark this meaning of *can* as deontic possibility. The speaker's attitude

to the truth of the proposition is not involved in the meaning of the modal and it is generally paraphrasable by *It is possible* followed by *for + noun phrase + to + infinitive construction*. Quirk states one example for better understanding:

[5] Even expert drivers can make mistakes.

(Quirk, 1985, p. 221)

The fifth example can be paraphrased in this way: *It is possible for even expert drivers to make mistake*. In case that *can* expresses future possibility, it can be paraphrased by the help of *It will be possible...* (Quirk, 1985, p. 222).

Coates points out that there can be possibility meaning of *can* which usually occurs when no external circumstances are specified. She states the following example:

[6] Well, I think there is a place where I can get a cheap kettle.

(Coates, 1983, p. 95)

This could be paraphrased as *There is nothing to prevent me getting a cheap kettle*. If the example were a negative sentence, it would be paraphrased as *It isn't the case that nothing prevents me getting a cheap kettle* (Coates, 1983, p. 95).

This meaning often occurs in declarative sentences which will occur very often in my analysis regarding type of texts and style. Leech adds that *can* (possibility) also have a habitual meaning which corresponds to the adverb *sometimes*. He presents another example:

[7] Lightning can be very dangerous. = Lightning is sometimes very dangerous.

(Leech, 2004, p. 73)

Tárnyiková adds one more interesting finding – *can* frequently occurs with adverbs possibly and perhaps. She presents several examples, one of which is displayed below:

[8] Perhaps we can now meet again as friends.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 28)

The above mentioned example can be combinable with the adverbs perhaps or possibly in this meaning.

3.2.2 Can – ability meaning

Another meaning of *can* to be analyzed is ability. This meaning applies to deontic modality as *can* does not express epistemic modality except for *can't* (negative form to must). Ability is considered a special case of possibility. Leech confirms this theory by claiming that there is no clear distinction between ability and possibility. The author adds that if someone has the ability to do some activities, then these activities in a sense are possible. Leech also claims that ability meaning can be paraphrased by *know how to* or *be capable of* (Leech, 2004, p. 74). To this theory Quirk adds that for this sense *can* may be paraphrased also by *be able to* or *be possible* construction. He explains that this is the reason why ability meaning is sometimes considered a part of possibility meaning (Quirk, 1985, p. 222). Coates states the example of *can* in its ability meaning which can be paraphrased as *I am able to type very slowly...*

[9] I can only type very slowly as I am quite a beginner.

(Coates, 1983, p. 89)

Tárnyiková points out that *can* in its ability meaning can display mental power, physical power, eventually combination of both previous, skill or knowledge. She presents these examples for better understanding. First example stands for mental power, second sentence expresses physical power, the third one represents combination of both previous kinds of powers and the last example stands for skill or knowledge.

[10] a. I can remember it.

b. I can carry heavy loads.

- c. We Woosters can keep the stiff upper lip.
- d. I can sing C sharp.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 23)

Although these ability and possibility meanings are similar, there are some obvious differences between these two meanings. For instance, Leech mentions that whereas ability and permission meanings require a human or animate subject, possibility meaning is the only one which can occur with inanimate subject (Leech, 2004, p. 74). See example [7] where *can* is connected with inanimate subject and represents possibility meaning.

As it has been already mentioned, *can* – ability requires mainly human subject. In case the inanimate subject occurs with ability meaning, it is often connected with the use of figurative language as it is in the following example where the inanimate subject *science* stands for the animate *scientists*.

[11] Wonderful what science can do.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 24)

Another distinguishing feature can be the use of passive or active voice. Whereas passive voice is typical to occur with the possibility meaning, active voice is often used with ability meaning. To this explanation author adds the following sentences where he displays different use of voice, first example represents passive voice and possibility meaning, whereas second sentence represents active voice and ability meaning.

[12] a. This game can be played by young children.

- b. Young children can play this game.

(Leech, 2004, p. 74)

As Tárnyiková explains, passive voice deprives subject of possibility of being an agent. Thus, the passive voice does not express ability but possibility (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 25).

The last remark concerning ability meaning of *can* belongs to the difference between the ability which was achieved and the ability which does not admit the realization. The author states two examples from which the difference can be clearly seen. The first sentence displays ability which was achieved and it uses *be able to*, whereas the second example presents only a potential ability and it uses *could*.

[13] a. I was able to catch the bus.

b. He was a man who could do the right and public spirited thing when the occasion called.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 26)

The first sentence displaying achieved ability indicates the fact that *I caught the bus*. On the contrary, the second example indicates only a potential ability and it expresses the fact that *He could do the right and public spirited thing*, but there is no further information if he did so or not, ability is potential in this case.

3.2.3 Can – permission meaning

The last meaning of *can* to be analyzed is permission. Permission meaning belongs to deontic modality as it is an action which person can directly control. According to Quirk, permission meaning can be paraphrased by *be allowed to* construction. He states the following example.

[14] a. Can we borrow these books from the library?

(Quirk, 1985, p. 222)

The example can be paraphrased as *Are we allowed to borrow these book from the library?* Coates adds that sentences containing can - permission can be paraphrased also

with the word *permitted* (Coates, 1983, p. 87). Thus, the example can also be paraphrased as *Are we permitted to borrow these books from the library?*

As Quirk points out, it is interesting to note that permission meaning is often combinable with an adverbial *tomorrow*, whereas ability meaning normally is not. The following example illustrates *can* in its permission meaning, combined with *tomorrow*.

[15] You can borrow my typewriter tomorrow.

(Quirk, 1985, p. 223)

Quirk highlights the information that in this sense *can* is less formal and polite than *may* (Quirk, 1985, p. 222). Leech claims that the permission meaning can be sometimes regarded as a strong recommendation and he states the example:

[16] You can forget about your holiday.

(Leech, 2004, p. 75)

Leech adds that this example is close to an offensive remark with impolite tone which brings irony.

More detailed information about meanings of the modal verb *can* can be found in chapter 3.4 where relations between *can* and *may* in their permission and possibility meanings are clearly described.

3.3 Meanings and usage of may

In the following chapters, different meanings of *may* will be described. To begin with, it must be noticed that the modal verb *may* does not belong to very frequent but still quite frequent modal auxiliaries. As Lewis confirms, *may* is a relatively rare word, but still is quite often used in certain meanings. Many linguists agree that essential meanings of *may* are possibility and permission. However, *may* can express both

epistemic and deontic possibility. These meanings will be analyzed in a detail. Leech adds one more meaning – exclamatory wish, which can occur, as he says, very rarely. More detailed information about this meaning of *may* can be found in Leech (2004).

3.3.1 May – possibility meaning - epistemic x deontic possibility

One of the meanings of *may* which will be analyzed now is possibility meaning. It is interesting to note that although *may* is primarily used to express epistemic possibility, it can also express deontic possibility. Epistemic possibility expresses speaker's lack of confidence in the proposition expressed. "Where enabling circumstances are mentioned in context, we can talk about deontic possibility of *may*" (Coates, 1983, p. 141). Moreover, deontic possibility is restricted to more formal contexts. The difference can be shown on the following examples:

[17] a. I may be a few minutes late.

b. I am afraid this is the bank's final word. I tell you this so that you may make arrangements elsewhere if you are able to.

(Coates, 1983, p. 132)

The first example expresses epistemic possibility and can be paraphrased as *It is possible that I am/will be late...I don't know...Perhaps, I am/will be late*. The second sentence expresses deontic possibility and can be paraphrased as *It is allowed/permissible/possible for you to make arrangements elsewhere...or My telling you this will enable you to make arrangements elsewhere...While the epistemic possibility can express an idea similar to I am not sure yet, the deontic possibility expresses an idea that everything is arranged, nothing prevents you doing something and may can be substituted by deontic can - possibility. For the difference between deontic possibilities between can and may, see 3.4.1.*

Moreover, epistemic *may* is typically characterized by flexibility of time reference and its use as a "hedge", which means that the speaker tries to avoid answering a question or making a decision in a definite or direct way. To this theory Coates explains: "The speaker avoids committing himself to the truth of

the proposition” (Coates, 1983, p. 134). In other words, this means that speaker tries to dispose of full responsibility for the meaning of the sentence. See the following example:

[18] I may come tomorrow.

This example contains hedging *may*, where assessment of possibilities is approximately 50/50 and it can be paraphrased as *I may or may not come tomorrow, I am not sure yet.*

Concerning deontic possibility of *may*, it should be pointed out that *may* is never found with negation. Thus, *may + not* can be used only with epistemic possibility. Moreover, *may* in negation can be normally used with *may – permission*. Negation of epistemic possibility can be seen in the following example which can be paraphrased as *It is possible that it is not perfect...*

[19] It may not be perfect, but at least it has some of the qualities that one looks for in a modern city centre.

(Coates, 1983, p. 135)

The epistemic possibility meaning is also used when the subject is not specific but is substituted by general expressions, for instance *one, you, fellow, a person*. Other situations when this meaning can be used are mental processes as it is not logical to give them the permission (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 37).

To conclude this chapter, it should be mentioned that possibility meaning of *may* can express both deontic and epistemic modality. Nevertheless, it can be said that in all kinds of texts epistemic *may* occurs much more frequently than deontic *may*. It can occur in statements and does not appear in questions. The modal verbs *can* or *could* are used instead of *may* in questions. However, in more formal texts, the occurrence of deontic possibility may be higher.

3.3.2 May – permission meaning

Concerning permission meaning of *may*, the first necessary thing to be mentioned is that the permission meaning belongs to deontic modality. The occurrence of the permission meaning of *may* is rather rare as the main modal verbs expressing permission is *can*. *May* in this meaning is considered more formal and polite and also less common. However, *may* is possible to be substituted by *can*. For the difference between permission meanings of *can* and *may*, see 3.4.2.

[20] May I read your message?

The example above introduces *may* in permission meaning, which can be paraphrased as *Do you allow me to read your message?*

Concerning epistemic possibility and permission meanings of *may*, it should be noticed that although they are sometimes very close, their distinction is not impossible. It is said that only permission meaning can be found in questions and there is one more important difference in the forms of negation. Possibility meaning is negated in this way: “*It is possible that...not...*”. On the contrary, permission sense is negated in the following way: “*You are not permitted to...*” (Leech, 2004, p. 76). For negation containing *may* - possibility, see the example [19], for the question including *may* – permission, see example [20]. The following example introduces negation with *may* - permission, which can be paraphrased as *You are not permitted to go...or I do not permit you to go*.

[21] You may not go until you’ve finished your work.

Dušková claims that expressing future or past is done by *be allowed to* construction, however it is possible to refer to the future only by the present form of *may* (Dušková, 1994, p. 191). See the following examples where both ways are presented.

[22] a. The children will not be/were not allowed to go bathing alone.

b. May I come tomorrow?

