



FACULTY OF ARTS
Charles University

Department of English and ELT Methodology

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: Veronika Vonzová

Title of the thesis: *Effectiveness of teaching English prosodic features in Czech children*

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):

Veronika Vonzová's thesis studies the acquisition of English prosodic features (specifically, melodic and temporal structure, as well as linking) by Czech children in the first year of primary school. As the children's teacher, the author compares two groups of learners (in two years): the experimental group received targeted prosody training alongside their normal English lessons, while the control group followed the standard textbook curriculum. The children's rendition of chants was recorded after ca. five and eight months of their course, and the author examined specific melodic and rhythmic aspects of their production. The results tentatively support the hypothesis that explicit instruction facilitates the acquisition of prosodic features. Methodological aspects of working with small children, who cannot yet read, are discussed in detail.

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

Strong points of the thesis:

It is extremely unusual for a bachelor student to present a longitudinal study of the effects of pronunciation instruction within their thesis, let alone a comparison of two groups recorded in two consecutive years. In this respect, the submitted thesis is exceptional. I believe the author successfully managed to deal with the absence of more "tangible" results (due to the above-mentioned difficulties of working with young learners), illustrating the main changes in the children's production.

Weak points of the thesis:

Weak points may be found mainly in relatively rare language errors (e.g., article omission) or in specific formulations. To name but one example, the claim that "it is therefore quite complicated to establish whether there is any kind of rhythm at all" (p. 16) is not quite fortunate given the importance of rhythm described later in the same section.

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

If you were to conduct the study again, what would you change in terms of the content of the lessons, the way of recording the children and the instruction given to them?

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, August 28, 2019