



FACULTY OF ARTS
Charles University

Department of English and ELT Methodology

A Review of a Final Thesis

submitted to the Department of English and ELT Methodology,
Faculty of Arts, Charles University

Name and titles of the reviewer: Luca Cilibrasi, PhD

Reviewed as: a supervisor an opponent

Author of the thesis: Simona Sobolevská

Title of the thesis: Fluency markers in the speech of advanced learners of English before and after a study stay in an English-speaking country

Year of submission: 2020

Submitted as: a bachelor's thesis a master's thesis

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):

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

This thesis investigates fluency markers in a group of English learners that have spent a semester abroad as part of the Erasmus programme. This is an excellent thesis, well written, clear, mature. The results are somewhat disappointing, but the student has the scientific integrity to explain this fact clearly and to report the data for what they are (as a good scientist should do).

Strong points of the thesis:

The thesis is in general of good quality. I selected a few sections where I felt the writing was particularly compelling:

Page 10. Nice explanation of the differences between complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

Page 16. In general, an excellent explanation of the concept of fluency

Page 20. Very good framing of the analysis conducted

Page 21. Great description of the corpus investigated

Page 39. Good approach to the data analysis, starting from general, getting to details

Weak points of the thesis:

Page 4. The author should have mentioned in the abstract that there are only 7 participants. More at the core, apart from the lack of reporting, the study has a rather small sample size, and this is a weakness of the research conducted.

Page 30. It is a bit weird that only one participant shows a significant effect of self-correction, when you do find a main effect of self-correction. It is also weird that you have more significance in repeats, while the main effect of repeats is not significant. Please see the question below for follow-up on this issue.

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

Page 30. Here I guess you are comparing each participant pre vs post assessment? What input did you put in the chi-square? Can you please show us at the defence?

Page 41. I appreciate that you are humble about your (only) result, by saying that “drop in the production of self-corrections post-SA can neither be exclusively seen as a drop in the production of a certain dysfluency, nor as the speakers producing fewer mistakes. “



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In fact, what I wonder is this: What if what you found is just an effect of confidence? People that spend some time abroad may “think” they know the language better, and thus reduce self-corrections, without this necessarily relating to language skills. Can we rule this out?

Other comments:

The candidate showed great maturity, clarity of thought and rigour. This is a great piece of work and I recommend grade one.

Proposed grade:

excellent very good good fail

Place, date and signature of the reviewer:

Prague, 10-6-2020

Anna Chubina