

# Legal Terms and Word Sketches: a Case Study

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# Introduction

- Goal:  
offer supplementary tools for building dictionary of Czech law terms
- Method:
  - ① VaDis partial parser: complex nominal constructions
  - ② Clustering according to headwords
  - ③ Word Sketches for the headwords

# Recognition of the Complex Nominal Constructions

- Tool: VaDis partial parser
- Source: the Penal Code of Czech Republic (36,000 word forms)
- Result: complex noun groups
- Further processing: clustering groups according to their headwords
- Headwords of big clusters: often essential legal terms like *čin* (*act*), *trest* (*punishment*), *pachatel* (*offender*), *zákon* (*law*), *sazba* (*penalty*), *vazba* (*detention*), *soud* (*court*), *předpis* (*regulation*), *opatření* (*measure*), *následek* (*consequence*), *škoda* (*damage*), etc.

# Example: a Part of the Cluster for the Headword čin (act)

| complex nominal group           | English equivalent                      |
|---------------------------------|---|
| pachatel trestného činu         | who committed a criminal act            |
| spáchání trestného činu         | committing a criminal act               |
| pokus trestného činu            | an attempt to commit a criminal act     |
| znaky trestného činu            | attributes of the criminal act          |
| způsob provedení činu           | way of the committing a criminal act    |
| dokonání trestného činu         | completing a criminal act               |
| účastník trestného činu         | participant of the criminal act         |
| trestnost pokusu trestného činu | punishability of the attempt            |
| doba spáchání činu              | time of the committing a criminal act   |
| povaha spáchaného činu          | nature of the committed criminal act    |
| stupeň nebezpečnosti činu       | degree of the dangerousness of crim. a. |

# Obtaining Legal Terms through WSE

- at the moment: no corpus of Czech legal texts
- instead we used big corpora of Czech common texts:  
SYN2000 (110 million tokens), Czes (1.2 billion tokens)
- we explored WS for the headwords
- results:
  - we obtained several hundreds relevant legal terms (despite of common texts)
  - some WS tables form natural groups of legal terms (e.g. gen\_1 contains a reasonable classification of criminal acts)
  - we also obtained verbs with legal meaning, including candidates for further extension of VerbaLex (e.g. *promlčet* (*be time-barred*), *překvalifikovat* (*change qualification*), *prošetřovat* (*investigate*), *zpochybňovat* (*question*),...)

# Example: Legal Verbs from WS Tables

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| spáchat (commit)                       | dopouštět se (perpetrate)    |
| páchat (commit)                        | odsoudit (condemn, sentence) |
| vyšetřovat (investigate)               | potrestat (punish)           |
| překvalifikovat (change qualification) | přiznat (confess)            |
| prošetřovat (investigate)              | postihovat (affect)          |
| vykonat (perform)                      | prokázat (prove)             |
| zmařit (thwart)                        | ohlásit (announce)           |
| ospravedlňovat (justify)               | uprchnout (escape)           |
| stíhat (prosecute)                     | zodpovídat (be responsible)  |
| objasňovat (explain)                   | zadržet (arrest, detain)     |
| promlčet (be time-barred)              | napravit (amend)             |
| zpochybňovat (question)                | litovat (regret)             |

# Case Study: WS for the Headword čin (*act*)

- WS with mainly legal terminology (despite its common meaning)
- čin: 13,400 occurrences in SYN2000, 88,500 ones in Czes
- WS tables: more than one hundred words in SYN2000, more than two hundreds words in Czes
- results:
  - gen\_1 table containing a reasonable classification of criminal acts
  - tables containing verbs with legal meaning
  - terminological legal adjectives, e.g. úmyslný (*deliberate*), nedbalostní (*caused by negligence*), násilný (*violent*), protiprávní (*illegal*)

