

# The Research Unit evaluation report

## Code of the RU: JU\_FF\_62

Name of the panel: Languages and Literature – Panel 6.2

### Introduction

Short description of the RU (field focus, positioning in the EvU, competitive positioning nationally and internationally, research strategy) **200 to 400 words**

There are in the EvU 8 Institutes, which are divided in 2 RU: Languages-Literatures and History.

The RU 6.2 includes 4 Institutes: Czech, English, German & Romance Studies. Thus, the researches concern —inter alia— the history of modern Czech literature, linguistics of Romance languages, English translations. The EvU and the RU 6.2 too have a short history, since they were founded in 2006. Nevertheless, that is to say despite this short time, the Faculty as well as the RU 6.2 present, as the committee could check during the on-site visit, a large number of outcomes, and publications whose quality has to be stressed.

The RU 6.2 gets accreditation for doctoral study programs. It also has a lot of projects granted by the Czech Science Foundation, some of them are international projects. The RU 6.2 has a strong position in the EvU, because it is pedagogically implicated in the entire LMD training, and since many of its researchers have integrated the international scientific community.

The RU 6.2 gathered, between 2010 and 2014, more or less 50 persons, among them (in 2014) 6 professors, 7 associate professors and 20 assistant professors: the number of researchers (even if it should be noted that during the period it was decreasing: 54 > 46), and among them, the proportion of habilitation, ensure the sustainability and the level of the RU's activities (but it should be noted now that the FTE was decreasing too: ca. 62 > ca. 34).

The competitiveness of the RU is high in the national context; the RU works about a lot of topics like Czech literature, which have a great interest in the home land. The committee sees that the various and numerous outcomes presented on-site are not more a question of individual than common works.

In terms of research strategy, the RU still aims at putting its Institutes in a higher position at an international level, and this policy was successful. The research environment in the RU is harmonic, the performance of the teaching staff is often assessed and the colleagues have a clear vision about their career development. Nevertheless, the committee wonders (it didn't have time to ask) what are the criteria for staff promotion, and which are the effects of promotions on the team's life.

Finally, it should be noted that the EvU/RU managed to reach a higher level of funding between 2010 and 2014 (2.650.000 > 14.464.000 CZK). The EvU/RU is well equipped, the work places (Faculty, Library) are very modern and welcoming, so there are good opportunities for each member and the entire community to progress at a national and international level.

## Results of the panel evaluation

Overview of the quality levels reached by the RU:

Criterion number	Quality criteria	Quality level reached
I	Research environment	C
II	Membership of the national and global research community	C
III	Scientific research excellence	C
IV	Overall research performance	C
V	Societal relevance	D

## Criterion I Research environment

Please highlight the final score as shown below

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	<b>The RU is a Global Leader</b> In terms of the quality of the research strategy and management, the Unit's research environment is fully comparable to that of global leaders in the field. It can attract the highest quality international researchers
B	Very good	<b>The RU is a Strong International Player</b> The Unit is able to provide an internationally comparable excellent research environment to high-level international researchers in the given field
C	Good level	<b>The RU is a Strong National Player</b> The Unit is able to provide a research environment that is comparable with internationally recognised research organisations in the field
D	Adequate	<b>The RU is a Satisfactory National Player</b> The Unit's research environment is still evolving to achieve a level that is expected in the international research community of a respected research organisation in the field
E	Poor	<b>The RU is a Poor National Player</b> The Unit is still only in the process of creating an internationally comparable research environment
Unclassified		N/A

*In this criterion, 'global', 'international' and 'national' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the strategy or management activities*

### Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The Unity's 6.2 research domain includes Bohemian studies, English studies, Romance studies — with special mention to the very innovative Czech-German Area Studies and German Studies; so, most research focuses on the theory of literature, literary history, linguistics (a dozen languages) with special mention, now, to translations and traductology.

Even if the EvU and RU were created less than ten years ago, it is obvious that, from a quantitative as well as qualitative point of view, their scientific production managed to achieve in most cases a national and even in many cases an international level.

It should be underlined that the training of doctoral students not only is wide (five programs are effective with 59 students) but also carefully organized: like the weekly contacts with directors, and the "philosophy seminars".

That said, the committee would have liked —but had not enough time— to ask what is done more in detail, in theoretical as well as methodological terms (the answers at Q013a-c and Q014d are rather short in the Self-Assessment document).

## Criterion II Membership of the national and global research community

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	<b>The RU is a Global Leader</b> The Unit participates and is recognised in excellent international networks involving global leaders in the field.
B	Very good	<b>The RU is a Strong International Player</b> The Unit participates and is recognised in international networks in the field.
C	Good level	<b>The RU is a Strong National Player</b> The Unit participates and is recognised in excellent national networks involving national leaders in the field.
D	Adequate	<b>The RU is a Satisfactory National Player</b> The Unit participates and is recognised in national networks in the field.
E	Poor	<b>The RU is a Poor National Player</b> The Unit has little to no substantive collaboration.
Unclassified		N/A

### Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The RU is on the good way to be recognized, both at national and international levels, as a major research centre in the field of philological sciences: since it was founded recently, the EvU/RU had not enough time to develop more activity. Despite this, the RU managed to get numerous achievements in terms of international cooperation, even if some big projects are still in progress.

Regarding prizes, positions, and participation in research networks or projects, the RU is above all focused on national ones. And if strong ties with foreign universities have been developed, it seems in contrast —according to what the committee could read in the Self-Assessment, since it had no time to get more detail on this issue during the on-site visit— that a rather low number of researchers visited the RU.

### Criterion III Scientific research excellence

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	<p><b>The RU is a Global Leader</b></p> <p>In terms of <u>originality, significance and rigour</u>, the Unit's research output is comparable with outstanding work internationally in the field. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet the highest international standards of excellence. Work at this level can be a key international reference point in the field.</p> <p>The RU output profile is comparable to the one of the best international research organisations in the field.</p>
B	Very good	<p><b>The RU is a Strong International Player</b></p> <p>In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with excellent work internationally. The research nonetheless does not yet meet the highest standards of excellence. Work at this level can arouse serious interest in the international academic community.</p> <p>The RU output profile is comparable to the one of very good international research organisations in the field.</p>
C	Good level	<p><b>The RU is a Good International Player</b></p> <p>In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with the best work internationally. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet high international standards. Internationally recognized publishers or journals could publish work of this level.</p> <p>The RU output profile is comparable to the one of good international research organisations in the field.</p>
D	Adequate	<p><b>The RU is a Good National Player with Some International Recognition</b></p> <p>In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with good work internationally. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet international standards only to a certain extent.</p> <p>The RU output profile is comparable to the one of modest international research organisations in the field.</p>
E	Poor	<p><b>The RU is a Poor National Player</b></p> <p>In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output falls below the international quality standards.</p> <p>The RU output profile is not comparable to the one of modest international research organisations in the field.</p>
Unclassified		N/A

*In this criterion, 'Global', 'International' and 'National' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the research outputs and/or publication channels.*

#### Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

If the items submitted to the committee are supposed to represent the excellence of research in the RU: the most part of them are in Czech language, which could suggest that they are supposed to have a reduced audience; but the anonym reviewers evaluated these books as outstanding, in their own domain, from various essential points of views: contents, stile, examples... On the other hand, the committee may ensure, as far as it knows and, if not, was able to verify on site, that the English, French and German productions (even productions in English, French and German) of the EvU/RU are prominent (among them 2 dictionaries) and may have an international impact.

A Grant Agency set up specifically to help the research life of the units, that is to say to support the

publications of the EvU/RU and provides grants for PhD students.

That said, the committee should add that, even if the RU may be considered consequently as a strong national player, its international position and impact is not always explained or exposed very clearly: for instance, the EvU offers among its trainings various Double Degrees, where research is strongly tied (see Conclusions).

