

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the ERU is to bring together young researchers from all over Europe and start an international network for collaboration on cross-European project. We are pleased to bring to your attention the Spring issue of the ERU Newsletter. This issue is mainly devoted to the first ERU writing week, held between 20-24th of February at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, under the auspices of the EADP and the supportive venue of the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences of Utrecht University. This number gathers glimpses of the program through personal commentaries on this novel experience, brief reports of various learning activities and its upcoming products, plus a number of useful information on scientific events.

Yet important news are in the horizon. Setting the stage for the special section titled *'Developmentics', Instruments and Procedures for Developmental Research* of the European Journal of Developmental Psychology (see Willem Koops call for papers), a text signed by Rens Van de Shoot and Peter Lugtig summarizes the why's and how's to test for measurement invariance. Surely more than one good reason to enjoy reading the Spring issue of the ERU newsletter!!

EARLY RESEARCHERS UNION - ERU



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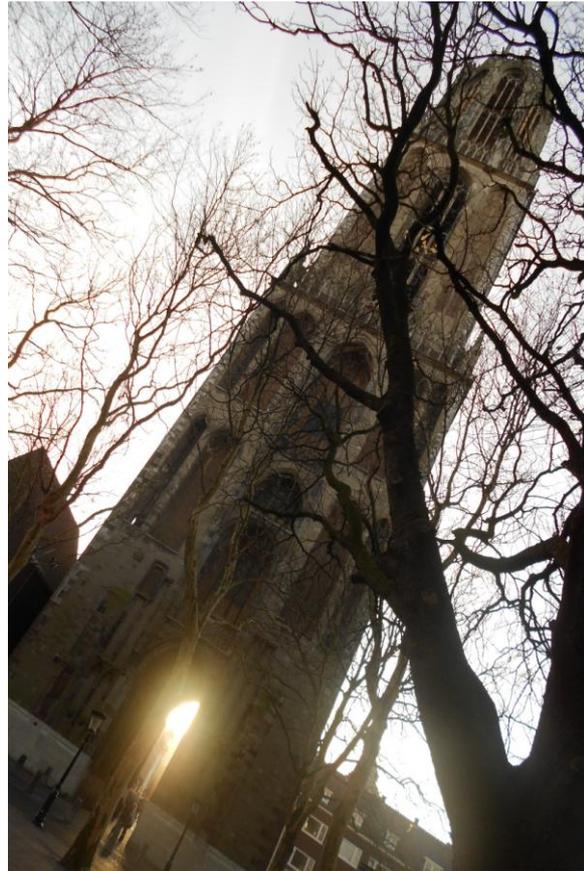
Yael Ponizovsky, Israel

Visit our website for more information about the ERU: <http://www.eadp.info/NEW-Young-Researchers-Union.644.0.html>

Become friends on our facebook account: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Young-Researchers-Union-of-EADP/233576063344922>

Remember that enjoying such interesting learning experiences involves being part of the EADP, by using the on-line membership, see <http://www.eadp.info/Membership.97.0.html>

ERU is profoundly grateful to the EADP precious support for the writing week held between 20-24th of February at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. The goal of the event was to finalize joint papers on cross-national comparisons of different instruments and submit those to the European Journal of Developmental Psychology, Special Section *Developmental Research, Instruments and Procedures for Developmental Research*. Part of the workshop focused on lectures on developmental psychology and publishing in high impact journals held by prof. Willem Koops (Editor of EJDP), professional language editing and cross-cultural validation procedures of instruments. We also would like to acknowledge Emma Nash, Suzannah Ravenscroft and Leonard Vanbrabant for their professional support in academic writing in English and statistical analyses.



COMMENTS OF PARTICIPANTS OF THE WRITING WEEK

“It was one of these great and satisfying experiences to interact with this group of young scholars; there was a beautiful atmosphere of friendship and collaboration among them and it was a great pleasure for me to present my views on methodology and history of our field and to discuss with them about all this and about publishing in top journals. I had the feeling to have met the future of our Association.”

Willem Koops

"The writing week has been a great, and also exhaustive, experience for all the things we learned and for the time spent collaborating on the same task and sharing our knowledge with other young researchers coming from different countries"

Nives Sala

“It's always enriching to interact with other young researchers, especially if they come from very different countries (from Siberia to Greece!). We created a joyful atmosphere, in a cooperative (and not competitive!) way. But the EADP writing week had something more: to come up by the end of the week with a paper, almost ready to be submitted, was the special ingredient of this very bright experience!”