## Example: Sketch Table gen\_1 for čin

|                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| zpronevěra (defalcation)           | padělání (forgery)          |
| krádež (larceny)                   | hanobení (defamation)       |
| poškozování (damaging)             | podílnictví (shareholding)  |
| loupež (robbery)                   | vražda (murder)             |
| maření (obstruction)               | zneužití (misappropriation) |
| porušování (violation)             | ohrožování (threatening)    |
| zneužívání (misappropriating)      | zvýhodňování (privileging)  |
| výtržnictví (disorderly behaviour) | ohrožení (emergency)        |
| vydírání (extortion)               | znásilnění (rape)           |
| pomluva (slander)                  | podplácení (bribery)        |
| zkrácení (reduction)               | týrání (abuse)              |
| zanedbání (negligence)             |                             |

Figure: A part of the WS Table of *čin* in SYN2000

**čin** SYN2000c frekvence = 13398

# Verbs with Financial Meaning

- subgroup of verbs occurring in legal texts
- we inspected verbs with EXT(sum:1) argument in their complex valency frames
- then we explored their frequencies in Czes
- observation: less frequent verbs display specialized terminological meanings, more detailed evaluation would be needed

## Table: Financial Verbs and Their Frequencies in Czes

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| alokovat (allocate)           | 670     |
| realokovat (reallocate)       | 13      |
| danit (tax)                   | 45,374  |
| zdanit (tax)                  | 3,291   |
| dodanit (pay up the tax)      | 117     |
| dodaňovat (pay up the tax)    | 20      |
| dlužit (owe, have a debt)     | 11,773  |
| vydlužit (take on loan)       | 13      |
| fakturovat (invoice)          | 755     |
| vyfakturovat (invoice)        | 135     |
| financovat (finance)          | 18,598  |
| dofinancovat (finance up)     | 219     |
| předfinancovat (prefinance)   | 19      |
| počítat (calculate, compute)  | 116,673 |
| spočítat (calculate, compute) | 13,663  |
| tarifikovat (tariff)          | 23      |
| tarifevat (tariff)            | 12      |

# Relation between VerbaLex Frames and WS

- assumption: semantic labels of the verb's arguments (e.g. EXT(sum:1)) match reasonably with the particular nouns in WS tables of the verb
- case study: verb *vy/fakturovat* (*invoice*)

fakturovat<sub>n1</sub>, zaúčtovat<sub>n1</sub>, zaúčtovávat<sub>n1</sub>, naúčtovat<sub>n1</sub>, naúčtovávat<sub>n1</sub>  
AG<person:1><sub>kdo1</sub><sup>obl</sup> VERB<sup>obl</sup> REC<person:1|institut.:1><sub>komu3</sub><sup>opt</sup>  
ART<goods:1>|ACT<act:2><sub>za+co4</sub><sup>opt</sup> EXT<sum:1><sub>co4</sub><sup>obl</sup>

- result: nouns found in the respective corpus sentences semantically agree with what is predicted by the argument labels in the valency frame

Figure: WS of *fakturovat* (*invoice*) in Czes

fakturovat preloaded/czes frekvence = 755

|                 |           |             |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>has_obj3</b> | <b>79</b> | <b>59.6</b> |
| odběratel       | 3         | 2.93        |
| dealer          | 2         | 2.53        |
| zákazník        | 56        | 2.2         |

|                |          |            |
|----------------|----------|------------|
| <b>post_od</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2.6</b> |
| duben          | 2        | 0.53       |

|                 |           |            |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>has_obj4</b> | <b>96</b> | <b>6.8</b> |
| caska           | 2         | 8.81       |
| mlčení          | 2         | 3.7        |
| provize         | 3         | 3.59       |
| úrok            | 11        | 3.38       |
| instalace       | 5         | 1.14       |
| poradenství     | 2         | 0.97       |
| montáž          | 2         | 0.97       |
| nájem           | 2         | 0.35       |
| pracoviště      | 2         | 0.29       |

|              |           |            |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>coord</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>1.8</b> |
| prodavat     | 3         | 6.06       |
| vyhodnocovat | 10        | 5.26       |
| inkasovat    | 2         | 2.93       |

|               |           |            |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>post_v</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>1.8</b> |
| přepočet      | 3         | 3.86       |

|                |          |            |
|----------------|----------|------------|
| <b>post_po</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5.1</b> |
| uskutečnění    | 2        | 2.94       |