



Institute of Phonetics, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

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: doc. Mgr. Radek Skarnitzl, Ph.D.

Reviewed as: a supervisor an opponent

Author of the thesis: Lenka Kalvodová

Title of the thesis: *Production and perception aspects of weak form words in Czech-accented English*

Year of submission: 2021

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):

The thesis examines weak forms (WF) of English grammatical words. The theoretical background introduces rhythm of speech and connected speech processes, with a focus placed on WF words. The author also considers didactic aspects of connected speech processes and weak-form words in English as an L2. The empirical part of the thesis takes the perspective of both production of WF-rich sentences by two groups of Czech students of English (less and more accented), and perception of signal-manipulated sentences. Production analyses, as well as manipulations for the purpose of the perceptual experiment concerned specifically WF words and phonological processes which are typical in them, such as linking, vowel reduction, elisions and assimilations. Overall, the results confirm the author's hypotheses concerning both production and perception.

Review, comments and notes (ca. 100-200 words)***Strong points of the thesis:***

The sentences, which were prepared specifically for this study, are rich in WF words (but not unnaturally so), enabling relatively strong conclusions to be made. The manipulations for the perceptual test were extremely demanding and time-consuming, and Lenka Kalvodová managed them very well. The presentation of the results (especially those of the production part) is well designed, using illustrative graphical displays.

Weak points of the thesis:

The goal for the number of participants in the perception test was not quite met (15 instead of the planned 20) due to the pandemic and (I assume) the unwillingness of students to spend even more time in front of the computer.

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

Can any conclusions or recommendations be drawn from the thesis concerning English (pronunciation) teaching in the Czech context?

Other comments:**Proposed grade:**

excellent very good good fail

Place, date and signature of the reviewer:

Sønderborg, Denmark, January 25, 2022