Tárnyiková adds several important findings. Interesting information is that the use of an inanimate subject excludes the use of permission meaning as it is not logical to give the permission to inanimate items.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that there is one more occurrence of *may* - permission. This occurrence is characteristic for *If-clauses* where speaker cautiously tries to include his own opinion in the sentence. Tárnyiková adds the example:

[23] He presents the crux, if I may say so.

(Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 40)

To conclude the paragraphs about the modal verb *may*, it should be taken into account that *may* can express possibility, both deontic and epistemic, and permission meanings.

3.4 Relations between can and may

To conclude the whole chapter and all subchapters about the modal auxiliaries, relations and differences between the modal verbs *can* and *may* should be stated. The reason why this theory should be analyzed is that there are close relations between *can* and *may* concerning their deontic possibility and permission meanings.

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that it is almost impossible to find two and more modal verbs which could be interchangeable, there are often at least slight differences of meanings. Quirk confirms that *can* and *may* cannot occur in free variation, generally without indicating meanings. The author highlights that there is only a little overlap between possibility and permission meanings of *can* and *may*. He points out that the overlap can be mainly found in written formal language (Quirk, 1985, p. 220).

3.4.1 Can x may in possibility meanings

Firstly, deontic possibility of *can* and epistemic possibility of *may* will be compared. Although these two meanings do not overlap in meaning, it is important to see clear differences. The main difference is that *may* expresses “factual possibility” and *can* represents “theoretical possibility”. Leech states two sentences for better understanding:

[24] a. The road may be blocked. → It is possible that the road is blocked.

Perhaps the road is blocked.

b. The road can be blocked. → It is possible for the road to be blocked.

It is possible to block the road.

(Leech, 2004, p. 81)

To these examples author adds: “The first sentence may be paraphrased by *It is possible* followed by *that-clause*, the second example may be paraphrased by *It is possible* followed by *for + noun phrase + to + infinitive construction*”.

Coates adds to this theory that *may* in its epistemic possibility meaning is close to *perhaps* (Coates, 1983, p. 103).

Leech claims that factual possibility is stronger than theoretical possibility. He explains this theory on the following examples:

[25] a. This illness can be fatal.

b. This illness may be fatal.

(Leech, 2004, p. 82)

As Leech writes, the second sentence should be more worrying than the first one. Whereas *can* expresses only a theoretical possibility, *may* represents a factual possibility and displays the event actually happening. However, *may* is sometimes used

to express both theoretical and factual possibility in formal English. The typical feature for *can* – possibility is that it is often used in general statements, unlike *may*. Compare:

[26] a. A friend can betray you.

b. A friend may betray you.

(Leech, 2004, p. 82)

Whereas the first sentence has general meaning, the second example with *may* is similar to warning about one particular person, not general.

Secondly, deontic possibility of *can* and *may* should be mentioned as there is overlap between these two meanings. Coates highlights that there is only a little overlap between *can* and *may* in deontic possibility as *may* is primarily used to express epistemic possibility. The occurrence of deontic possibility of *may* can be higher when texts are more formal as *may* express deontic possibility rather than epistemic possibility in formal contexts (Coates, 1983, p. 103).

3.4.2 Can x may in permission meaning

The next difference which should be taken into account is the difference between *may* and *can* in their permission meanings. Here, the situation is much more simple. *May* in permission meaning is used especially in more formal and polite contexts and also in several fixed phrases such as *If I may, may I be allowed*, which cannot be substituted by *can* (Leech, 2004, p. 82).

Similarly, Coates adds that *may* cannot be substituted by *can* without losing the formal marking (Coates, 1983, str. 106).

Quirk confirms the theory: “In this sense, *can* is less formal than *may*”. As Quirk points out, another difference between these two modals in the permission meaning is that *may* is particularly associated with permission given by speaker and *can* means permission in a more general and impersonal sense. Quirk states these two sentences to display the difference.

[27] a. You may leave when you like. (= I permit you...)

b. You can leave when you like. (= You are permitted...)

(Quirk, 1985, p. 224)

As it has been mentioned by Leech, also Tárnyiková agree that *can* in permission meaning is considered to be a less formal opposite of *may* - permission (Tárnyiková, 1985, p. 29). Dušková confirms this theory and emphasizes that permission *may* is more polite in the 1st person in questions whereas permission *can* is more polite for the 2nd or the 3rd person in declarative sentences. She states these examples to express politeness.

[28] a. May I use your phone?

b. You can leave earlier today.

(Dušková, 1994, p. 188)

To conclude the whole chapter about the modal verbs *can* and *may*, it should be taken into account that *can* has three major meanings: possibility, ability and permission. The modal verb *may* can be found in two main meanings, these are possibility and permission. It is important to note that *can* expresses only deontic possibility, *may* represents both epistemic and deontic possibility, so it is possible to state that *may* has also three different meanings. The main difference between overlapping meanings, which are deontic possibility and permission, lies in a degree of formality. More differences can be found in the analysis, where the distinguishing features are connected with the particular examples.

4. Analysis

This part of my bachelor paper concentrates on the analysis of the modal verbs *can*, *may* and their deontic and epistemic meanings and partly it focuses on the characteristic of the administrative style.

This analytical part of my paper focuses on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the analysis. The main aim of the qualitative analysis is to apply data and findings collected in the theoretical part to the analyzed sentences and prove that the features discussed in the theoretical part correspond to the modal verbs in the sentences analyzed. The main aim is also to state the synonymous occurrence of the overlapping meanings of *can* and *may*. The main aim of quantitative analysis is to state the frequency of the modal verbs and their individual meanings in the analyzed documents. At the end of the analysis, all findings and results are summarised.

As the source of the primary data, two different Command Papers which belong to the Official documents of the British government were used. These two Command Papers consist of: The learning revolution and Department for Children, Schools and Families: Departmental report 2009.

The data corpus consists of 206 sentences containing one of the analyzed modal verbs – *can* or *may*. All sentences are numbered and marked with “A” or “B” according to the particular Command Paper in which they occurred. A number of a page can be found in the brackets behind each sentence. The data corpus can be found in Appendix 1.

4.1 Administrative style

This chapter will focus on the description of the administrative style. It is necessary to mention the characteristic of the style as it is the style which occurs in the documents analyzed.

Due to its directness, the administrative style is connected with the publicistic style, but it is more close to the scientific style. Concerning the characteristic of the style, its typical features are pragmatism, clarity, explicitness, lucidity and briefness (Knittlová, 2000, p. 15). Concerning clarity, it means that everything should be explained and no ambiguous sentences can occur. It is important to mention that the author (writer or speaker) goes to the background of the information and also personal relationship to the addressee is often blurred as this style is considered highly impersonal. This finding can be proved by the use of passive voice, avoiding connotations and emotionally marked words.

The author adds that concerning the stylistic point of view, this style is rather stereotyped and lexically poor (Knittlová, 2000, p. 15). It means that for instance clichés and set expressions are used very frequently and that some words are used often repetitively, without the use of synonymy for example. According to Gal'perin, style of official documents can be characterised by the use of terms, set expressions, by the use of abbreviations, symbols and signs agreed in advance, by the primary lexical meaning of words and by avoiding emotionally marked words (Gal'perin in Knittlová, 2000, p. 16).

This style is considered highly conventional, it uses many words of foreign origin, abstract nouns and complex sentences. That is one of the reasons why the style of official documents can be sometimes termed "officialese" which expresses quite pejorative or negative attitude. It means that in contrast to the language of conversation or colloquial language, this style is considered to be full of terminology, stiff formulas and not clearly understandable. However, the comprehensibility of the official documents is a matter of time because it improves with memorizing frequent phrases, formulas, set expression or terminology (Knittlová, 2000, p. 17).

4.2 Can and may in administrative texts

4.2.1 Can

To begin with, it is necessary to mention that the meanings of the modal verb *can* included in the analysis are deontic possibility, ability and permission. As British Command Papers are primary data, I expected declarative sentences to occur in majority of examples. According to Biber et al., generally occurrence of *can* in different texts is very common (Biber et al., 1999, p. 487). The modal verb *can* occurred in both British Command Papers in 172 cases out of 206, thus it occurred in 83% of sentences which were analyzed. In comparison with the second analyzed modal verb *may*, *can* occurred in the majority of examples. When analyzing different meanings of *can* in detail, other findings were proved. The possibility meaning of *can* occurs very often, ability meaning is less common and the permission meaning is the least frequent (Leech, 2004, p. 73-74). These findings can be also supported by the results of the analysis. All of these meanings occurred in the analysis and will be analyzed in detail in following chapters.

4.2.1.1 *Can - possibility*

It is interesting to note that deontic possibility meaning of *can* occurred in 128 sentences, which includes 74% of all sentences with *can*, and 62% of both modal verbs and all their meanings. Thus, *can* in its possibility meaning is used the most often in the whole analysis. The fact that this meaning of *can* occurred in majority of cases is supported by Coates, who claims that *can* in its possibility meaning is much more typical for formal texts than *can* in its ability meaning (Coates, 1983, p. 100). See the following examples where the first sentence representing ability meaning is less formal than the second example expressing possibility meaning. It should be noticed that the second example contains passive voice which is also typical for more formal texts.

1. We **can** provide the framework to support individuals, communities, the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to create opportunities for informal learning. (125A, p. 5)
2. This is in recognition of the increasing numbers of consortia delivering, or planning to deliver, Diplomas and the resulting wider range of needs; the longer-

term need to ensure that the 2013 entitlement **can** be delivered; and the intention that the support currently provided by a central support package will need to be replaced by mainstream support over the same timescale. (121B, p. 238)

The possibility sense of *can* is considered neutral and suitable to many contexts. This meaning can be paraphrased as *It is possible followed by for + noun phrase + to + infinitive construction*. Other characteristics of the possibility meaning, which have been discussed in detail in chapter 3.2.1, can be seen on the following examples. One of the typical features is that it occurs often in declarative sentences.

3. Absence **can** lead to an increased risk of harm or injury for children, or their potential involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour. (72B, p. 68)

It can be paraphrased as “It is possible for absence to lead to an increased risk of harm or injury for children...” The use of declarative sentences is also typical for administrative texts, as it is in my analysis where all sentences were declarative.

As it has been discussed in chapter 3.2.2, the use of inanimate subject in combination with the passive voice belongs to the most typical features of the possibility meaning.

4. It has been received with enthusiasm and has stimulated a vibrant and engaged debate on how best public money **can** be spent to support a learning society where the combination of public, voluntary and private sector provision guarantees the widest choice of learning to all, and where the state guarantees access and opportunity for those in greatest need. (60A, p. 50)

The example above can be paraphrased as “It has been received with enthusiasm and has stimulated a vibrant and engaged debate on how it is possible for public money to be spent to support learning society...” It should be noticed that these two features occurred very frequently - the inanimate subject occurred in 70% and the passive voice occurred in 29% out of 128 sentences expressing possibility meaning of *can*.

