

SERENA PETROCCHI, PH.D

Work: Institute of Communication and Health, University of Lugano, Switzerland

EDUCATION

Ph.D, Psychology, 2009, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy

Dissertation Title: **Theory of mind and interpersonal trust in elementary school children**

Supervisors: Prof. A. Marchetti (Catholic University, Italy), Prof. K.J. Rotenberg (Keele University, UK)

Synopsis: The thesis consisted of three studies. In the first one, according to authors (Bernath, Feschbach, 1995) who affirmed that trust should be considered as a complex phenomenon, I created a semi-projective measure that considers both cognitive and affective core of trust. I demonstrated its psychometric characteristics and its validity for typical developing children and its applicability also for adults. In the second study, I validated the Italian version of the Children Generalized Trust Beliefs Scale (see Rotenberg et al., 2005) for children aged 8 to 11, contributing to the redress of the problem regarding the paucity of trust measures for non-English-speaking children. In the third study, I examined the association between children's trust beliefs and their theory of mind, demonstrating that children's theory of mind abilities were associated with emotional trust in their parents representing a measure of emotional climate of the family. I also examined association between children's trust beliefs in parents and in peers, children's trusting behaviors towards peer, and children's trustworthiness towards peers.

M. Sc., Developmental and Social Psychology, 2004, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy

Dissertation Title: **Theory of mind in deaf children and in their hearing mothers**

Supervisors: Prof. A. Marchetti (Catholic University, Italy)

Synopsis: The thesis assessed Theory of Mind (ToM) abilities in a group of oral deaf children and in their hearing mothers, compared to hearing-hearing dyads. Compared to the hearing paired children, the deaf children showed lower performance in both classic and advanced ToM measures. Also the hearing mothers of the deaf children showed lower abilities than the mothers of the hearing children in all the ToM measures. Further, a specific ToM interaction model was found between hearing mothers and deaf children. The findings showed that ToM difficulties in deaf children can be considered mainly as a relational deficit.

TEACHING & TUTORING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Fellow/Assistant Professor

Faculty of Medicine, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy, 2016-2017

- Teaching Fellow of Risk Communication in Public Health for the Post Graduate School in Hygiene and Preventive Medicine
- Topics: risk and risk perception, health communication theories, public health
- Lectures and practical classes
- Duties: fully responsibilities of courses development and learning materials, and delivering lectures/practical classes

Faculty of Psychology, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan and Brescia, Italy, 2013-today

- One semester of course per year for undergraduate or postgraduate students, bi-weekly lessons, 30-60 students
- Topics: Methodology, Data Analysis/Statistics for Social Sciences, Psychological Testing (MMPI-2, MMPI-RF, MMPI-A, 16PF, BFQ-2), Advanced Data Analysis for Master Level students.
- Lectures and laboratory sections, online video-lessons

- Duties: fully responsibilities of courses development and learning materials, delivering lectures, setting and marking exams (written and oral)
- Other duties: organizational meetings with colleagues
- Supervisor for undergraduate research theses and postgraduate research theses

Faculty of Education, Social Sciences, and History, Università del Salento, Italy, 2012-2014

- One semester of course per year for undergraduate students, bi-weekly lessons, 80 students
- Topics: Children and Adults Clinical Psychology, Adult Abnormal Behaviors
- Duties: fully responsibilities of all courses development and learning materials, delivering lectures, setting and marking exams (written and oral).
- Other duties: organizational meetings with colleagues
- Supervisor for undergraduate research theses and postgraduate research theses

Faculty of Education, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy, 2008-2010

- One semester of course per year for undergraduate students, bi-weekly lessons, 20-100 students
- Teacher for continuing professional development courses, weekly lessons, 10-20 students
- Topics: Developmental and Clinical Psychology, Social Developmental Psychology, Methods and Technics for Effective Communicational Skills, Methods and Technics for Educational interventions.
- Duties: fully responsibilities of all aspects of the courses development and learning materials, delivering lectures, setting and marking exams
- Other duties: organizational meetings with colleagues
- Supervisor for undergraduate research theses and postgraduate research theses, collaboration with the supervisory team for a doctoral student

Faculty of Psychology, University of Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy, 2008

- One semester of course for undergraduate students, weekly lessons, 50 students
- Lecturers and laboratory sections on Attachment Theory and Separation Anxiety Test (Fonagy et al., 1997)
- Duties: fully responsibilities of all aspects of the courses development and learning materials, delivering lectures, and laboratory sections

