



# A Review of a Final Thesis

submitted to the Department of English and ELT Methodology,  
Faculty of Arts, Charles University

**Name and titles of the reviewer:** Luca Cilibrasi, PhD

**Reviewed as:**  a supervisor  an opponent

**Author of the thesis:** Kateřina Hasalova

**Title of the thesis:**

**Year of submission:**

**Submitted as:**  a bachelor's thesis  a master's thesis

**Level of expertise:**

excellent  very good  average  below average  inadequate

**Factual errors:**

almost none  appropriate to the scope of the thesis  frequent less serious  serious

**Chosen methodology:**

original and appropriate  appropriate  barely adequate  inadequate

**Results:**

original  original and derivative  non-trivial compilation  cited from sources  copied

**Scope of the thesis:**

too large  appropriate to the topic  adequate  inadequate

**Bibliography (number and selection of titles):**

above average (scope or rigor)  average  below average  inadequate

**Typographical and formal level:**

excellent  very good  average  below average  inadequate

**Language:**

excellent  very good  average  below average  inadequate

**Typos:**

almost none  appropriate to the scope of the thesis  numerous

**Overall evaluation of the thesis:**

excellent  very good  average  below average  inadequate



**Brief description of the thesis** (by the supervisor, ca. 100-200 words):

This thesis investigates the performance with nonwords in two groups of children: a group of monolingual children with developmental language disorder and a group of Czech-English bilingual children. The aim of the thesis is to understand whether these two groups show different patterns with this specific type of stimuli. This research has an important applied motive: While both children with DLD and bilingual children experience difficulties with nonwords, little is known about how specific features of the nonwords may affect performance differently in the two groups. Data of this kind could thus be used, in the future, to spot the presence of DLD in bilingual children.

**Review, comments and notes** (ca. 100-200 words)

Overall, this is an excellent work that contributes to a crucial topic in current research in language acquisition. The student completed this thesis with growing independence over time, and I have seen her developing her skills while producing her work. The first full draft of the thesis showed well this pattern, with the analysis and discussion being of a higher quality than the introduction. This pattern may not be visible anymore because a final revision of the introduction lifted that part to the level of the rest of the thesis. In summary, my evaluation is positive, particularly regarding the rationale of the thesis, the rigour of the analysis and its interpretation.

**Strong points of the thesis:**

The rationale for this thesis is original and interesting, and the results are promising. The student used proficiently relatively complex statistical analysis and showed a high level of independence. For example, she decided to use two separate models for analysis, one with long nonwords only, and one with the whole sample, and I believe she did a good job defending this choice. Her interpretation of the data is scientifically appropriate, she was rigorous in reporting rather complex patterns, without pushing her initial claims. Particularly, she was successful in explaining that patterns with nonwords may be different from DLD only in a subsample of bilingual children, the simultaneous, leaving thus a more modest promise of the effect of nonword repetition as a discriminating tool.

**Weak points of the thesis:**

One weakness of the thesis (though not due to the student) is the sample used. Due to the pandemic Kateřina was denied twice the access to schools, days before her testing was planned to occur. For this reason, she had to analyse previously collected data instead of purposely collected data. The data from bilinguals and DLD children were not matched perfectly, so there are some age differences between the groups, and a different spread within each group. Another weakness is a relative mismatch in the width of the introduction vs the discussion. The introduction appears to be wider than the discussion, since some of the topics mentioned in the introduction are not mentioned in the discussion. For example, while the introduction reports a relatively long presentation of the concept of bilingual advantage, this does not find space in the discussion.



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***Questions to answer during the Defence and suggested points of discussion:***

Do you think that the bilingual advantage has any role in explaining the result of your sample?  
Can you expand on why only simultaneous bilinguals seem to perform differently from DLD?

***Other comments:***

I propose grade 1 or 2, to be established depending on performance during the defence.

**Proposed grade:**

excellent  very good  good  fail

Place, date and signature of the reviewer:

*Prague,*