Although this meaning can occur with the element of external circumstances, it can also appear in sentences where no external circumstances are specified. Both cases can be seen on the following examples.

5. The Open University's (OU) Openlearn site offers free resources that **can** be used, adapted, redesigned or translated by others, with the resulting quality assured resources shared via OU's LearningSpace. (46A, p. 38)
6. DH will encourage Primary CareTrusts (PCTs) and Healthy Living Centres to sign the informal adult learning pledge and where possible and affordable, open up their spaces so that self-organised groups **can** meet in local community health settings. (23A, p. 22)
7. The campaign involves a range of activity to generate debate and support more father-friendly practice – for example, the development of a simple 'dad test' to help service providers assess their provision and give them easy ideas for changes they **can** make to meet the needs of both parents more effectively. (67B, p. 27)

The example 5 can be paraphrased as “It is possible for free resources to be used, adapted, redesigned or translated by others,...” or “The Open University's (OU) Openlearn site offers free resources that will be perhaps/possibly used, adapted, redesigned or translated by others,...” Except the use of inanimate subject and passive voice as it has been already mentioned in the previous example, the paraphrase also includes adverbs *perhaps* and *possibly*. This example also contains the mentioned element of external circumstances. External circumstances allow you to do something, thus in this sentence The Open University's (OU) Openlearn site allows free resources to be used, adapted, redesigned or translated by others... The example 6 also includes element of external circumstances - Primary CareTrusts and Healthy Living Centres will open up their spaces so that self-organised groups can meet in local community health settings – Primary CareTrusts and Healthy Living Centres will allow, enable to self-organized groups to meet in local community health settings. The last example represents the case of *can* – possibility, where no external circumstances are specified. In comparison with the example 5 and 6 where there are particular external circumstances, this sentence has no external circumstances and can be paraphrased as “There is nothing to prevent them making...” The occurrence of the meaning where there were no external circumstances was much higher than the number of examples where certain circumstances were specified.

As it has been mentioned in the theoretical part, the possibility meaning of *can* is close to meaning of adverb *sometimes*. The next typical feature included in these sentences is

the occurrence of non-specific subject (people). Other non-specific subjects can be for instance *you*, *one* or *fellow*. See the following examples presenting both features.

8. During the informal adult learning consultation, people reported that it **can** be hard to find out about informal learning opportunities - what's available, venue, cost, whether there's disability access and so on. (42A, p. 36)
9. Participation will increase on all routes to ensure young people **can** make the choices they want. (99B, p. 184)

The example above can be paraphrased as "During informal adult learning consultation, people reported that sometimes it is hard to find out about informal learning opportunities..." The part of the sentence "it can be hard to find out..." expresses possibility, it means that sometimes it is hard to find out and sometimes it is not hard to find out. Another example can be paraphrased as "Participation will increase on all routes to ensure that it will be possible for young people to make the choices they want." When talking about possibility, there is no certainty that something would happen, there are more choices. Thus the adverb sometimes can perfectly represent element of possibility, potentiality.

The possibility sense of *can* was the most used meaning in the analysis as it is used for more formal contexts which certainly occurs in the analysis as the primary resources as British Command Papers. At the same time, it is logical that possibility meaning was used the most often as ability meaning is used in preference in less formal texts and permission meaning generally occurs less frequently. Due to the characteristic of the subject and the verb, which are often inanimate subject and verb used in passive voice, it suits more to the formal contexts.

4.2.1.2 *Can* – ability

Ability meaning of *can* occurred in 26 cases out of 172 sentences containing *can*. Thus, *can* – ability represents 15% of all examples with *can* and 13% out of all sentences analyzed. *Can* in its ability meaning is the second most used sense in the analysis. Consequently, typical features of ability meaning of *can* will be analyzed.

As it has been mentioned in the chapter 3.2.2, one of the most typical features of this sense is the element of human subject. This feature, which can be seen on the following example, occurred in 15 cases out of all 26 sentences containing *can* in its ability meaning.

10. We **can** provide the framework to support individuals, communities, the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to create opportunities for informal learning. (125A, p. 5)

This example containing human subject can be paraphrased as “We are able to provide the framework to support individuals, communities...” Nevertheless, inanimate subject can sometimes occur. In this case, the meaning of the inanimate subject is close to figurative language. It can be seen on the following example, where subject *organisations* stands for *people in organizations*.

11. The funding criteria will encourage a wide range of bids from organisations that **can** reach into communities and support adults who are excluded and disadvantaged. (131A, p. 25)

Except having animate subject, the following sentence contains another important feature – active voice. The use of active voice occurred in 25 sentences out of 26 examples containing *can* – ability, which is the absolute majority.

12. This is set to rise to £74.2 billion in 2010–11, helping to ensure that we **can** continue to give every child the best start in life. (139B, p. 3)

The example above, containing active voice, can be paraphrased as “...We are able to continue to give every child the best start in live.” Other paraphrases for this meaning of *can* are *know how to*, *be capable of* or *be possible*.

Coates claims that *can* - ability occurs frequently in informal spoken language which is in contrast with the style of the analyzed Command Papers (Coates, 1983, p. 100). Thus the frequency of ability meaning is relatively low in comparison with the possibility meaning as possibility meaning uses passive voice and inanimate subjects which is

typical for more formal texts and not for informal spoken language. For the most typical features of the possibility meaning, see chapter 4.2.1.1.

4.2.1.3 Undecidable occurrences

As it has been mentioned in the theoretical part, it is not always clear whether the modal verb *can* expresses ability or possibility, as ability is sometimes considered a special case of possibility. If someone has the ability to do some activities, then these activities in a sense are possible. Thus, several undecidable occurrences of *can* are included in my analysis. The following examples illustrate 5 unclear meanings out of 128 sentences containing the modal verb *can*.

13. Together we **can** support a flourishing landscape of informal learning, engaging libraries, museums, the arts and sports, broadcasters, community organisations, healthy living centres, online communities, colleges, universities and schools and encouraging learning in all its many guises. (198A, p. 2)
14. The paper sets out how together we **can** sow the seeds of a new movement for learning. (199A, p. 3)
15. We recognise we **can** do more to ensure there is a wide choice of inspiring opportunities in every community, accessible to everyone. (200A, p. 5)
16. Broadcasters and technology companies **can** popularise issues and connect entertainment with learning, helping viewers and listeners to develop an initial interest into something richer. (201A, p. 33)
17. NI 4 % of people who feel they **can** influence decisions in their locality (PSA 21) (202A, p. 47)

Although these examples contain animate subject and active voice, which is typical feature of ability meaning, it is not clear whether these occurrences can be paraphrased as “*we are able to...*” or “*it is possible for us to...*” For instance, the example 15 can be paraphrased as “We recognize we are able to do more to ensure...” or “We recognize that it is possible for us to ensure...” Some sentences which were also unclear to determinate, were in the end specified due to context, but it was not always possible.

4.2.1.4 Can – permission

It should be taken into account that *can* in its permission meaning occurred in 13 sentences out of 172 cases containing *can*. It represents 8% of sentences containing *can*

and 6% of all analyzed sentences. As it was discussed in the chapter 3.2.3, paraphrases, which are typical for this sense, are *be allowed to*, *be permitted to*. It can be seen on the following example:

18. Booktalk groups **can** make use of extended book loans, meeting spaces and an online space called 'Ask Chris' all provided by the library service. (151A, p. 22)

The example above can be paraphrased as "Booktalk groups are allowed to make use of extended book loans, meeting spaces..." Another possible paraphrase to this sentence can be "Booktalk groups are permitted to make use of extended book loans, meeting spaces..."

Another feature is that permission can be combinable with an adverbial *tomorrow*, whereas ability normally is not. See the following examples, where *tomorrow* can be added to sentences including can - permission:

19. In relation to higher education, all UK universities have stated that an Advanced Diploma holder **can** access undergraduate courses at their institution. (154B, p. 105)
20. Of course that does not mean they **can** access any course, just as few students with humanities A levels will be allowed on to science degrees. (155B, p. 105)
21. Young people **can** apply for the Youth Opportunity Fund to fund activities that they identify as most needed in their local areas. (158B, p. 196)

These examples can be combinable with *tomorrow* because it is suitable to add it to the sentences, it does not affect or change the meaning of the sentence. However, concerning ability meaning, it would be inappropriate to add this adverbial to the sentence. For instance, the sentence "Across the country, parents are doing all that they can to provide the best care and education for their children." (143B, p. 6). This sentence can be paraphrased as "Across the country, parents are doing all that they are able to/capable to provide the best care and education for their children." It would make no sense or it would change the meaning if the adverbial *tomorrow* would be added.

Although it is obvious that permission meaning is the least used meaning concerning the modal verb *can*, it should be taken into account that *can* – permission occurred more often than *may* – permission, as *can* is the main modal expressing permission.

4.2.2 May

May was the second modal verb included in the analysis and it occurred in 34 cases out of 206, which represents 17%. As it was discussed in the theoretical part, *may* can be found in three main meanings, these are deontic possibility, epistemic possibility and permission. All mentioned meanings occurred in the analysis at least once. As it has been already mentioned, overlapping meanings with the modal verb *can* are deontic possibility and permission. For the difference, see chapter 3.4. This matter will be analyzed in a separate chapter at the end of the analysis.

4.2.2.1 May – deontic possibility

The first meaning to mention is deontic possibility which is the third most used meaning out of all meanings included in whole analysis. It occurred in 17 sentences out of 34 containing the modal verb *may*, which is 50%. In whole analysis it represents 9% of all analyzed sentences. As it has been discussed in the theoretical part, one of the typical characteristic is the paraphrase *It is possible for...* In this sense, *may* is overlapping with *can* – deontic possibility. All typical features of this meaning can be seen on the following examples.

22. A further issue is that some material which **may** support informal learning produced by different broadcasting companies is not routinely available on demand. (170A, p. 46)

This example can be paraphrased as “It is possible for some material to support informal learning...” or “A further issue is that some material which can support informal learning...”

To conclude this sense of *may*, it should be mentioned that the relative frequency of *may* in its deontic meanings (deontic possibility, permission) can be explained by

the formality of these meanings, these two senses are often used in written material (Coates, 1983, p. 24). Generally, without considering any special context or style, the modal verb *may* expresses mainly epistemic possibility. However, in my analysis it is used more often than epistemic possibility, as deontic possibility is restricted to highly formal context, which definitely occurs in the analyzed Command Papers.

4.2.2.2 *May – epistemic possibility*

The second kind of *may* – possibility is epistemic. It occurred in 15 sentences out of 34 sentences containing *may* and it represents 44%. Overall, *may* in this sense includes 7% of all sentences in analysis. This meaning occurred also quite often as *may* mostly expresses epistemic possibility. Epistemic possibility expresses speaker's lack of confidence in the proposition expressed. This can be obvious from the following examples.

