

HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

Masaryk University

Faculty

Faculty of Social Studies

Applicant

Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk, Ph.D.

Habilitation thesis

Cross-cultural similarities and differences in perception of tasks of varying complexity

Reviewer

prof. Mgr. Sylvie Graf, Ph.D.

Reviewer's home unit, institution

Institute of Psychology, Czech Academy of Sciences

The habilitation thesis aims to answer the research question about conditions and mechanisms underlying potential cultural differences in perception and cognition. Altogether, it introduces eight journal articles – one review, two validation, and five empirical studies – all published in, mostly international, journals with peer review. Study I, the review, anchors the subsequent studies in methodological foundations of cross-cultural research, considering its usual shortcomings. Studies II, III, and VIII examine individual-level, while Study IV macro-level variables. Increasing task complexity, Studies IV–VIII follow with empirical contrasts across distinct cultures.

More specifically, the studies deal with principles in cross-cultural testing, psychometric evaluation and cross-national invariance testing of self-construal/individualism–collectivism scales; minimal perceptual tasks with multilevel reaction-time modelling; eye-tracking during free viewing of complex 2D scenes; immersive 3D virtual-reality viewing; and categorization of multivariate map symbols. The data were collected from over 4,000 participants from Central Europe, East Asia, the Western Balkans, Türkiye, or Ghana. Although the thesis contains a large variety of outcomes, the author attempts to summarize the findings into a coherent, but nuanced, framework that enriches current cross-cultural comparisons in perception and cognition. Finally, the author uses his extensive expertise to distil recommendations for future studies in a comprehensive, ready-to-implement fashion.

The fact that all studies were already published and result from competitively funded research projects speaks to the scientific quality of the thesis. The articles document that, throughout his academic path, the candidate has engaged in a functional research team that has built an impressive research agenda, delivering important scientific findings, an outstanding achievement.

Reviewer's questions for the habilitation thesis defence

What are, in your opinion, the paramount shortcomings of current cross-sectional comparisons in cognition with consequences for theory building?

Please, describe the open science practices that you have implemented in your studies.

Conclusion

In my humble opinion, the habilitation thesis entitled “Cross-cultural similarities and differences in perception of tasks of varying complexity” by Ing. Mgr. Jiří Čeněk, Ph.D., **fulfils** requirements expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Psychology.

Date: 28.5.2026

Signature:

