

Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

POSUDEK VEDOUCÍHO BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)

Název práce: Stereotypes about bilingualism

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Short characteristics of the thesis

This thesis focuses on the topic of bilingualism, stereotypes connected with this phenomenon and bilingual upbringing. After a short introduction, the author explains the term bilingualism using several definitions formulated by famous scholars. Then, she introduces several classifications of bilingualism, simultaneous bilingualism, bilingual strategies, and other related issues (Chapter 2). The author also provides a short overview of families whose children were observed for the purpose of this thesis. The subsequent chapters focus on particular stereotypes about bilingualism with the aim to describe them and on the basis of the author's research to confirm or disprove these prejudices. The actual findings are summarised in the Conclusion.

Overall assessment

The topic addressed in this thesis is very interesting and up-to-date. What I would like to appreciate is the empirical part since it is always difficult to find suitable respondents for a particular type of research and their sufficient number, to work with them, and afterwards to transcribe their conversations. Examples of some of these transcripts may be found throughout the thesis, together with their descriptions and commentaries, which are very valuable parts.

Even though the thesis mostly accomplished its primary goals, I have certain reservations concerning some of its parts.

As regards the Introduction, I would appreciate a more detailed formulation of the aims of the thesis. The third paragraph of this section describes the empirical part. However, this is not sufficient and the author should have devoted a separate chapter/section to methodology applied in this thesis and explain it in a more detailed manner and more explicitly.

When reading the thesis, we can come across several unfounded claims, which should have been clarified or supported by relevant literature. For instance, in the Introduction we can read this sentence: Around 60% of the worldwide population are raised as bilingual speakers. Where did the author find this information?

In the same paragraph, there is this statement: The topic of bilingualism is examined often, but children who are raised bilingually less so, but we can find quite a lot of studies dealing with bilingual upbringing (e.g. Bialystok 2017, Byers-Heinlein and Lew-Williams 2013, De Houwer 2007, etc.).

Another example of an unsupported claim: Learning two languages simultaneously from birth is still more unique but it has been a perfectly normal phenomenon since ancient times. (Section 2.3, p. 12)



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In the first part of Chapter two, the author provides the reader several definitions of bilingualism, however, these are neither critically compared nor evaluated. A similar thing happened in part 2.1 (Classification of Bilingualism), where the author presents several classifications but without any deeper comparison.

In Section 2.5 (p. 15) we can find an overview of families, their bilingual children, languages, strategies, etc. According to this table, Karolína and Christoper's L1 is German but their parents' L1 is Czech, the whole family speaks Czech at home and uses German only in public. Should not be their L1 Czech and L2 German?

Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 focus on particular types of stereotypes, their description and testing on bilingual children included in research. The author presents specific examples from her corpus of conversations accompanied by her interpretations, which is quite valuable. What could have been included at the end of these chapters is a clear explanation whether that particular stereotype was confirmed or disproved.

A bit questionable may be the stereotype presented in Chapter four (Bilingual children do not belong to any of the two cultures) since children themselves cannot decide about it and belonging to one or the other culture is highly dependent on particular families.

The thesis is written in good English with only a few grammatical and stylistic mistakes. To sum up, despite the above-mentioned reservations, this thesis is a valuable and interesting contribution to the topic of bilingualism.

Práci doporučuji k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: velmi dobře

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Datum

Podpis