23. The 2007-08 figures are provisional and **may** change. (194B, p. 180)

This example may be paraphrased as “It is possible that figures will change.”

As it has been mentioned in the chapter 3.3.1, one of the features typical for this sense is also the use of *may* as a hedge, which can be seen on the following examples. From this example, which can be paraphrased as “It is possible that other people find it more difficult to access informal learning”, it may be obvious that the speaker tries to avoid expressing in a direct way. This feature can be applied to all sentences containing *may* – epistemic possibility.

24. Other people **may** find it more difficult to access informal learning. (185A, p. 24)

The following sentence contains another feature which is also applicable to all sentences containing this sense of *may* – assessment of possibilities is approximately 50/50 and it can be paraphrased as “Readers may or may not be interested, I am not sure...”

25. Improving outcomes for children and young people means working across government, and readers **may** also be interested in the Departmental Reports of other government departments, for example, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Department of Health (DH), Home Office (HO) and HM Treasury (HMT). (190B, p. 12)

The following sentence also expresses epistemic possibility as *may have* expresses always epistemic modality and can be paraphrased as “It is possible that the trend in obesity prevalence began to flatten out over the last two or three years.” Determination of epistemic possibility meaning is supported by the following sentence which clarifies that the speaker is not confident about the proposition expressed. (“However, confirmation of this change will require at least one more year’s data.”)

26. According to the 2007 HSE report, there are indications that the trend in obesity prevalence **may** have begun to flatten out over the last two to three years. (191B, p. 20)

The next example can be paraphrased as “Perhaps, people feel that learning isn’t for them or they perhaps struggle to find out what is available.” As it can be seen from this sentence, this sense of *may* is close to the word *perhaps*, which also implies speaker’s uncertainty.

27. People who suffer socio-economic disadvantage **may** feel that learning isn’t for them, or struggle to find out what is available. (181A, p. 7)

It is interesting to note, that both deontic and epistemic possibility of *may* occurred in the similar amount of sentences. As it was written in the previous chapter, *may* generally expresses epistemic modality but due to the character of the documents analyzed, deontic possibility occurs a bit more frequently as it is used for formal contexts.

4.2.2.3 *May* – permission

The last meaning of *may* which occurred in analysis is permission. This meaning occurred in 2 cases out of 34 sentences, it represents 6%. Overall, it represents 1% of all analyzed sentences, thus it is the least used meaning of all modals. Sentences containing *may* – permission can be paraphrased as *be allowed/permissible to*, as it is in the following example.

28. The text in this document (excluding the Royal Arms and other departmental or agency logos) **may** be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. (196A, 197B, p. 0)

The example above can be paraphrased as “The text in this document is allowed/permissible to be reproduced free of charge in any format...”

The occurrence of *may* – permission sense is much lower than *can* – permission meaning as *can* is the main modal verb for expressing permission.

4.2.3 **Can and may** – overlapping meanings

This chapter concentrates on the overlapping meanings of *can* and *may* which are, as it has been already mentioned, deontic possibility and permission.

Firstly, concerning permission meanings, as it has been mentioned in the theoretical part, *may* is a more formal variant to *can* in this meaning. However, there are slight differences. *May* is particularly associated with the permission given by speaker and *can* means permission in a more general and impersonal sense. It can be seen on the following examples:

29. Booktalk groups **can** make use of extended book loans, meeting spaces and an online space called ‘Ask Chris’ all provided by the library service. (151A, p. 22)
30. The text in this document (excluding the Royal Arms and other departmental or agency logos) **may** be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. (196A, 197B, p. 0)

Thus, in the example 30, containing *may* – permission, there is permission given by the speaker and it can be paraphrased as “I / We permit you to reproduce the document free of charge...”, on the contrary, example 29 containing *can* expresses permission in more general and impersonal sense. It can be paraphrased as “Booktalk groups are permitted to make use of extended book loans...”

It should be noticed that there were only 2 sentences containing *may* – permission in my analysis, thus to state some final findings concerning the overlapping area between *can* and *may* in their permission meaning might not be relevant. Nevertheless, it can be said that both sentences containing *may* – permission present permission given by the speaker. On the contrary, *can* – permission occurred in 13 sentences, 11 examples represent permission in more general sense and 2 examples contain certain external circumstances, but none of them represents permission given by the speaker. See the following example where there is *can* – permission occurrence with external circumstances and can be paraphrased as “All UK universities allowed/permitted Advanced Diploma holder to access undergraduate course at their institution.”

31. In relation to higher education, all UK universities have stated that an Advanced Diploma holder **can** access undergraduate courses at their institution. (154B, p. 105)

Before analyzing the second overlapping area of the modal verbs *can* and *may*, it should be taken into account that generally there is also a slight interconnection between possibility and permission meanings. It means that if something is permissible, it is also possible due to some authorities. It is a similar case to interconnection between ability and possibility meanings. As it has been already mentioned, there are no clear borders between these two meanings as ability can be part of possibility – if somebody is able to do something, he/she is at the same time possible to do something.

Secondly, concerning deontic possibility meanings, *can* and *may* also overlap. See the following examples, where *can* and *may* are interchangeable.

32. In some cases it **can** be an important stepping stone to further learning, qualifications and more rewarding work. (8A, p. 4)
33. These resources **may** come in the shape of premises vacated in shopping centres. (164A, p. 4)

The example 33 can be paraphrased as “These resources can come in the shape of premises vacated in shopping centres.”

To conclude the findings, it should be noticed that there is only a certain overlap between deontic possibility meanings of *can* and *may*. However, there are some differences. As it has been mentioned, one difference between overlapping meanings, which are deontic possibility and permission, lies in a degree of formality. Concerning some other differences, it is obvious from the analyzed sentences that *can* is frequently used with passive voice and as it has been noted, the occurrence of passive voice in this meaning represents 30%. On the contrary, *may* in its deontic possibility is not so frequently used with the passive voice, it occurred only in 17% of sentences containing this meaning which is in comparison with the modal verb *can* approximately only a half occurrence. Concerning another feature – element of external circumstances, it should be mentioned that although there are no external circumstances concerning *can* – deontic possibility in majority of sentences, *may* in this meaning had 6 sentences where external circumstances appeared. Although it might seem that it is not so frequent occurrence, it should be considered that there were only 17 examples containing *may* – deontic possibility and thus it represents approximately 35% out of all sentences containing this meaning. Thus in contrast to the occurrence of external circumstances in sentences containing *can* – deontic possibility, *may* presents the modal verb with higher occurrence of element of external circumstances.

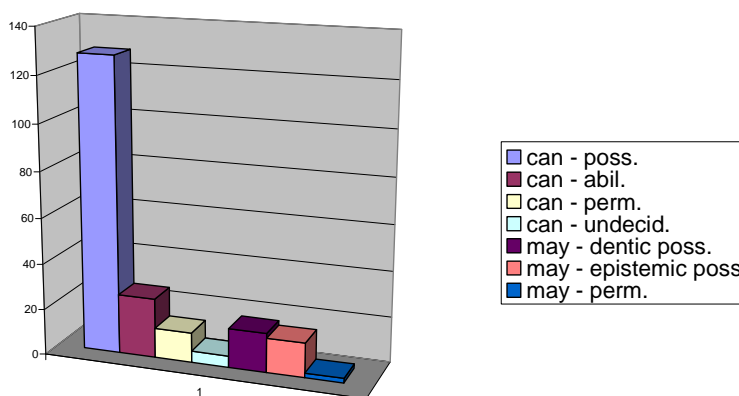
4.3 Summary of results

To conclude the results of the analysis, it should be mentioned that both kinds of modality, deontic and epistemic, occurred in the analyzed texts. The data corpus includes 206 modal verbs, *can* or *may* expressing either deontic or epistemic modality according to their individual meanings. Out of this total occurrence, *can* appeared in 172 sentences (83%) and *may* occurred in 34 examples (17%). For more detailed results concerning their individual meanings, see the following tables and a below mentioned graph.

Frequency	Can				
	Deontic possibility	Ability	Permission	Undecidable	Total number
Number	128	26	13	5	172
%	62	13	6	2	83

Frequency	May				
	Deontic possibility	Epistemic possibility	Permission	Undecidable	Total number
Number	17	15	2	0	34
%	9	7	1	0	17

Chart 1: The frequency of individual meanings of can and may



To sum up the results, it should be noticed that can – possibility meaning occurred most frequently in analyzed sentences (62%). The possible explanation for so high occurrence of this meaning might be the character of primary data – British

Command Papers, which represent highly formal language. *Can* in this meaning is more typical for formal texts than for instance ability and permission meanings. The high occurrence of this meaning in these texts may be due to the function of the texts as it includes reflecting of many different possibilities and various solutions to some issues solved in the Command Papers. This sense of *can* occurred with passive voice in 37 cases out of 128 (29%) and with inanimate subject in 90 examples out of 128 (70%). There were no external circumstances identified in majority of sentences concerning this meaning.

Can – ability meaning represents the second most used meaning in the whole analysis with its 26 samples (13%). In these texts, this meaning typically represents the fact that somebody or something is able to do something, to arrange something, to manage something. The function of this meaning in the texts is to present ability, speaker indirectly offers or highlights ability, skill. This sense occurred with animate subject in 15 sentences (58%) and active voice in 25 sentences (96%).

It should be taken into account that it was not always clear which meaning occurred in certain sentences as ability meaning can be sometimes considered a part of possibility meaning. As Leech points out, if someone has the ability to do some activities, then these activities in a sense are possible (Leech, 2004, p. 74). Thus, 5 undecidable occurrences appeared in the analyzed documents which represent 2%.

The last meaning of the modal verb *can* is permission which occurred in 13 sentences and it presents 6%. Thus, this sense of *can* occurred the least frequently. It occurred in more example in comparison with *may* – permission, as *can* is the main modal expressing permission. It is important to highlight that permission meaning has a descriptive function.

As far as the modal verb *may* is concerned, *may* – deontic possibility occurred in 17 examples which presents 9% of all analyzed sentences. Thus it is the third most often used meaning in this analysis. It occurred with passive voice only in 3 sentences (17%) and in contrast to *can*, external circumstances were determined in 6 examples which represents 35%.

Concerning *may* – epistemic possibility, it should be mentioned that it is the fourth most used meaning in the analysis with its occurrence in 15 sentences (7%). All these cases presented speaker's lack of confidence in the true of the proposition. It

should be pointed out that although *may* is generally used to express epistemic possibility, deontic possibility is dominant meaning in the Command Papers as this meaning is restricted to highly formal contexts.

And to conclude this part, the last meaning of *may* and the last meaning used in the analysis is *may* – permission with its 2 occurrences (1%). Both of these sentences expressed permission given by the speaker. This sense is the least used meanings concerning frequency of both modal verbs and their meanings.