Marta Casonato



“As I decided to join the Early Researchers’ Union on its informal meeting at Bergen in August 2011, I didn’t expect that it could end up in such an interesting and productive week, in February 2012. In the Netherlands, the hospitality of the local researcher, Rens van de Schoot, who managed to organize the week in every detail, made for a highly effective as well as pleasurable use of time. The presence of



people from different countries, who are more or less –like I am- in their first steps as researchers, with the common goal of working on an academic matter –struggling for a paper to be published- gave me inspiration and motive, that helped me work hard as well as enjoy my time. I’m looking forward to other collaborations in the future!”

Stefanos Mastrotheodoros

“It was great to be involved in the writing week watching all the research papers come together and seeing the enthusiasm of the group. Giving the lecture on English writing for a group of internationals was a new experience for me and highlighted the complexity of using a language other than your own when writing an article. I was

really impressed with the efforts of the group and the attention they gave to our hints and tips. I enjoyed the experience and getting the chance to interact with such a dynamic group.”

Suzannah Ravenscroft

“Working together with young talented fellow researchers from around the world was a great experience. Especially when they noticed that writing a short article in one week was possible. Next time I will definitely participate again, since I really enjoyed it. So, thank you all and now fingers crossed. Salute,”

Leonard Vanbrabant



“I was amazed at the dedication and enthusiasm of the participants, and was impressed that they were able to write a paper in such a short time - and in a foreign language! I had a lot of fun helping with the week, and I hope the hard work paid off.”

Emma Nash



“What I really appreciate during this writing week: Meeting other young researchers coming from different countries; writing a brief paper in "one" week; having some lessons on statistic...without getting bored!; having some cues to better write in English! but also:

Staying in a hostel from the 70thies; our meet point with this delightful latte macchiato; eating in a Belgian restaurant...having none Belgian typical meal; trying to speak Dutch saying "we

hebben onderwijs here"! Only a few students understood me! I also tried in French but no more success! Many thanks to Rens and Leonard for the organization of this amazing writing week”.

Marie Stiévenart

“I join my colleagues in sharing their enthusiasm and motivation in working with such culturally diverse and dynamic group. I strongly believe that this event marked the beginning of a fresh new start for our young but cohesive group with prospects to further extend our activities in the field of developmental psychology. ”

Radosveta Dimitrova

PUBLICATIONS

Young researchers from 9 countries gathered together to work on the following manuscript projects:

Dimitrova, R., Cunha, J., & van de Schoot, R. (in preparation). *The Children's Depression Inventory: Factorial structure and measurement invariance in Brazilian and Italian school-aged children.*

Gorlova, N., Romanyuk, L., Vanbrabant, L., & van de Schoot, R. (in press). *Values and meaning-of-life orientations in youth.*

Mastrotheodoros, S., Dimitrova, R., Motti-Stefanidi, F., Abubakar, A., & van de Schoot, R. (in press). *Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) in Bulgarian, Greek and Dutch adolescent samples.* Manuscript accepted for publication

Ponizovsky, Y., Dimitrova, R., Schachner, M. K., & van de Schoot, R. (under review). *The Satisfaction with Life Scale: Measurement invariance across immigrant groups.*

Romanyuk, L., Harasimczuk, J., Vanbrabant, L., Vlasova, O. & van de Schoot, R. (in preparation). *Psychology of values: Personality in development (cross-national comparison).*

Sala, M. N., Molina, P., Ablor, B., Kessler, H., Vanbrabant, L., & van de Schoot, R. (in press). *Measurement invariance of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ). A cross national validity study.* Manuscript submitted for publication

Stievenart, M., Casonato, M., Muntean, A., & van de Schoot, R. (in press). *Comparisons between countries on attachment representations of adopted adolescents. Assessment validation of the Friends and Family Interview.*

LECTURE AND MEETING WITH WILLEM KOOPS, EDITOR EJDP

During the writing week, Prof. Dr. Willem Koops, editor of EJDP gave a lecture dedicated to methodological aspects and research in the field of developmental psychology. Prof. Koops recommended young researchers to read one of his favorite books on methodology of developmental psychology "The Study of Behavioral Development" by J. F. Wohlwill published in 1973.

