

**Statement prepared by the supervisor of *Lucie Jiráňková* relating to their studies and dissertation entitled “*The development of L2 inflectional morphology and cross-language interference effects*”**

**submitted in 2021 at the *Department of English and ELT Methodology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University***

**I. Overall evaluation of PhD studies**

Lucie Jiráňková has been a PhD student under my supervision for the last 4 years. Throughout these years, she has shown to be extremely reliable and hard working. All academic requirements were met in time and tackled with professionalism. Additionally, she contributed to the smooth operation of the department in various ways, particularly by coordinating students in the teacher training programme (which is to some extent connected to her PhD project).

Her thesis is an excellent piece of scientific work: I particularly appreciate the systematicity of the studies, the fact that the volume is well organised, and the fact that it tackles separately perception, production and interference, with three domain-specific experiments.

During the years, the candidate has shown a growingly independent behaviour: if the initial experiment was heavily influenced by some of my previous work (Cilibrasi, 2016), the second and third experiments are the creation of a mature scholar, and they show that the candidate can develop and complete complex designs on her own. The number of participants involved in each study is rather impressive, with ample datasets for all studies.

These statements are corroborated by the fact that, as of today, articles describing two of the three experiments have been accepted for publication in journals of good quality (the *Journal of Monolingual and Bilingual Speech and Linguistica Pragensia*), and a third article is currently under the second phase of review in another journal. Additionally, the candidate has presented her work in several national and international conferences.

**II. Overall evaluation of the dissertation**

Ms Jiráňková's thesis deals with the development of inflectional morphology in second language learners of English with Czech as L1. The thesis is organised in three self-contained chapters that deal separately with perceptual skills, production skills and cross-language interference (or facilitation). Each chapter contains one experiment that the candidate conducted independently, testing a large number of subjects over the 4 years of the PhD. The findings provided by this thesis are quite complex, and they show an interaction of rule-based and analogic processing in the acquisition of inflectional morphology in L2 learners. The thesis successfully accounts for interference (or facilitation) effects from the L1 Czech, and this gives the whole work an important trait of originality: few studies have investigated the role of Czech in the learning of English morphology, and this is probably the most comprehensive work of this kind currently available.

### **III. Comments relating to the dissertation [if any]**

The thesis is an impressive journey in an important aspect of second language learning (the acquisition of inflectional morphology), and it offers a substantial amount of new data to the scientific field of psycholinguistics. The pairing of languages (Czech + English) is still relatively understudied compared to other pairings, and the candidate provides important contributions in a systematic fashion. The theoretical background covers two of the main approaches in the field of language acquisition, and it successfully manages to keep an agnostic approach to these two accounts, consistently with the complex and mixed data obtained from the experiments.

### **IV. Any questions for the defence**

In the thesis you conducted experiments using both a traditional grouping system (separating participants in proficiency groups) and a more modern continuous approach (keeping all participants in one group, and using proficiency as a continuous predictor in your statistical model). What do you think are advantages and disadvantages of both these approaches?

### **V. Conclusion**

I provisionally classify the submitted dissertation as passed.

[6-09-2021]

