

Response to Professor Kata Csizer

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Kata Csizer for her thorough comments about my dissertation. These comments will definitely enrich my work. Answers to the questions in her review are presented as the following:

- The researcher understands that the phrase testing population is the entire members of adult learners in Syria of German as a fourth language. However, in this context it means the participants who took part in this study.
- The sampling procedure used in this study is direct sampling. The sample is selected based on some judgmental decisions set forth by the researcher who excludes equal opportunity selections and depends more on the intentional selection of items based on criteria which would relate less or more with sample representativeness of the population which is the case at the HLI and AIU. The rationale behind choosing this method can be attributed to practicality issues (the researcher works for these two universities) and the ongoing crisis in Syria in which getting official numbers about adult participants learning German as a fourth language is rather challenging.
- Regarding the reviewer's question about inconsistency while presenting the research questions in the result chapter, the researcher in the first draft of the dissertation grouped the research questions according to the statistical tests used. For example, if I will use a Pearson correlation test, I used the word *relationship* while forming the question (What is the relationship between English and French proficiency and the German language performance?). However, one reviewer suggested that questions should be general and hypotheses are specific. For that reason, the structure of the questions was changed, and Q4 and Q5 were merged into one question, namely Q4. Then the researcher needed to use three different statistical tests to answer Q4. So, the researcher

got around this problem by listing the answers of the different tests as subsections (for example: Age and fourth language acquisition).

- Future research may investigate the previous linguistic repertoire i.e. English and Russian while acquiring an additional language. In 2019, Russian language was introduced as an optional second foreign language starting from the seventh grade. The students can choose either French or Russian as a second foreign language.
- Some of the indirect variable, which can be examined by future work, is the role of alternative teaching methods, such as the multi-competence approach on multiple language acquisition. The researcher tried to investigate this variable during the pilot study; however, many logistic constraints obstructed the implementation of this aim as presented in chapter 6.