5. Conclusion

To conclude this bachelor paper, the aim of this thesis was to work up a relevant theoretical part and apply it to the analysis itself to state the results, to state which modal verb and which particular meaning is used mostly in administrative style, particularly in British Command Papers. The aim of this paper was also to analyse and evaluate the synonymous occurrence of two overlapping meanings of the modal verb *can* and *may* – deontic possibility and permission.

At the beginning of the theoretical part, the term modality and two main different kinds of modality have been explained. There are many terms used for the two kinds of modality, thus the most common terms - deontic and epistemic modality were chosen to be used in the whole bachelor paper. The next part of the theory focused on modal verbs. Firstly, features, rules and typical characteristic of these verbs were described. This part also concentrated on different individual meanings of the modal verbs *can* and *may*. Concerning the main three meanings of the modal verb *can*, the possibility meaning was supposed to be used the most frequently as it is the most general and neutral meanings. Another reason for this presumption was the finding that *can* in this meaning is used in formal texts more often than its ability or permission meanings. Ability meaning of *can* was supposed to occur less frequently than possibility meaning but more often than permission meaning. Concerning meanings of the modal verb *may*, three different meanings were also determined – deontic possibility, epistemic possibility and permission meaning. It has been found that deontic possibility is restricted to more formal contexts and epistemic possibility is mainly used to express speaker's lack of confidence in the truth of the proposition. Permission meaning of *may* was used the least often as the main modal verb expressing permission is *can*.

To summarize the practical part, all information and data in the theoretical part were applied to two different British Command Papers where 206 sentences containing either the modal verb *can* or *may* were identified. It should be noticed that both deontic and epistemic modality occurred as each meaning expressed different kind of modality. To sum up the results, *can* – possibility occurred the most frequently with its 128 sentences (62%). As it has been assumed in the theoretical part, this meaning of *can* occurred the most frequently as this meaning typically occurs in formal text more often

than ability or permission meaning. Also *can*, but in its ability meaning was the second most used meaning concerning frequency of usage, it represents 26 cases (13%). May – deontic possibility occurred in 17 sentences (9%), may – epistemic possibility appeared in 15 sentences which represents 7%. Deontic possibility of *may* was used more often than epistemic *may* as it is used in more formal contexts. The meanings which follow concerning frequency of occurrences are *can* in its permission meaning with 13 sentences (6%), undecidable occurrences with 5 cases (2%) and the least used meaning is *may* in its permission meaning with 2 sentences which represents only 1%. The permission meanings of *can* and *may* belong to the least often used meanings, however *can* – permission can be found more often than *may* in the same meaning as *can* is the main modal verb expressing permission.

Nevertheless, it should be taken into account that there were not enough analyzed sentences (206 occurrences) to state definite results. It is interesting to note that also preterite forms of *can* and *may* – *COULD* and *MIGHT* could be described, compared and analyzed in this paper as all these four verbs are very similar concerning their meanings. It would be also interesting to compare their prospective overlapping or synonymous meanings, occurrences.

6. Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá výskytem modálních sloves v administrativním stylu. Konkrétně se soustředí na výskyt modálních sloves *can* a *may* v britských vládních dokumentech. Jedním z hlavních cílů této práce je popsat jednotlivé významy modálních sloves *can* a *may*, určit jejich specifické znaky, charakteristiku, typ modalitu, kterou vyjadřují a aplikovat je na konkrétní příklady ve vybraných vládních dokumentech. Dalším cílem je vymezení synonymních výskytů sloves *can* a *may*. Práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí, teoretické a praktické části.

První kapitola se zabývá vysvětlením pojmu modalita. V této části jsou uvedeny dva základní typy modalitu – deontická (deontic) a epistemická (epistemic) modalita. Tyto typy jsou následně detailně popsány a vysvětleny spolu s názornými příklady. Pro tuto práci bylo nutné popsat oba typy modalitu – deontickou i epistemickou, jelikož jednotlivé významy modálních sloves *can* a *may* vyjadřují oba typy modalitu. Facchinetti (2003) zmiňuje další druh modalitu – dynamická. Tento druh modalitu ovšem není zahrnutý v praktické části práce.

Druhá kapitola se soustředí výhradně na modální slovesa. Nejprve je zde uveden výčet všech modálních sloves. Po té jsou popisovány charakteristické znaky a vlastnosti modálních sloves. Nejprve jsou popisovány vlastnosti, které mají společné všechna pomocná slovesa, dále jsou popsány vlastnosti typické pouze pro modální slovesa. Další, nejrozsáhlejší část této kapitoly se zabývá jednotlivými významy modálních sloves *can* a *may*.

Jako první jsou analyzovány typické znaky, charakteristika a druh modalitu u jednotlivých významů slovesa *can*. Tyto tři základní významy slovesa *can* zahrnují možnost (possibility), schopnost (ability) a povolení (permission). Všechny tři významy modálního slovesa *can* vyjadřují deontickou modalitu, jelikož *can* kromě své záporné formy *can't / cannot*, protějšku ke slovesu *must*, nevyjadřuje epistemickou modalitu. U slovesa *can* – možnost je předpokládán nejvyšší výskyt, jelikož tento význam je nejvíce neutrální a používá se ve větší míře ve formálních textech více než *can* – schopnost nebo *can* – povolení. Hlavním znakem možnostního významu slovesa *can* je užití neživotného podmětu v kombinaci s trpným rodem, který je typickým jazykovým prostředkem formálního projevu.

Pro schopnostní význam slovesa *can* je typický výskyt spíše v méně formálních nebo mluvených kontextech, pro které jsou příznačné typické znaky tohoto významu – životný podmět v kombinaci s činným rodem.

Přestože *can* je hlavním slovesem vyjadřujícím povolení, jeho výskyt je v porovnání s předchozími významy velmi nízký. Ovšem, v porovnání s významem *may* – povolení, se *can* vyskytuje častěji, jelikož je hlavním modálním slovesem vyjadřujícím povolení. Je nutné poznamenat, že ačkoliv mají jednotlivé významy slovesa *can* stanovené určité znaky a vlastnosti a jsou typické pro určitý druh kontextu, každý význam se může objevit i v naprosto jiném kontextu a typu jazyka.

Stejným způsobem je zpracováno modální sloveso *may*, u kterého jsou rozlišeny také 3 základní významy – deontická možnost (deontic possibility), epistemická možnost (epistemic possibility) a povolení (permission). Jak už vyplývá z názvu jednotlivých významů, modální sloveso *may* ve svém možnostním významu vyjadřuje oba druhy modality - deontickou i epistemickou.

Zatímco deontická možnost je totožná s možnostním významem slovesa *can* a vyjadřuje postoj “nic mi nebrání v tom, abych... / mohu”, epistemická možnost obsahuje nejistotu v určitém tvrzení vyjádřenou mluvčím. Epistemické možnostní *may* vyjadřuje 50% pravděpodobnost, že se určitá situace možná stane či nestane.

Co se týká posledního významu slovesa *may* – povolení, je nutné říci, že tento význam se překrývá s významem povolení slovesa *can*. *May* se však v tomto významu vyskytuje velmi zřídka, jelikož hlavním slovesem vyjadřujícím povolení je *can*.

Na závěr je v teoretické části uvedena kapitola, která se zabývá synonymním výskytem dvou významů sloves *can* a *may* – konkrétně deontické možnosti a povolení. Přestože se tyto významy překrývají, jsou zde jisté rozdíly. U slovesa *may* se vyskytuje povolení vyjádřené mluvčím (někdo něco dovoluje). Naopak u *can* je častější povolení ve více obecném smyslu (něco je dovoleno). Dalším rozdílem u tohoto významu je, že *may* je obecně považováno za formální variantu slovesa *can*.

Druhý synonymním významem je deontická možnost, kde je hlavním rozdílem používání neživotného podmětu v kombinaci s trpným rodem u slovesa *can*, zatímco u slovesa *may* se trpný rod téměř nevyskytuje. Co se týká dalšího rozdílu – výskytu vnějších okolností (external circumstances) ve větě, u slovesa *can* se v majoritní většině

žádné vnější okolnosti nevyskytují. Naopak, u slovesa *may*, výskyt vnějších okolností je patrně vyšší.

Třetí kapitola této práce zahrnuje praktickou část. Nejprve jsou představeny cíle a záměry analýzy, následně jsou v další kapitole uvedeny typické rysy a charakteristika administrativního stylu, který se vyskytuje v analyzovaných textech – v konkrétních britských vládních dokumentech. Tato kapitola zahrnuje podrobnou analýzu všech významů sloves *can* a *may*. Po té je uvedena kapitola o synonymních významech *can* a *may*, deontické možnosti a povolení. Na konci této analytické části jsou uvedena zjištěná data a výsledky analýzy jsou prezentovány v přehledných tabulkách a znázorněny na grafu.

V této části práce jsou aplikovány poznatky z teoretické části na dva vybrané dokumenty administrativního stylu – britské vládní dokumenty. Celkově je v těchto dokumentech analyzováno 206 vět s výskyty modálních sloves *can* a *may*. Z celkového množství vět se nejčastěji vyskytlo sloveso *can*, ve 172 případech z 206, které představují 83%. Sloveso *may* tedy bylo identifikováno ve 34 případech (17%).

Co se týká konkrétních významů těchto sloves, *can* ve významu možnosti bylo rozpoznáno ve 128 případech (62%) a představuje tak nejpoužívanější význam modálního slovesa *can*, ale i nejpoužívanější význam v analytické části. Tento význam je považován za nejvíce obecný a neutrální a také se často objevuje ve více formálních textech než například *can* ve významu schopnosti či povolení. Tento význam se velmi často objevuje s neživotným podmětem v kombinaci s trpným rodem. Deontická možnost je totožná s deontickou možností slovesa *may*, ovšem *may* není tak často používáno s trpným rodem, sloveso *may* se také mnohem častěji vyskytuje s vnějšími okolnostmi, zatímco *can* se u většiny příkladů objevuje bez vnějších okolností. *Can* ve významu schopnosti bylo rozpoznáno ve 26 větách (13%). U tohoto významu se naopak objevilo mnoho výskytů s životným podmětem a činným rodem. Jak bylo předpokládáno v teoretické části, *can* ve významu povolení bylo identifikováno nejméně často, ve 13 případech (6%). V tomto významu se *can* opět shoduje s permissivním *may*. Sloveso *may* vyjadřuje povolení dané určitou autoritou, zatímco *can* vyjadřuje obecné povolení. *Can* je v tomto významu považováno za méně formální variantu *may*. Přestože se *can* ve významu povolení vyskytlo nejméně často ze všech významů slovesa *can*, objevilo se mnohem častěji než permissivní *may*.

