A Review of a Bachelor’s Thesis
submitted to the Department of English and ELT Methodology,
Faculty of Arts, Charles University

Name and titles of the reviewer: doc. Mgr. Radek Skarnitzl, Ph.D.
☒ supervisor ☐ opponent

Author of the thesis: Dominika Trčková

Title of the thesis: Comparing the effect of segmental and prosodic manipulations on speaker’s accentedness and comprehensibility

Year of submission: 2019

Level of expertise:
☒ excellent ☐ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Factual errors:
☒ almost none ☐ appropriate to the scope of the thesis ☐ frequent less serious ☐ serious

Chosen methodology:
☒ original and appropriate ☐ appropriate ☐ barely adequate ☐ inadequate

Results:
☒ original ☐ original and derivative ☐ non-trivial compilation ☐ cited from sources ☐ copied

Scope of the thesis:
☐ too large ☒ appropriate to the topic ☐ adequate ☐ inadequate

Bibliography (number and selection of titles):
☒ above average (scope or rigor) ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Typographical and formal level:
☒ excellent ☐ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Language:
☒ excellent ☐ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Typos:
☐ almost none ☒ appropriate to the scope of the thesis ☐ numerous

Overall evaluation of the thesis:
☒ excellent ☐ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate
Brief description of the thesis (by the supervisor, ca. 100-200 words):
This was a very demanding thesis whose experimental part was performed in collaboration with another student, as well as myself. That allowed both authors to manipulate a greater number of phenomena and especially to obtain perceptual ratings from an unusually high number of respondents ($n = 68$). In my opinion, Dominika Trčková tackled the thesis in an excellent way.

Review, comments and notes (ca. 100-200 words)

Strong points of the thesis:
The theoretical background constitutes a very good introduction into the topic; the chapter is well structured with logical links between individual parts of the text. The methodology is described in sufficient detail to allow replication; particularly worth highlighting is the meticulous explanation of the design of the perception test (section 3.3).

Weak points of the thesis:

Questions to answer during the Defence and suggested points of discussion:

1. The author ascribes the results, especially with respect to comprehensibility in the prosodic domain, to “the insufficient quality of our sound manipulations” (p. 44). While this is a valid assumption, I do not think it is the main reason behind the results. Assuming that the drawbacks of manipulation were hidden by the masking noise, what other effects may have led to the worse comprehensibility scores of prosodically manipulated phrases?

2. On p. 14, the author describes pronunciation features as “key milestones in learning”. I would like to ask her to explain this viewpoint in more detail.

Other comments:

I hereby
☒ recommend ☐ do not recommend to accept the bachelor’s thesis.

And I propose the following grade:
☒ excellent ☐ very good ☐ good ☐ fail

Place, date and signature of the reviewer:

Prague, June 9, 2019