Peer Review (part I)

General Research Question

Which are the measurements of acquisition of the neuter vowel of Catalan (*see* in the IPA) between bilingual Spanish-French students in a formal educative context (University) and monolingual Spanish students.

Hypothesis of an answer and its consequences

This question above would tell us if bilingual Romance-languages subjects (in this case, students in a formal context) acquire phonetic characteristics of another Romance language rather quicker than monolingual Romance-language subjects. Therefore, this answer would tell us if **there is a real difference in being bilingual or monolingual in language acquisition**, taking into account the shared characteristics Romance languages have (therefore, *i.e.* not mixing Anglo-Saxon languages with Romance ones).

Specific Research Question

Do Spanish–French bilingual students acquire the neuter vowel of Catalan ([ə]) quicker than Spanish monolingual students?

Addressment of the Research (unlimited resources)

- Observation of the pronunciation of different level students in university Catalan language lessons (several observations in different universities) → *pronunciation data* [quantitative]
- Notes of observation and quantitative data (how many students do not pronounce the neuter vowel versus how many students do pronounce it). → *pronunciation data* [quantitative]
- Questionnaire regarding students' origins and language knowledge. → *background data* [qualitative]

Addressment of the Research (limited resources regarding class's scope)

- Simulation of results [stablishing a sample of both groups + stablishing a characterisation of pronunciation of both samples]
- Simulation of quantity of sample [monolingual group: 30; bilingual group: 30; monolingual group mispronunciation of [ə]: 20; bilingual group mispronunciation of [ə]: 10]
- Regarding that it would be more of a case of study than full research, I think there is not enough data to address the investigation, since we are not taking every monolingual or bilingual in the world of both contexts. We are delimiting 1) phonetic language acquisition of a language highly marked by geography (10 million of Catalan speakers worldwide, but 8,8 million live in Spain); 2) languages of bilingualism and proportions of knowledge (13,1% Spanish bilinguals with good knowledge of French *versus* 98,9 % Spanish monolingual speakers in Spain = 12,96% Spanish bilinguals); 3) where to acquire the language (university means a formal context and there are only 9 in Spain that teach Catalan).

Therefore, taking into account the proportions we have: 12,96% Spanish–French bilinguals in Spain, only 9 universities that teach Catalan (outside Catalonia), which have a total of an approximate 480.000 undergraduate students and only part of these study Catalan (some data we do not have). Therefore, we would have to do first a **normal distribution calculus** to know how many bilingual students would be learning Catalan in these 9 universities. Once we have the result, we should revise the probability of how many would be in a class shared with other monolingual students, some data we cannot acquire. Thus, I have decided to make up my own data, which is not realistic but at least would be a simulation of how it could be in a context where the data relates to reality.