Jak již bylo zmíněno, sloveso *may* se vyskytlo ve 3 základních významech – *may* ve významu deontické možnosti bylo určeno v 17 příkladech (9%), vyskytlo se tedy více častěji než epistemická možnost, *may* v epistemické možnosti bylo rozpoznáno v 15 případech (7%). Poslední význam *may* – povolení byl identifikován ve 2 větách, které představují pouhé 1%. Je nutné zmínit, že v 5 případech nebyl identifikován žádný význam, jelikož z kontextu nebylo možné určit, zda se jedná o možnostní či schopnostní *can*. Do skupiny “undecidable occurrences” (nezařaditelné výskyty) bylo tedy zařazeno 5 vět a tato poslední skupina představovala 2%.

V závěru této práce jsou shrnuty obě hlavní části – teoretická a praktická část. Všechny věty, ve kterých byly identifikovány určité významy modálních sloves *can* a *may*, jsou seřazeny podle jednotlivých významů, očíslovány dle jednotlivých dokumentů a přiloženy do přílohy této práce.

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Available at: <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm75/7555/7555.pdf>>

Department for Children, Schools and Families departmental report 2009, Cm 7595 [online]. The Stationery Office (TSO): 12 June 2009, [cited 2010-02-15].

Available at: <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm75/7595/7595.pdf>>

8. Appendix

8.1 Appendix 1: The data corpus

A *The learning revolution, Cm 7555* [online]. The Stationery Office (TSO): 23 March 2009, [cited 2010-01-20].

Available at: <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm75/7555/7555.pdf>>

B *Department for Children, Schools and Families departmental report 2009, Cm 7595* [online]. The Stationery Office (TSO): 12 June 2009, [cited 2010-02-15].

Available at: <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm75/7595/7595.pdf>>

Can-possibility

- 1A. Learning for its own intrinsic value makes an enormous contribution to creating the kind of society we **can** be proud of. (p. 2)
- 2A. To consider how Government **can** best support the vibrant and diverse opportunities out there for private and collective engagement. (p. 2)
- 3A. The Government recognises that informal adult learning **can** transform individual lives and boost our nation's well-being. (p. 4)
- 4A. At its best, it **can** bring people and communities together, challenge stereotypes and contribute to community cohesion. (p. 4)
- 5A. It **can** unite the generations and help people remain active and independent into old age. (p. 4)
- 6A. At its simplest, informal learning **can** help build people's confidence and add to their personal fulfilment. (p. 4)
- 7A. For the low-skilled and those with a bad personal experience of formal education, an informal approach **can** provide a way back. (p. 4)
- 8A. In some cases it **can** be an important stepping stone to further learning, qualifications and more rewarding work. (p. 4)
- 9A. Our top priority is, of course, the practical training which **can** help get people back to work quickly. (p. 4)
- 10A. In these tough economic times, informal learning **can** also make its contribution. (p. 4)
- 11A. Although informal learning **can** support the development of work-related skills, this movement is made up of a kaleidoscope of part-time, non-vocational learning where the primary purpose isn't to gain a qualification. (p. 4)
- 12A. The social relationships that develop as a result of this informal learning **can** provide networks of support and solidarity. (p. 4)
- 13A. For the low-skilled and under-confident, informal learning **can** be an important stepping stone to further learning and a more skilled future. (p. 4)
- 14A. It sets out how we will support a learning revolution by building capacity within individuals and communities and connecting the people who **can** make this happen. (p. 5)

- 15A. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through its sponsorship of sporting, cultural and creative sectors, all of which **can** reach out to people, spark new interests and fuel existing ones. (p. 5)
- 16A. Although there is a rich tapestry of informal adult learning, more **can** be done to help some adults overcome the barriers they face. (p. 6)
- 17A. Although informal learning **can** be a good way of developing work-related skills, this movement is made up of a kaleidoscope of part-time, non-vocational learning where the primary purpose isn't to gain a qualification. (p. 11)
- 18A. The social relationships that develop as a result of this informal learning **can** provide networks of support and solidarity. (p. 11)
- 19A. For the low-skilled and under-confident, informal learning **can** be an important stepping stone to further learning and a more skilled future. (p. 17)
- 20A. To build on these opportunities, HEFCE will explain to HEIs how they **can** demonstrate their commitment and contribution through the informal learning pledge and, as part of their strategy for the social dimension of the third stream of funding, will set out how HEIs **can** work with others to support the wider engagement of the community through informal learning. (p. 21)
- 21A. Despite that, anecdotal evidence suggests that self-organised groups **can** find it difficult to negotiate access to school facilities. (p. 22)
- 22A. In the context of the Advancing Assets programme, CLG will promote informal adult learning as an example of how community assets **can** benefit local people. (p. 22)
- 23A. DH will encourage Primary CareTrusts (PCTs) and Healthy Living Centres to sign the informal adult learning pledge and where possible and affordable, open up their spaces so that self-organised groups **can** meet in local community health settings. (p. 22)
- 24A. Our consultation also showed us that we need better targeted information for older people so that they **can** find out about local learning opportunities and ask for support and guidance about learning in later life. (p. 26)
- 25A. We know there are concerns that action by some learning providers to withdraw age-related fee concessions, in the belief that they may be unlawful, **can** create a barrier to accessing learning. (p. 43)
- 26A. In fact, age-related practices like fee concessions **can** be objectively justified, provided they can be demonstrated to be a "proportionate response to a legitimate need." (p. 26)
- 27A. Informal learning **can** make a unique contribution to the lives of people who are disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. (p. 27)
- 28A. So informal adult learning **can** and must reach out to people who are disadvantaged. (p. 27)
- 29A. Members **can** play a key role in organising local courses where no other provision exists and where it would not be viable without their input. (p. 28)
- 30A. Members **can** be elected to governance roles locally, regionally and nationally – right up to Trustee level. (p. 28)
- 31A. Community learning champions and learning ambassadors are part of the vital cadre of foot soldiers who **can** encourage peers, neighbours and friends to take up learning. (p. 29)

- 32A. The programme will develop resources that **can** be adopted by local authorities to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of local people so they can participate more fully in their communities and take up civic roles. (p. 29)
- 33A. Informal learning **can** help improve morale, promote well-being, boost confidence and build team working skills. (p. 30)
- 34A. Our strategy aims to: help adults develop skills, confidence and access to technology so they **can** participate in a wider variety of learning experiences. (p. 32)
- 35A. Working with a wide range of partners, we will: establish a broadcasting forum to explore how we **can** make the most of all types of broadcasting for informal adult learning purposes, including making more content free to access and open to share. (p. 33)
- 36A. Government **can** help bring together leading innovators, technology companies and broadcasters to create new connections and widen access to opportunities so they are not the preserve of a few. (p. 34)
- 37A. Our priorities for action are to: help adults develop skills, confidence and access to technology so they **can** participate in a wider variety of learning experiences. (p. 34)
- 38A. Digital Britain recognises the huge opportunities technology offers to learners and the need to ensure that everyone **can** participate in the digital world. (p. 34)
- 39A. Access to IT equipment in people's own homes **can** stimulate a fruitful learning experience and an onward learning journey. (p. 35)
- 40A. Families are already benefitting from DCSF's Home Access programme, which aims to make England one of the first countries in the world where every young person **can** use a computer and internet at home for their education. (p. 35)
- 41A. People who want to learn need quick and easy access to relevant information so that they **can** make choices and take charge of their learning. (p. 36)
- 42A. During the informal adult learning consultation, people reported that it **can** be hard to find out about informal learning opportunities - what's available, venue, cost, whether there's disability access and so on. (p. 36)
- 43A. We want to create sustainable, online spaces where adults **can** go to find out about all the different kinds of informal learning opportunities in their local area. (p. 36)
- 44A. Users **can** add their own stories of migration to this resource which is linked to a programme of learning events delivered in museums and libraries. (p. 37)
- 45A. We will ensure that the solutions we test and develop are able to link into the new adult advancement and careers service so that people who want to progress to more formal learning **can** be referred for high quality information, advice and guidance. (p. 37)
- 46A. The Open University's (OU) Openlearn site offers free resources that **can** be used, adapted, redesigned or translated by others, with the resulting quality assured resources shared via OU's LearningSpace. (p. 38)
- 47A. Community radio acts as a powerful magnet towards learning that **can** start people off on a positive lifelong learning journey. (p. 40)
- 48A. All the stations recognise the part they **can** play in helping to foster social inclusion and active citizenship. (p. 40)
- 49A. We will work with partners to ensure the people involved in the delivery and facilitation of informal learning **can** access appropriate training and support so

- that all adults experience high quality and invigorating learning opportunities. (p. 42)
- 50A. It **can** create the conditions and allocate resources that enable learning to thrive. (p. 43)
- 51A. It **can** help make the connections that build a joined-up approach to informal learning. (p. 43)
- 52A. In some places there are good existing partnerships which **can** be built on; in others there will need to be an imaginative approach to establishing partnerships that **can** embrace the challenge of the new vision. (p. 44)
- 53A. Informal learning **can** make a strong contribution to delivering Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements, but currently its role is not always recognised. (p. 44)
- 54A. LAs and their partners could open doors and resources and provide expertise to help self-organised learning groups, provide seed-corn funding to voluntary organisations to offer learning activities in collaboration with local museums or archives, link up with interest groups with local outlets such as the RSPB, the National Trust or the WI, or join forces with charities like Crisis or Shelter to explore ways in which adult learning **can** improve lives. (p. 45)
- 55A. Informal learning **can** make a significant contribution to many of the existing indicators including health, social cohesion, social inclusion, use of public libraries, museums and galleries and participation in civic life, volunteering, sports, arts and culture. (p. 46)
- 56A. Inspection will be proportionate, targeted where it **can** have the greatest impact for communities. (p. 46)
- 57A. It is an excellent example of how the educational expertise of a college, such as City Lit, working with expert partners, such as Tate Modern, **can** build new approaches to learning, using technology. (p. 46)
- 58A. We will work with partners to map the range of current resources and development opportunities and consider how training initiatives **can** be aligned to maximise value and share resources across the broadest range of organisations. (p. 47)
- 59A. Ask LSC to look at the targets and outcomes in local areas to ensure that local authorities **can** use funds as flexibly as possible. (p. 48)
- 60A. It has been received with enthusiasm and has stimulated a vibrant and engaged debate on how best public money **can** be spent to support a learning society where the combination of public, voluntary and private sector provision guarantees the widest choice of learning to all, and where the state guarantees access and opportunity for those in greatest need. (p. 50)
- 61B. This document **can** be accessed from the Department for Children, Schools and Families internet site at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk>. (p. 0)
- 62B. More details of ministerial responsibilities **can** be found at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/whoswho/ministers.shtml> (p. 5)
- 63B. More details of board responsibilities **can** be found in Chapter 7 and at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/whoswho> (p. 8)
- 64B. The Strategy is based on the following principles of the relationship between parents and services and will establish what parents and children **can** expect from their service. (p. 15)

