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: Mgr. Magdalena Mouralová

Master's thesis of Tereza Česká focuses on multicultural education in the CzechRepublic. The student explores construction of "multicultural identity" by analysing policy documents and textbooks. I consider the thesis interesting and appreciate author's courage to choose a minor **topic** and also to present her own ideas even though these are sometimes daring. On the one hand, ,the thesis could provoke a discussion which is beneficial. On the other hand the author should pay more attention to the defence the the topic as relevant for public policy (I consider it relevant, but I miss the argumentation in the paper).

The thesis is quite well **structured**, although there are some inconsistencies. Chapter 2.1 called "Construction and deconstruction in public policy" is included in the methodological part, even though it is rather theoretical. Author also "briefly analyses" (p. 19) in the chapter 1.3.2, which is a part of the conceptual framework. I would also prefer if goals and research questions were presented earlier than in the half of the paper (p. 30) – it would help to better orientation of a reader and to clarify the role of some arguments in the thesis.

The main **goal** of the thesis is to "identify how the multicultural identity is constructed in the multicultural education in the Czech educational system". The main research question is included here word by word and therefore there is no useful distinction between the goal and the research question. . There are three more specific research questions: 1) What is the prevalent theoretical stream of multicultural education in Republic? 2) What are the caveats of such construction? 3) Is multicultural education worth pursuing?

Especially the third question is not properly formulated, there is no operationalization and it is not clear how it should be answered (and it is not answered in the thesis at all). Also the second research question is weakly connected both to the conceptual framework and the analysis.

The author is well informed about concept of multiculturalism, its development, different approaches a critique which are presented in the Chapter 2. Here are also some weak points, e. g. term definitions often start and finish with the statement that a term is complicated and vague, which really does not lead to a better comprehension. I also miss more sophisticated usage of Schneider and Ingram's theory.

The weakest parts of thesis are mainly data, analysis and argumentation. Methods are not properly described; it is not clear how and why even these documents were selected for the analysis and above all how exactly the analysis was executed (it corresponds with fact the that no methodological

literature is used in the thesis). The author for example states that „the handbooks and the documents were chosen as typical representative textbooks about multicultural education" (p. 34), but she does not mention how the representativness was recognized and examined and why she decided to analyse only the „typical" documents.

Analysis itself is rather shallow; author focuses on dominant features, but it is necessary to show also the other aspects (for example the analysis of an instrumental level of indentity focuses only on the preservation of culture, as there are no other skills in any of the analysed textbooks. Are there not, really?)

Because of these facts, the results are not very convincing, as data and the methods are not enough credible. Moreover, many of arguments are not supported by data (or other resources) at all and the argumentation is in general rather weak. There are some excessive or even false statements (e.g. no formulation of educational policy strategies in the 90's), some incomplete (e.g. only one amendment of School Act is mentionted, even there were many of them). Some information are missing (e.g. existence of the Framework Educational programmes for vocational education) or are not clear (which School Education Programmes are analysed – there are thousands of schools).

Some essential arguments should be more discussed (e. g. Dana Moree's critique of the Czech realization of MCE) and some important statements are missing at all. I feel the lack of deeper discussion about the role of education for the society and individuals, which is crucial for the topic: First, there is a strong connection between education and identity, and second, public education always aims (and it might even be the main reason for its establishment) to preserve culture (of majority) and transfer it to new generation. Demands of critical multiculturalism are therefore in conflict with historical foundations of public education and there is no mention about it in the thesis at all!

There are also some minor formal defects and mistakes such as grammar errors (punctuation), typing errors, typography errors or bad cross links between different parts of thesis.

To sum up, the main strengths of thesis are: unique and interesting topic; good orientation of the student in the concepts of multicurturalism and multicurtural education and originality, personal interest in the topics and courage to present own opinions. On the other hand, the main weaknesses are: vaguely formulated research question, partly not answered; results not based on data; weak description of the research methods and not clear public policy relevance, weak relation to the public policy theory or practice. Nevertheless, **I recommended the master thesis for the defence and I suggest to grade it as good** (3).

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Magdalena Mouralová