



Dissertation review for the defense

PhD candidate: Noémi Szabó

Title of the dissertation: Metalinguistic awareness and cross-linguistic interaction in third language learning: English and German as L3 in the Hungarian classroom

Supervisor: Ulrike Jessner-Schmid

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Csizér Kata

Date of the review: November 22, 2024

The topic of this research is novel and highly relevant, with the potential to offer theoretical, pedagogical, and practical implications. In what follows, I will review the issues raised during the in-house defense to evaluate the quality and value of the final dissertation.

Introduction

The introduction is well-written and proportional to the dissertation. However, I still think that the current form could be better aligned with international standards, though justifications for its structure are presented professionally. If the candidate decides to publish her work as a monograph, this section will need substantial revision.

Literature Review

The literature review is well-organized, but I still find the overall justification for its structure lacking, which could have made this part of the dissertation more reader-friendly, even with the current careful signposting. I can see the effort and attempt to refine both the structure and content of the literature review, which is appreciated. Some formal issues persist, not only in this section but throughout the dissertation. A final, careful reading of the work could have added valuable quality to the final product.

Context

This chapter is well-structured and well-written. Multiple sections describe the current state of the Hungarian education system, providing an adequate and convincing backdrop for this dissertation study.

Methods

This section required substantial restructuring and rewriting after the in-house review, and it is praiseworthy that the candidate invested the time and effort to address the issues identified previously. However, there is still a certain lack of audience awareness, and the candidate occasionally explains the obvious. Nevertheless, the write-up is mostly professional. The research questions are well-formulated and appropriately cover the topic of research, but the research gap could have been emphasized more clearly.

I do not fully understand the distinction made between a “testing population” and a “sample”. Additionally, whenever you describe your sample and sampling techniques, you need to define and justify your population to enable the generalizability of the quantitative results. Data collection and data analysis are explained in sufficient detail, and quality considerations are adequately presented.

Results and Discussion

I think this part of the dissertation clearly benefitted from additional work. There is a clear relationship between the research questions and the results. However, comparing and contrasting the findings with international studies could have shed more light on contextual differences and helped readers better understand and position this study within both Hungarian and international research contexts. A more in-depth discussion of contextual differences could have highlighted the unique characteristics, or the lack thereof, of the Hungarian education system, which could have provided a more detailed agenda for future research.

Conclusion

The conclusion adequately addresses the necessary issues. Thank you for adding a section on future research directions. I hope this addition not only motivates the candidate to pursue subsequent studies but also engages readers with this part of the dissertation, leading to future research on this very important topic in Hungary.

On the basis of the above considerations, I can conclude that this thesis presents an original piece of research on a timely and important topic, and the dissertation is ready for the public defense. I am looking forward to discussing the dissertation with the candidate.



Prof. Dr. Kata Csizér, DSc
Department of English Applied Linguistics
Eötvös Loránd University