

Opponent's review of the Master's Thesis

Title: **Implications of the double reduction policy (2021) in China for the providers of shadow education**

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The thesis presented by Yu Zhu deals with a double reduction policy in China, which is relevant and a current topic of international research. The author set the objective to „explore the implications of the *Double Reduction* (2021) policy in China for the providers of Shadow Education“ (p.18) and set four relevant research questions, which she more or less answered in four individual separate chapters and fulfilled the goal of the thesis.

The Czech standard requires more balanced empirical and theoretical part. As for the structure of the text I would not divide the text into two parts (theoretical and empirical part). The content itself is balanced though. I consider an effective approach to set the context in the first two chapters (defining shadow education and describing the current research status in China) and then to answer the research questions in separate individual chapters (*Chinese Shadow Education Features*, *The Driving Forces of Chinese Shadow Education*, *Shadow Education Policy Responses*, *Prohibitive Policy-Double Reduction*). The text includes eleven tables and 5 figures which support the ideas effectively. Also I appreciate that the conclusion answers the research questions in a short but accurate and clear way and summarizes the thesis efficiently.

The empirical research is based on document analysis and qualitative research (interviews). However, the author does not use the full potential of the qualitative data. Deeper analysis could provide a unique insight in the ways how the providers of shadow education perceive not only the implementation of double reduction policy but the problematic of shadow education in general. Besides, the way of data analysis is unclear and not explained, both for the interviews and the documents.

I appreciate the amount of sources the author studied and cited, even though there are some minor mistakes in citation (eg.: pg. 81 “According to the report (which?), parents’ educational anxiety was not released...“).

Concerning the formal standards, there are grammatical mistakes (mainly in the sentence structure), which make the text sometimes more difficult to understand. I recommend to have the text proofread next time.

Questions for the author

- How did you analyse the data from the interviews?
- You mention some limitations on p. 90, but this does not seem exhaustive. Would you think of any other limitations of your research? (e.g. in relation to the construction of your sample of respondents?)

- What is your personal opinion on the double reduction policy as it is now? Do the pros outweigh the cons, or would it bring more bad than good in your opinion? What mid-term and long-term outcomes (say, in 10 years) of this policy would you expect?

To sum up, it is an interesting contribution to the debate about the consequences of double reduction policy. The author shows the ability to conduct independent analysis and the master's thesis presented is fully acceptable and I recommend it to be defended.

Katerina Novotná