- 65B. *Improving quality and capacity:* With the £770 million additional funding set out above, the services that families really want (such as short breaks) **can** be transformed to meet their needs more effectively. (p. 23)
- 66B. In January 2009, a public consultation was held on how legislation **can** best reflect this long-term ambition. (p. 25)
- 67B. The campaign involves a range of activity to generate debate and support more father-friendly practice – for example, the development of a simple ‘dad test’ to help service providers assess their provision and give them easy ideas for changes they **can** make to meet the needs of both parents more effectively. (p. 27)
- 68B. Further information **can** be found at <http://www.think-fathers.org>. (p. 27)
- 69B. Since the publication of the Action Plan, the Department has: reviewed existing evidence relating to emergency accommodation provision, and is now undertaking primary research which will help the Department to consider how local authorities **can** best provide safe places for young runaways. (p. 51)
- 70B. A new expert group of headteachers and education professionals are to advise the Government on the introduction of national-level sampling at Key Stage 3 so that performance **can** still be monitored year-on-year. (p. 61)
- 71B. Behaviour is good at the overwhelming majority of schools but the Government recognises the challenge that managing pupils behaviour **can** present and the hard work involved in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour. (p. 65)
- 72B. Absence **can** lead to an increased risk of harm or injury for children, or their potential involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour. (p. 68)
- 73B. Absence **can** also be a warning sign of other social problems such as forced marriage, child abuse, and is sometimes the first indication that there may be a problem. (p. 68)
- 74B. Extended services **can** have positive effects on children, adults and families and **can** enhance self-confidence, improve relationships, raise aspirations and lead to better attitudes to learning. (p. 69)
- 75B. Schools and other facilities in the community such as health centres, sports and leisure clubs **can**, through co-location of other services, provide a single point of access for children, young people and families that will encourage the use of services that they would not otherwise use and support ongoing efforts to integrate services and encourage joined-up working between professionals. (p. 71)
- 76B. Pupils **can** be selected for tuition if they entered the Key Stage behind expectations, are not on track to make two levels of progress through the Key Stage, or are looked after children who would particularly benefit from additional support. (p. 80)
- 77B. APP provides clear criteria against which judgements **can** be made about levels and sub-levels. (p. 80)
- 78B. Raising aspirations **can** be a significant motivator in raising attainment. (p. 87)
- 79B. The right support so that every young person **can** access and make the most of their choice through high quality information, advice and guidance, personal and financial support. (p. 93)
- 80B. But overall, 80 per cent of undergraduate courses **can** be accessed with the right grades in the right Diploma from the first five lines. (p. 105)

- 81B. To help deliver these recommendations, the Department published the *Building Stronger Partnerships* document in December 2008 to show how schools and employers **can** work together. (p. 108)
- 82B. Chlamydia trachomatis is the most common sexually transmitted infection in England and **can** have serious consequences if left untreated. (p. 126)
- 83B. They **can** be statutory or non-statutory bodies which have been formed to carry out duties and functions in which the Department has a public interest, including:... (p. 139)
- 84B. Details of current public appointment vacancies **can** be found at <http://www.publicappts-vacs.gov.uk> (p. 139)
- 85B. Details of the Department for Children, Schools and Families Public Bodies 2008 directory **can** be found at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/ndpb/> (p. 139)
- 86B. More information **can** be found at <http://www.englandsrdas.com> (p. 142)
- 87B. More information **can** be found at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector (p. 143)
- 88B. New EU activities for education and training (Lifelong Learning Programme) and youth (Youth Action Programme) are being developed to widen participation to the schools with pupils with the least opportunity, and to demonstrate how international activity **can** help to raise standards and motivation for staff and pupils. (p. 145)
- 89B. Further improving the skills of the third sector youth workforce through a capacity building programme to ensure they **can** make the most effective use of their expertise within integrated youth support services. (p. 149)
- 90B. As part of the Department's People Strategy and vision to build a diverse department with a culture that enables all our people to be the best they **can** be and succeed in adult life, the Diversity Delivery Plan consultation with staff was launched in July 2008. (p. 151)
- 91B. The Department has amended legislation that required independent schools to send out information to parents in hard copy; these schools **can** now post the information on their websites. (p. 152)
- 92B. Some of the main simplification measures that have already been delivered **can** be found at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/>. (p. 153)
- 93B. A summary of the Government's commitment to small businesses through the Enterprise Strategy (published in 2008) **can** be found at: <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file44993.pdf> (p. 153)
- 94B. More general information on small business support **can** also be obtained from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) at: <http://www.berr.gov.uk/> (p. 153)
- 95B. The Department aims to develop every member of staff so that they **can** make a full contribution to meeting the Department's objectives, as well as fulfilling their own potential and ensuring they are able to be the best they **can** be. (p. 154)
- 96B. The enquirer does not have to be a UK national or resident and **can** live anywhere in the world. (p. 163)
- 97B. Each of these services requires an appropriate level of resilience to be implemented so that they **can** continue to be delivered even in the event of a significant disruption. (p. 165)

- 98B. Further analysis is being undertaken to identify specific actions that **can** be taken to lower carbon emissions to meet the UK's target of 80 per cent reduction in emissions by 2050. (p. 169)
- 99B. Participation will increase on all routes to ensure young people **can** make the choices they want. (p. 184)
- 100B. The new funding approach for 2008/09 introduced the concept of 'standard learner numbers', a measure of volume of learning which **can** be applied across all funding streams. (p. 186)
- 101B. The Primary Capital Programme challenges local authorities to think long-term and strategically about teaching and learning in primary schools in the 21st century and how capital investment **can** support wider transformation. (p. 194)
- 102B. Fund **can** also be used to purchase equipment, for example, computers. (p. 196)
- 103B. The Government remains committed to delivering educational transformation through Building Schools for the Future and is strongly supportive of the value that private finance **can** bring to infrastructure procurement. (p. 197)
- 104B. In March 2009, the Government announced a public sector infrastructure debtfinancing unit to provide temporary support for Private Finance Initiative projects until market conditions improve, ensuring that vital projects in areas such as schools, waste and housing **can** proceed as planned. (p. 197)
- 105B. If the resource released is not financial it **can** only be diverted within the system it has been released, for example, teachers' time freed up within a school). (p. 199)
- 106B. A number of tasks, (for example, filing and bulk photocopying) **can** be undertaken just as effectively by support staff, enabling teachers to use the time they would have spent on these tasks on activity that directly supports pupil learning, such as lesson planning and preparation. (p. 200)
- 107B. An element of the savings is money which would have had to be spent on upgrading school buildings now rebuilt under BSF or as new academies, and which **can** be recycled to other local authority priorities for school capital investment. (p. 202)
- 108B. In addition, the space is increasingly more flexible and **can** be tailored to better meet demand. (p. 204)
- 109B. As the Department's frontline institutions work and report in academic years rather than financial years, there **can** be a time lag between delivery, collection and reporting. (p. 210)
- 110B. Gains of £707 million **can** be reported up to March 2009. (p. 210)
- 111B. The Department has shown a strong commitment to the PVP, taking this opportunity to focus on key areas of spending, identifying how the money being spent **can** be best allocated to increase the impact of policies on the Departments Public Service Agreements. (p. 212)
- 112B. The associated National Audit Office (NAO) report **can** be accessed at <http://www.nao.org.uk> and the full PAC report (incorporating the transcript of the hearing) and Treasury Minute replies are available on the Public Accounts Committee website at <http://www.parliament.uk>. (p. 224)
- 113B. The Department recognises that it needs to have a strong communication strategy, so that local authorities know exactly what the reforms entail on a local level and what support they **can** expect from the Department. (p. 225)

- 114B. The Department is currently conducting a study into Diploma funding which will include research into the distribution of funds at local level, identifying examples of best practice to provide a framework against which local authority cost-effectiveness and spending on the reforms **can** be measured. (p. 225)
- 115B. The pack includes: a booklet summarising the reforms; a short summary leaflet; a set of postcards on key issues to prompt discussion; a memory stick with a presentation that **can** be edited; video material; a set of posters; and a guide for using the materials. (p. 226)
- 116B. Further information on the evidence and conclusions from this research **can** be found in the response to Recommendation 7. (p. 226)
- 117B. Local areas **can** take advantage of bespoke training provided by the Diploma Support Programme to implement these changes. (p. 227)
- 118B. In time, the Department expects all EBPOs that wish to receive public funding to either hold or demonstrate that they are working towards (and **can** achieve) this new Award. (p. 231)
- 119B. Funding flow **can** be complex, particularly where devolved funding models operate and this is likely to increase as Diploma learner numbers grow. (p. 236)
- 120B. These facilities will be ready for learners by September 2011 and will exemplify how facilities **can** be developed to deliver world class teaching and learning of Diplomas. (p. 237)
- 121B. This is in recognition of the increasing numbers of consortia delivering, or planning to deliver, Diplomas and the resulting wider range of needs; the longer-term need to ensure that the 2013 entitlement **can** be delivered; and the intention that the support currently provided by a central support package will need to be replaced by mainstream support over the same timescale. (p. 238)
- 122B. During the year, Ministers and officials appeared on many occasions before the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Select Committee. The minutes of evidence of each meeting and any subsequent reports **can** be found on the Committee's website at http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/csf.cfm (p. 240)
- 123B. Capital Modernisation Fund: A fund administered by the Treasury from which departments **can** bid for money to support capital projects aimed at improving the quality of public service delivery. (p. 257)
- 124B. Specialist schools: Any maintained secondary and any special school **can** apply for specialist status. Specialist schools are designated in one of ten areas and to achieve specialist status, a school has to raise sponsorship to support their application, and they receive money from the government in return. (p. 260)

Can-ability

- 125A. We **can** provide the framework to support individuals, communities, the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to create opportunities for informal learning. (p. 5)
- 126A. This will help unlock choice, connect learning and develop awareness of the benefits informal learning **can** bring. (p. 6)

