

WARNING! The following characterizations of academic texts in English and in Czech are generalizations only. They show typical tendencies. Of course, there are excellent academic texts written by Czech authors, and bad academic texts written by English-speaking authors!

English

Academic Texts (tendencies)

Highly structured

Clear division of the text (abstract, introduction, body, conclusion, bibliography)

More logical division into sections

Logical division of the text into chapters, sub-chapters or sections, sub-sections, etc.

Strict paragraph function

Paragraphs with clear single theme or topic, each with a 'topic sentence', body, and (possibly) concluding sentence – longer paragraphs

No digression from theme

Information or ideas avoided if not related to the theme

Thesis clearly identified

Clear thesis (expressed in introduction)

Clarity more important than style

Repetition of expressions and use of straightforward syntactic structures to increase clarity and understandability

Author – happy to state opinions

Authorial self-confidence – use of assertive statements (*The results of the research show that...*); clear titles (*Problems associated with...*)

Emphasis on understandability

Orientation towards the reader – the author is responsible for the reader's understanding of the text.

Czech

Academic Texts (tendencies)

Loosely structured

Boundaries between different parts of text less clearly identifiable

Less logical division into topics

No division into sections or less logical indication of chapters and sub-chapters, etc.

Less strict paragraph function

Long stretches of text devoted to one topic – made up of shorter paragraphs to provide reading pauses only

Digression from theme allowed

Information or ideas unrelated to the theme are acceptable

Often no explicit thesis

Explicit thesis not required. The conclusion is wherever the 'javelin' lands.

Style more important than clarity

Use of synonyms and complex syntactic structures to convey message in a stylistic, 'flowery' way

Author – fear of appearing immodest

Modalization – tentative statements (*From our results, it appears that...*); modest titles (*A small contribution to understanding problems associated with...*)

Emphasis on sounding 'academic'

Orientation towards the subject in all its complexity – it is the reader's responsibility (or problem?!) to make sense of it.