The second part of the lecture conveyed relevant tips for writing articles in the field of developmental psychology: the introduction of the article should frame an exciting story or methods; statistics should be adequate, discussion should be (self-) critical and lay a path for interesting future steps etc. Prof. Koops recommended several choices for a high impact journals and suggestions for an appropriate cover letter to the journal Editor. In addition, various possibilities of important professional societies and associations, SRCD (Society for Research in Child Development), EADP (European Association of Developmental Psychology) and ISSBD (International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development) we discussed.

The lecture was followed by a discussion on major topics of interest to young scholars such as possibilities to increase cultural diversity with the EJD, development of special issue on a topic of common interest and a preconference workshop for young scholars with a cross-cultural perspective at the next EADP meeting in Lausanne 2013.

Final recommendations of Prof. Koops for the young EADP scholars regarded the development of wide spread social networks both within and outside the Association, use different opportunities to organize workshops with field experts, round-table sessions and broaden connections between young and senior scholars in different fields of developmental psychology or other disciplines.

Radosveta Dimitrova & Natalia Gorlova

TOP TIPS IN WRITING IN ENGLISH

During the writing week, Emma Nash and Suzannah Ravenscroft gave a lecture on writing in English aimed to refresh the students understanding of grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, and issues regarding content when writing up their research. This summary briefly looks at the highlights of the points covered in the lecture.

As native English speakers we were asked to give a lecture on writing in English for a group of young researchers. Our lecture aimed to refresh the students understanding of grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, and issues regarding content when writing up their research. The lecture was aimed at non-native speakers but also reminded us of basic concepts in writing that native speakers often forget themselves. This summary will briefly look at the highlights of the points covered in the lecture.



In the first section of the lecture students were reminded to keep an eye out for redundant words in their writing. As researchers we are under pressure from journals to maintain a strict word count, therefore checking for redundancy is a way to cut words and clarify content. Redundancy often comes in the form of replicating meaning and double negatives. After a more expanded explanation of these points students were asked to delete the redundant words from various sentences, for example:

- There were a total of 68 participants.
- Participation in the study was completely anonymous.

We will leave it up to you to decide which words are redundant in the above examples.

The second section of the lecture focused on improving the flow of the article. We reminded students that each paragraph should start with a thesis sentence, move on to explain or expand this point, and then end with a conclusion. An example of such a paragraph comes from Van de Schoot et al. (2010; Can at-risk young adolescents be popular and anti-social behaviour? Sociometric status groups, anti-social behaviour, gender and ethnic background. Journal of Adolescence, 33):

Thesis sentence	The main finding of this study is that the effect of anti-social behaviour is larger within sociometric status groups than between them.
Paragraph body	In other words , in each sociometric status group there are subgroups that differ in terms of reporting anti- social behaviour. One small group reported a willingness to use covert and overt anti-social behaviour, one group reported a fairly low prevalence of anti-social behaviour, and one reported no involvement in any anti-social behaviour at all.
Conclusion	Consequently , at-risk young adolescents who reported involvement in anti-social behaviour on a regular basis can be found in similar numbers in each and every status group.

Theoretically when a writer follows this advice, one could read the first and last sentence of each paragraph and still understand the author's full line of argument. Additionally, the students were given a variety of linking words/phrases to help with the transition between clauses, sentences and paragraphs. The use of linking words are italicised in the above paragraph of Van de Schoot et al. (2010). 'In other words' allowed the authors to link the body to the thesis sentence by indicating a reformulation, whereas the use of 'consequently' led the paragraph to its end formulation as a result of the preceding sentences. The use of linking words should not be forgotten in our academic writing, as they provide the tool that connects our ideas together and this will help us build up the coherent argument.

Finally, the lecture tackled the most common mistakes in English grammar namely comma use, semi-colon use and use of brackets. The most common misuse of commas is to merely place them wherever there is a natural pause in the sentence. Commas should be inserted before, 'but', to separate a series and to provide additional information. Appropriate usage of a semi-colon can be tricky though the rule sounds simple: a semi colon is used to link two independent clauses. The best advise is that if one is not sure whether the two statements are independent clauses is to simply use a full stop. Students were advised that brackets are used to clarify meaning, or to avoid confusion. However, as was impressed upon us throughout our education, such confusion within our writing should not arise, and so the use of brackets should not be necessary.