- 127A. To build this shared purpose, we need to: establish a clearer identity for informal learning and make more people aware of what this kind of learning **can** do for us. (p. 16)
- 128A. Positive developments have already come about, including plans to establish a nationwide network of U3A volunteers who **can** help fledgling U3A technology users, as a result of collaboration between UK Online and the Third Age Trust. (p. 19)
- 129A. Partnerships, for example between galleries or community broadcasters with exciting resources and third sector organisations with good reach into local communities, **can** open up learning for whole new audiences. (p. 19)
- 130A. The benefits of informal learning are clear and it's important that everyone **can** learn more about the things that interest and inspire them – whether they learn simply for pleasure or as a first step into more formal learning. (p. 25)
- 131A. The funding criteria will encourage a wide range of bids from organisations that **can** reach into communities and support adults who are excluded and disadvantaged. (p. 25)
- 132A. We need to ensure that family learning continues to meet local needs and priorities but also that it **can** focus effectively on specific aims, like encouraging greater parental engagement in their children's learning, engaging fathers and boys, tackling the culture of guns, gangs and knives, staying safe, enabling access to family learning for minority groups and supporting families who have a family member with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. (p. 28)
- 133A. But we want to do more to make sure that people who experience disadvantage **can** benefit from informal learning. (p. 29)
- 134A. We will ensure that learning champions are able to make strong links with the new adult advancement and careers service network as they develop, so that adults **can** be referred for high quality information, advice and guidance. (p. 29)
- 135A. The programme will develop resources that can be adopted by local authorities to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of local people so they **can** participate more fully in their communities and take up civic roles. (p. 29)
- 136A. The internet **can** open up the rich resources held in archives, galleries and museums to a much wider audience. (p. 33)
- 137A. We believe we **can** add value by making training and support resources more widely accessible, drawing on existing practices and offering additions where necessary. (p. 47)
- 138A. INFORMAL ADULT LEARNING **can** contribute to 21 National Indicators and 5 Public Service Agreements. (p. 47)
- 139B. This is set to rise to £74.2 billion in 2010–11, helping to ensure that we **can** continue to give every child the best start in life. (p. 3)
- 140B. We are continuing to ensure that every child, whatever their background **can** achieve their best with the launch of the National Challenge committed to ensuring that no secondary school has fewer than 30 per cent of its pupils achieving five or more good GCSEs, including English and mathematics by 2011. (p. 3)
- 141B. Families need help and support to get through these difficult economic times, children and young people need quality services that work with them to achieve their best and break the link between disadvantage and low attainment and we

- can never be satisfied until we have done all we **can** to keep every child safe from harm. (p. 4)
- 142B. We have made much progress towards this goal, as set out in this Departmental Report and with everyone playing their part; we **can** make this country the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. (p. 4)
- 143B. Across the country, parents are doing all that they **can** to provide the best care and education for their children. (p. 6)
- 144B. Evidence shows that actively involved fathers **can** have a significant, positive impact on their child’s wellbeing. (p. 27)
- 145B. Equally, if some young people do run away, there need to be services that **can** go into action quickly to support them and keep them safe. (p. 50)
- 146B. All children have the potential to succeed and should go as far as their talents **can** take them. (p. 133)
- 147B. The Government’s ten-year strategy for young people, Aiming High for Young People set out the case for the reform of the youth support workforce and the Government’s ambitions to develop a skilled and confident workforce who **can** work to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people. (p. 149)
- 148B. Proposals for this programme are developed and refined in discussion with stakeholders, then rigorously scrutinised to ensure they **can** answer high-priority research questions in a cost-effective manner. (p. 159)
- 149B. The Gateway process includes a compulsory initial readiness self-assessment tool so that consortia **can** quickly understand their strengths and areas for development. (p. 229)
- 150B. The Department will be working with these projects to showcase the facilities and lessons learned so that all areas delivering Diplomas **can** understand what is possible and be inspired to use other (larger) streams of capital funding to develop excellent 14-19 facilities. (p. 237)

Can-permission

- 151A. Booktalk groups **can** make use of extended book loans, meeting spaces and an online space called ‘Ask Chris’ all provided by the library service. (p. 22)
- 152A. In fact, age-related practices like fee concessions can be objectively justified, provided they **can** be demonstrated to be a “proportionate response to a legitimate need.” (p. 26)
- 153B. Short ‘single level’ tests at a single national curriculum level which pupils **can** take when their teacher judges them ready in Key Stage 2. (p. 79)
- 154B. In relation to higher education, all UK universities have stated that an Advanced Diploma holder **can** access undergraduate courses at their institution. (p. 105)
- 155B. Of course that does not mean they **can** access any course, just as few students with humanities A levels will be allowed on to science degrees. (p. 105)
- 156B. An additional £655 million was announced in the 2009 Budget to help tackle youth unemployment and to ensure investment in skills by creating additional post-16 learning places, so that more young people aged 16-18 than ever **can** participate in education and training. (p. 113)
- 157B. This is for frontline service staff and their managers, and offers clarity on when and how information **can** be shared legally and professionally. (p. 167)

- 158B. Young people **can** apply for the Youth Opportunity Fund to fund activities that they identify as most needed in their local areas. (p. 196)
- 159B. The Parliamentary Ombudsman **can** look into complaints about a service provided by a government department, agency or other organisation acting on their behalf providing that the body falls within its jurisdiction. (p. 162)
- 160B. A request for information **can** be made by any person, organisation, company or group. (p. 163)
- 161B. This is for frontline service staff and their managers, and offers clarity on when and how information **can** be shared legally and professionally. (p. 167)
- 162B. The Department agrees that capital funding must be aligned and that effective use of capital resources is key to ensuring that Diplomas, as with all other qualifications, **can** be taught in world class facilities. (p. 237)
- 163B. Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL): Expenditure which departments **can** control overall, though some elements may be demand-led. (p. 258)

May-deontic possibility

- 164A. These resources **may** come in the shape of premises vacated in shopping centres. (p. 4)
- 165A. With firms on short-time working there **may** be more time to learn. (p. 5)
- 166A. People on reduced hours or looking for work **may** have the capacity to teach or volunteer, as well as more time to devote to learning. (p. 5)
- 167A. There **may** be people who want to put something back into their communities, to share knowledge, or to gain new skills. (p. 5)
- 168A. These **may** be premises vacated in shopping centres. (p. 11)
- 169A. Free courses are widely available through UK Online but at present we are unclear about the extent to which we are meeting the need for basic ICT skills, particularly those which **may** be regarded as functional skills for life and employability and/or which enable people to make practical use of ICT for leisure and learning. (p. 34)
- 170A. A further issue is that some material which **may** support informal learning produced by different broadcasting companies is not routinely available on demand. (p. 41)
- 171A. In some local areas, LAs and their partners **may** agree a third sector consortium or a college is best placed to take the lead role in commissioning and publicising a broad learning offer. (p. 45)
- 172B. The reasons behind this increase are being explored and **may** include the impact of the introduction of Special Guardianship on this indicator. (p. 46)
- 173B. It is envisaged that, with the improvements in local service provision, that this indicator will bring that in future spending reviews, it **may** be possible to have an indicator based on a more robust data source, relating to levels of running or repeat running away, or on specific outcomes for runaway or missing children. (p. 51)
- 174B. Absence can also be a warning sign of other social problems such as forced marriage, child abuse, and is sometimes the first indication that there **may** be a problem. (p. 68)

- 175B. In the longer term, schools **may** have a Fresh Start, become a National Challenge trust or be replaced by Academies. (p. 69)
- 176B. Purpose: To assist the Departmental Board to discharge it's responsibilities regarding the management of high-level risks which **may** jeopardise the achievement of the Department's strategic business objectives, and/or severely damage the Department's reputation, by identifying and assessing high-level risks, and by ensuring such risks are effectively managed. (p. 137)
- 177B. Purpose: To advise the Accounting Officer and DCSF Board on audit, risk and control issues which **may** jeopardise the achievement of the Department's objectives. (p. 137)
- 178B. Risk management in the Department is defined as all the processes and activities required to identify and control its exposure to those risks which **may** have an impact on the achievement of its business objectives. (p. 160)
- 179B. The Youth Capital Fund, which is designed to work in tandem with the Youth Opportunity Fund, **may** be used to provide new or improve existing youth facilities for young people in their local area. (p. 196)
- 180B. Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL): Expenditure which departments can control overall, though some elements **may** be demand-led. (p. 258)

May-epistemic possibility

- 181A. People who suffer socio-economic disadvantage **may** feel that learning isn't for them, or struggle to find out what is available. (p. 7)
- 182A. With firms on short-time working there **may** be more time to learn. (p. 11)
- 183A. They **may** be people who want to put something back into their communities, to share knowledge, or to gain new skills. (p. 11)
- 184A. Often people who might benefit from these informal learning experiences **may** be unaware of the possibilities and this should be a key part of the drive for change. (p. 20)
- 185A. Other people **may** find it more difficult to access informal learning. (p. 24)
- 186A. Some people find it easy to participate in the many different kinds of informal learning that are available. Other people **may**: lack motivation and confidence. (p. 25)
- 187A. We know there are concerns that action by some learning providers to withdraw age-related fee concessions, in the belief that they **may** be unlawful, can create a barrier to accessing learning. (p. 26)
- 188A. We don't want a special offer that's targeted at disadvantaged people. This **may** sound obvious. But sometimes there's been a tendency to assume that people who are excluded or disadvantaged in one area of their lives will only be interested in particular kinds of learning. (p. 27)
- 189A. But the pattern is not consistent. Some staff and volunteers **may** want to further develop their skills to meet the learning needs of the wide range of adults touched by their organisations. (p. 47)
- 190B. Improving outcomes for children and young people means working across government, and readers **may** also be interested in the Departmental Reports of other government departments, for example, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP),

- Department of Health (DH), Home Office (HO) and HM Treasury (HMT). (p. 12)
- 191B. According to the 2007 HSE report, there are indications that the trend in obesity prevalence **may** have begun to flatten out over the last two to three years. (p. 20)
- 192B. Taken together this suggests that in keeping with the long-term trend, conception rates **may** show a decline again in 2008. (p. 118)
- 193B. Successful risk management within the Department involves: The active monitoring and reviewing on progress of risk, in order to establish whether or not any further mitigation or contingency action **may** be necessary. (p. 160)
- 194B. The 2007-08 figures are provisional and **may** change. (p. 180)
- 195B. The breakdown of near-cash in Resource DEL by economic category **may** exceed the total near-cash Resource DEL reported above because of other income and receipts that score in near-cash Resource DEL but aren't included as pay, procurement, or current grants and subsidies to the private sector, abroad and local authorities. (p. 217)

May-permission

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- 197B. The text in this document (excluding the Royal Arms and other departmental or agency logos) **may** be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. (p. 0)

Undecidable occurrences

- 198A. Together we **can** support a flourishing landscape of informal learning, engaging libraries, museums, the arts and sports, broadcasters, community organisations, healthy living centres, online communities, colleges, universities and schools and encouraging learning in all its many guises. (p. 2)
- 199A. The paper sets out how together we **can** sow the seeds of a new movement for learning. (p. 3)
- 200A. We recognise we **can** do more to ensure there is a wide choice of inspiring opportunities in every community, accessible to everyone. (p. 5)
- 201A. Broadcasters and technology companies **can** popularise issues and connect entertainment with learning, helping viewers and listeners to develop an initial interest into something richer. (p. 33)
- 202A. NI 4 % of people who feel they **can** influence decisions in their locality (PSA 21) (p. 47)