#### Criterion IV Overall research performance

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	<b>The RU is a Global Leader</b> In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is internationally excellent, i.e. at the level of the best international research organisations in the field.
B	Very good	<b>The RU is a Strong International Player</b> In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is optimal, i.e. at the level of very good international research organisations in the field.
C	Good level	<b>The RU is a Strong National Player</b> In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is at a good standard.
D	Adequate	<b>The RU is a Satisfactory National Player</b> In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is at an acceptable standard.
E	Poor	<b>The RU is a Poor National Player</b> In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is poor.
Unclassified		N/A

*In this criterion, 'global', 'international' and 'national' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the research activities.*

#### Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The RU has reached a good level in terms of research performance, since the members published a lot of texts. The monographs represent the largest part of the scientific production; the RU published, during the five years of the period evaluated, inter alia, 30 books.

Within the Humanities, and with a great variety of further specifications, a wide debate is taking place about the format of publications: whether monographs or journal articles have to be preferred. In the case of the present RU 6.2, a further remark is needed: if the choice of publishing books rather than contributing with articles to peer reviewed journals prevails, along with this choice another one goes on, i.e. that of publishing them in Czech. According to the committee, this solution biases in a certain degree the potential internationalization of the RU.

The RU receives every year sums for research projects from different foundations and ministries. However the committee is not able to determine what are exactly the themes and aims of these research activities.

## Criterion V Societal relevance

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	<b>Work in the RU has a Very High Potential for Societal Impacts</b> In terms of <u>reach and significance</u> , the RU is an important driver of societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) stand out in terms of their extensive and dynamic nature.
B	Very good	<b>Work in the RU has a High Potential for Societal Impacts</b> In terms of reach and significance, the RU strongly contributes to societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) are at a very high level.
C	Good level	<b>Work in the RU has a Good Potential for Societal Impacts</b> In terms of reach and significance, the RU contributes well to societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) are at a good level.
D	Adequate	<b>Work in the RU has a Low Potential for Societal Impacts</b> In terms of reach and significance, the RU contributes to societal development. The RU has some collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public).
E	Poor	<b>Work in the RU has Little to No Potential for Societal Impacts</b> In terms of reach and significance, the RU makes little to no contributions to societal development. The RU does not collaborate and/or interact with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public).
Unclassified		N/A

*'Societal' impacts refer to impacts on the economy and social welfare, the latter including health, environment, culture, social inclusion, education and gender.*

### Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The RU 6.2 cooperates with numerous cultural organizations like museums, broadcasting, libraries, and publishing houses. It has strong ties too with associations like inter alia the Alliance française, where it is possible namely to give to researches in Foreign Language Teaching fields for applications.

It's necessary to emphasise too, in terms of applications and dissemination, that the RU ties strong relations with institutions like schools, which represents a solid contribution to the social welfare. However, the committee notes that the self-assessment doesn't go with great details in this kind or domain of activities, such that the committee may have had the impression that these activities only play a second role in the scientific life of the RU.

## Conclusions and recommendations

Target: 100 to 200 words

The RU 6.2 made a real SWOT analysis; it is very aware of its scientific position and the role it plays in the Czech as well as in the European community. The RU is now starting to build a strong staff, which will be able to offer important publications, in quality and quantity, and thus to get accreditations for teaching programs.

By doing so, the EvU/RU adopts the necessary means to play a high national and regional player with good connections in Middle Europe. However it is necessary to develop the teaching programs and to give to the staff clearer career opportunities.

The RU publishes one journal *Écho des Études Romanes* which is already recognized at an international level (classed A by the Italian ANVUR). The committee suggests that the RU could consider the possibility to develop another “philological” journal dedicated to general linguistics and theory of literature.

Concerning the strategy, the RU manifests the will “to implement the habilitation in Romance Studies” (page 12). Considering the impact of the RU in linguistics and literature, the committee strongly agrees with this project.

The committee knows how much members of the RU are involved in international cooperation (Double Degrees, Erasmus mobility). But according to what the committee could read in the Self-Assessment, a rather low number of researchers visited the RU. If right, the committee suggests developing exchanges in that direction.