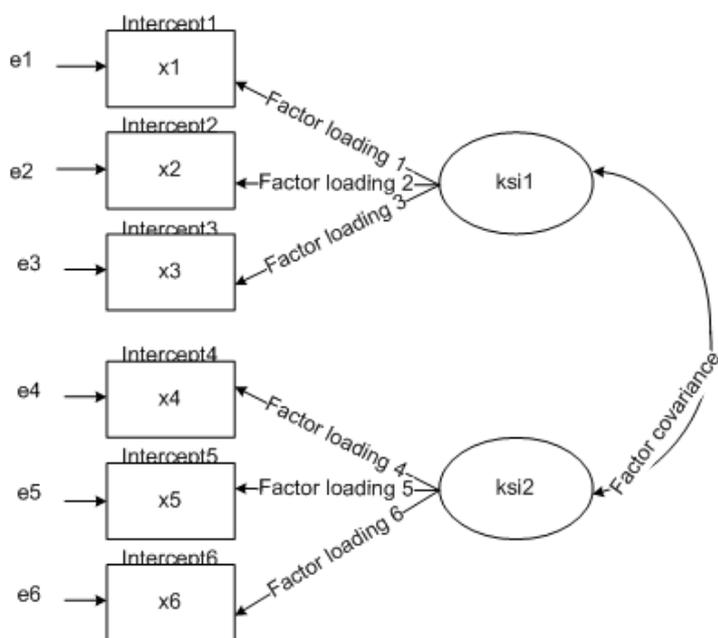
Our final top tip came from the Greek philosopher Epictetus who said “Do not write so that you can be understood, write so that you cannot be misunderstood.” Following this advise should remind us to keep our writing clear, fluent and without unnecessary complexity. Hopefully our lecture helped towards the young researchers avoiding misunderstanding in their own work.

Emma Nash and Suzannah Ravenscroft

WHY SHOULD YOU PUBLISH A PAPER ON MEASUREMENT INVARIANCE?

The following text is a summary of a tutorial paper on why and how to test for measurement invariance, forthcoming in EJDP (Van de Schoot, Lugtig & Hox, A checklist for testing Measurement invariance.)

In the social and behavioral sciences self-report questionnaires are often used to assess different aspects of human behaviour. These questionnaires consist of items that are developed to assess an underlying phenomenon with the goal to follow individuals over time or to compare groups, for example across genders, cultural groups, and countries, etcetera. To be valid for such a comparison a questionnaire must measure identical constructs with the same structure across different groups. Stated otherwise, the factor structure (i.e., factor loadings, intercepts/thresholds, and residual variance terms) should be identical over different groups. When this is the case, the questionnaire is called test measurement invariant (MI). The main question that Measurement Invariance answers is whether the measurement model is the



same in different groups. If MI can be shown then the factor structure of the instrument is common across groups, suggesting that participants across all groups interpret the individual questions, as well as the underlying factor in the same way. Having determined MI, future studies are able to compare the occurrence, determinants, and consequences of the questionnaire over time or between groups, as well as compare scores at the Latent Variable (factor) level. When

MI does not hold, groups or subjects over time respond differently to the items and as a consequence factor means cannot reasonably be compared.

The first step is to specify a Confirmatory Factor Analysis that resembles how the construct is theoretically operationalized. The CFA model for each group separately tests the configural invariance. That is whether the same CFA is valid in each group.

The second step is to run a model where only the factor loadings are equal across groups but the intercepts/thresholds are allowed to differ between groups (metric invariance). This model tests whether respondents across groups attribute the same meaning to the latent construct under study.

The third step is to run a model where only the intercept/thresholds are equal across groups, but the factor loading are allowed to differ between groups .

The fourth step is to run a model where both the loadings and intercepts/thresholds are constrained to be equal (scalar invariance). When scalar invariance holds, this implies that the meaning of the construct (the factor loadings), and the levels of the underlying items (intercepts/thresholds) are equal in both groups. This means that respondents can be compared on their scores on the latent variable across groups.

Finally, run a model where also the residual variances are fixed to be equal across groups (full uniqueness MI). If full uniqueness invariance holds, this means that the explained variance for every item is the same across groups; i.e. the latent constructs is measured identically across groups. If the error variances are not equal, groups can still be compared on the latent variable.

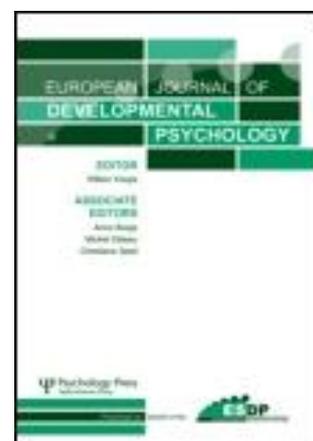
For straightforward interpretation of means and correlations across groups, both the factor loadings and intercepts/thresholds should be similar across groups (scalar invariance). After testing the invariance of the measurement model, a next step is to test the equality of factor means, factor variances and correlations between two or more latent variables, across groups.

