



**REPORT ON MASTER THESIS**

**Name of the student:** Tereza Česká

**Study program:** Veřejná a sociální politika (Public and Social Policy)

**Title of the master thesis:** Multicultural Education: Construction of Identity in Czech Educational System

**Supervisor:** Prof. PhDr. Arnošt Veselý, Ph.D.

**Name of the referee:** Prof. PhDr. Arnošt Veselý, Ph.D.

Master's thesis of Tereza Česká deals with multicultural education in the Czech Republic. I appreciate the topic because it is rarely raised in the Czech public policy discourse. I also appreciate courage of the student to present her own ideas that stems not only from the theory, but also from her personal interest in the topic. Last, I value that the master thesis is written in English.

The thesis is reasonably structured. It is divided into five main parts. First, the topic as such is introduced. Second, theory – or more accurately “the concept” – of multicultural education is introduced. Third, methodology and research questions are presented. It is followed by empirical analysis of the Czech educational policy documents. The thesis is concluded by “research discussion” and conclusions. In general, the structure of the thesis is clear, although the titles of some chapters could be labelled differently, or its parts restructured. For instance, the methodological part includes chapter on “Construction and deconstruction in public policy” which is concerned with theory and not methodology.

The main goal of the thesis was formulated as to “identify how the multicultural identity is constructed in in the multicultural education in the Czech educational system”. The main research question is: How is the multicultural identity constructed in multicultural education? It is decomposed into three research questions: What is the prevalent theoretical stream of multicultural education in Republic? What are the caveats of such construction? Is multicultural education worth pursuing? The formulation of the research questions is rather broad and general which complicates the empirical approach and coherence. Consequently, the questions are not fully answered in the thesis. It concerns especially the third question which is not addressed in the thesis almost at all.



In general, the thesis suffers from ambiguity and vagueness. I acknowledge that the author has made an effort to define the terms. However, the result is a set of definitions without their relationships, and clear understanding of them. Consequently, with such ambiguity the arguments are sometimes hard to understand. For instance, it is not clear what the author criticises: the concept of multicultural education as such or some particular *theory* of it or *application* of it?

The comprehension is further complicated by the lack of detailed empirical analysis that would demonstrate the argumentation and conclusions. Empirical analysis is very shallow and in fact it is only sketched. Even more importantly, it is not clear how the conclusions have been reached. The research process has not been transparent. Although there are documents that have been analysed, it is not clear *how* they have been analysed. Discourse analysis is a very broad methodological approach, and it should be stated how exactly it was realized.

The examples that are presented are just a few cases which might – but do not have to – represent the reality. Some of the examples provided are taken out of the context. For instance, it is argued that “*Given the fact that the multicultural education does not have so much space in the curriculum, the framework gives only the instructions to teach about culture in a simplistic and stereotypical manner.*” Nevertheless, it can be argued that educational framework is just a framework and *none* of the topic is described in detail. This is something that cannot be expected from the framework.

But the crucial problem is a failure to distinguish between the discourse in the policy documents and discourse in the practice in real-life classrooms. We know from other research that what is actually taught (real curriculum) is often far from the formal description in national curriculum. It is likely that different teachers teach differently. There are likely to be *different discourses* and *different practices* on multicultural education, and at least some of them might include topics such as prejudice and injustice which are argued to be missing. Generalization of the author is simply too broad and all-encompassing and is based rather on theory than on empirical analysis.

In general, it is clear that the author is rather strong in theoretical thinking, but often lacks deeper understanding of the empirical evidence. It is clear from many



statements which are not accurate. (Just one example. On page 19 it is claimed that “*It took more than ten years after the democratic transition before the school act came into force and the educational strategies were formulated*“. Simply this is not true. Many important strategies have been formulated immediately after 1989).

The thesis includes quite a few of typing errors. Also, the format for references is not uniform and standard. It seems that the thesis has been written and finalized in rush.

**Conclusion: I recommend the master thesis for defence and I suggest grading it as good (3).**

**Suggested questions for defence:**

1. One of the research questions is as follows: “Is multicultural education worth pursuing?” What is the answer?
2. How did you analyse the documents?
3. What are the implications for public policy? What should be done?

Date of evaluation: August 9, 2017

Referee Signature: