

Recommendations of Examiner: Detailed Report

The Diachronic Typology of Relative Clauses, Rachel Hendery (2007)  
Australian National University PhD Dissertation

Recommendation: PhdD should be granted (with high distinction)

This is an outstanding dissertation in all regards. It is well written and clear; the survey of the field is excellent; the evidence is abundant and is used well; the argumentation is clear and persuasive; and the findings make very significant original contributions to a broad and complex topic. This thesis will no doubt stand as the most significant study of the history of relative clauses for many years to come, by far the most definitive work in this area to date. I would recommend publication of the thesis soon as a monograph. It contributes not only to the historical understanding of relative clauses, but also to grammatical change, grammaticalization, and linguistic typology in diachrony. Of particular importance is the demonstration of the extensive impact of language contact on changes involving relative clauses.