Rens van de Schoot & Peter Lugtig

CALL FOR PAPERS

If you want to publish a paper about measurement invariance yourself, you are very welcome to submit your paper to the special section titled 'Developmental Psychometrics' of the European Journal of Developmental Psychology (www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17405629.asp):

The EJDP will from now on offer the possibility to publish short reports on the development of instruments and procedures for developmental research. The reports will have a maximum length of 2200 words (5 pages in print), including tables, figures, references and so on. The reports should have the structure of a regular paper, such as specified in the last edition of the Publication Manual of the APA.



As an editor I feel that this possibility to publish data on the quality and the usability of instruments and procedures can be very helpful for several reasons: it offers a pool of publications to refer to when one publishes a paper in which an instrument is used that has been investigated already; it prevents that we as editor and co-editors reject papers that are just about instruments, without any developmental content; it may help publishing relevant data on the cross-cultural use of instruments. With “instruments“ we refer to instruments like tests, questionnaires and checklists, and with “procedures“ we refer to any research on the reliability and validity of procedures for experimentation or of strategies to gather data. The editors will of course still maintain the principle that the short reports on instruments and procedures should have relevance for developmental research.

Willem Koops

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Interested whether you will find a job after finishing your PhD:
Yerkes, M., van de Schoot, R., & Sonneveld, H. (2012). Who are the Job Seekers? Explaining Unemployment among Doctoral Recipients. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 7, 153-166. <http://ijds.org/Volume7/IJDSv7p153-166Yerkes346.pdf>
- **A workshop by Bengt Muthen** (27-29 Aug): We are honored that Prof. Muthén and Dr. Asparouhov will visit Utrecht university. In a three-day workshop new features of Mplus version 7 are highlighted (e.g., multilevel/SEM with 3 levels, new Bayes features, causal effect estimation). On the third day there is also some room for individual consultations with Mplus experts. For more information: tinyurl.com/workshop-Bengt
- The fourth **'Mplus user group'** (30 Aug) with key note presentations of prof. Bengt Muthen (history and future of Mplus), prof. Peg Burchinal (editor at Child Development; Using M-Plus to Analyze Data in Psychology Journals: An Associate Editor's View) and prof. Joop Hox (estimating new structural equation models with the Bayesian methods). For the preliminary program, registration and more information see www.fss.uu.nl/mplus
- **Call for proposals** for Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) 2014 Themed Meetings. SRCD invites proposals for one or more small (300-500 attendees) themed meetings to be held in 2014. As with 2012, the meetings can have topical or methodological foci. Meeting organizers are expected to provide intellectual leadership, with SRCD staff making all of the logistical arrangements. Further information can be found at http://www.srzd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=624&Itemid=255
- **Call for Papers** International Conference: Migration and Well-Being: Research Frontiers, Tel Aviv University, Israel, January 8-10, 2013, contact: migration.conference@gmail.com

- **2012 Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) Biennial Meeting**, Vancouver, Canada. For more information visit <http://www.s-r-a.org/biennial-meeting>
- **21st International IACCP** (International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology) **Congress 2012** in Stellenbosch, South Africa in July 2012. <http://www.iaccp2012southafrica.co.za/>
- **16th European Conference on Developmental Psychology** in Lausanne in 2013(September,3-7): <http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/ecdp2013/>
- **6th International Attachment Conference** in Pavia (Italy) from 30th August-1st September 2013 <http://iac2013.unipv.it/>
- **Call for Papers International conference** The Socialization and re-socialization of the personality in modern society in November 8-9, 2012, Taras Shevchenko. National University of Kyiv organized by Olena Vlasova whose main research areas involve socialization and psychological problems in child development. Contact vlalit@ukr.net; rozvytku@ukr.net
- **Call for Submissions**, for Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) 2012 Themed Meeting: Transitions from Adolescence to Adulthood, October 18-20,Tampa,Florida.
http://www.srcd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=620&Itemid=698&utm_source=TAA+Submissions+Call&utm_campaign=7a1dca0eba-TAA+Call_Submissions_2_29_2012&utm_medium=email