Thesis Title: The CLIL method at Czech secondary schools: Study case
Field of Study: FF N-SS AJU combined [sem 4, cycle 2]
Department: Department of English and American Studies
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Reviewer: Nicola Catherine Fořtová, B.A., M.A.

Reviewers recommendation for overall mark: C

1. Evaluation of central idea, thesis, focus and purpose: B
2. Evaluation of organization, logic and arrangement: B
3. Evaluation of topic development, support and evidence: B
4. Evaluation of language, style, standard usage, citation and bibliographic standards: D

Comments and/or topics and questions for the thesis defence:
Divided into five main chapters plus introduction and conclusion the present thesis investigates Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as a teaching approach and its implementation in Czech schools. The work aims to determine how CLIL is being implemented, some of the challenges that its implementation in the Czech context presents, whether it is deemed effective, and the possible reasons for a lack of its development in Czech schools. In order to answer the aforementioned questions, the authors research comprised a comparative case-study of CLIL’s implementation in three grammar schools in Brno. The author has conducted the research using lesson observation, interviews and questionnaires.

The introduction clearly states the authors reasons for conducting the research, outlines the structure of her work, and presents the reader with the research questions (RQs) she seeks to answer. Chapters 2 and 3 present a review of the literature in the field and lead the reader through a definition of terms, CLIL’s history to date, its benefits and challenges, and what is necessary to ensure successful implementation. These chapters progress logically, show that the author has read in interesting places, and also lie the foundation on which the author bases her research. A little more exemplification would have strengthened this section as the work lacked lucidity in places. For example, it was not clear in chapter 2 why CLIL learners had a higher stress tolerance, and why being taught through CLIL increases Czech learners chances in the foreign job market (p.38).

The research methodology used, the participants, and an analysis of the collected data, is presented in chapter 4 before the author presents a final review of the findings and also future recommendations in chapter 5. Credit should be given to author for the observation sheet that she created - based on points raised in the literature review - to analyse the lessons that she watched. In addition, obtaining data from people in management at the three schools through a questionnaire allowed for even further insights into their views of CLIL and its current implementation. Chapter 5 helpfully summarised the authors findings according to her RQs, though it would have been further strengthened had there been a section on the limitations of the research.

Overall the thesis is well-organised and the reader is well-signposted throughout. The research is well-conducted and documented. The language used, however, is not always clear and causes some strain on the reader’s part, making the authors message difficult to understand in places.

I would be interested to know the following:
1. what the author considers to be the limitations of her research.
2. whether her research revealed anything new that does not seem to be represented in the
literature.
3. whether she thinks that CLIL is an approach that will continue to gain momentum in the Czech context or whether the alleged lack of available materials, twined with the lower level of teachers/learners language, will prevent its growth.