Personal Tutor/Mentor

Faculty of Psychology, E-Campus University, Italy, 2008-2010

I served as a tutor and mentor for a group of 50 undergraduate students. Through distance learning and monthly meetings, I supported and motivated individual students through their studies and advised students on their module choice.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research and Lecturer, Institute of Communication and Health, University of Lugano, 2017-today

Post-Doc Research Fellow, Institute of Communication and Health, University of Lugano, 2016-2017

Title: **Increasing acceptance of age thresholds for mammographic screening among young women.**

Synopsis: This project aims to explore the ways in which young and healthy women can be persuaded to avoid unnecessary mammographic screening. The project applies the Theory of Regulatory Focus (Cesario, Higgins, Scholer, 2007) and distinguishes between two mindsets in which screening decisions are made: (1) a prevention focus, which is risk-averse and aimed at avoiding negative outcomes, and (2) a promotion focus, which is risk-taking and directed at realizing goals. In this project, it is assumed that by minimizing the attention to screening and simultaneously creating a fit condition between individuals' mindsets and video-vignettes, young women's fear of breast cancer can be made less salient. Consequently, it is hypothesized that their acceptance of the screening thresholds will increase. The project consists of three consecutive studies. The first study concerns a survey of a representative group of women across Switzerland that may serve as a baseline to

map out young women's perceptions and attitudes towards breast cancer screening. The second study applies the findings of the baseline survey to inform the design of an experimental study using video-vignettes. Lastly, the third study seeks to test these effects longitudinally.

I am the principal researcher responsible for design research, recruiting participants, chairing meetings, administering measures, analyzing data and dissemination. The project was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

Post-Doc Research Fellow, Faculty of Education, Social Sciences, and History, Università del Salento, Italy, 2013-2014

Title: The effect of interpersonal factors in enhancing working alliance with therapist in ED patients

Synopsis: The purpose of the project was to analyze the role that several factors play in the quality of working alliance of patients with eating disorders, with a specific focus on interpersonal dimensions such as metalization, interpersonal trust, and quality of attachment relationships. The research program consisted of a longitudinal quantitative study. I was the principal researcher, responsible for recruiting participants, chairing meetings, administering measures, analyzing data and dissemination. This was a collaborative project between Perrino Hospital (Brindisi, Italy), the Clinical Center for Eating Disorders (ASL, Lecce, Italy), and Università del Salento. Through this collaboration, I have also developed a second study with the aim to compare ED patients and non-ED subjects on their Theory of Mind and interpersonal trust.

Post-Doc Research Fellow, Department of Psychology, Keele University, United Kingdom, 2010-2012

Title: Paediatric Medical Trust Research Project. Relationships among parents, children/young people and doctors

Synopsis: The project dealt with the role that interpersonal trust plays in the treatment of children and young people with asthma and diabetes. The research program consisted of two studies covering qualitative (focus groups and interviews) and quantitative measures (questionnaires). I was the Principal Researcher, responsible for recruiting participants, chairing meetings, administering measures (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups), analyzing data and dissemination. The project entailed collaboration between University Hospital of North Staffordshire, North Staffordshire Medical Institute, Keele University, and Asthma UK. For this project I have received my CGP Training (mandatory in the UK to conduct research within the NHS) and my Enhanced CRB (mandatory in the UK to work with children and vulnerable people).

Ph.D. Student, Faculty of Psychology, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy, 2005-2008

Graduate Research Assistant, Faculty of Psychology, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy, 2004-2005

As a member of the Theory of Mind Research Unit, Catholic University (Milan, Italy), I have worked as a Research Assistant for one year on several projects on children's development and cognition.

VOLUNTARY JOB EXPERIENCE

Asthma UK, www.asthma.uk, London, UK, 2012 (4 months), *Project:* developing new asthma guidelines for adolescents

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Marie Curie Fellowship - European Union, 7th Framework Programme (FP7-PEOPLE-2009-IEF),
Amount: 139.558 €(2010-2012)

Ph.D Fellowship - MIUR – Ministero dell'istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca Scientifica (Italian
Ministry of University and Scientific and Technological Research), Amount: 31.200 €(2005-2008)

OTHER

- Enhanced CRB (12/11/2010) and GCP training (17/03/2011) for research within the National Health System in the UK
- Training Course on the Reflective Function coding system for the Parental Development Interview at the Anna Freud Centre, London, 2012
- Advanced knowledge: SPSS, AMOS, PROCESS, Social Relations Model
- Member of the Editorial Team: Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology (Canadian Center of Science and Education); Interdisciplinary Education and Psychology (Rivera Publishing)
- Occasional reviewer for: Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry; 67th International Communication Conference (San Diego, USA) - Interpersonal Communication and Intercultural Communication Sections; Italian Journal of Developmental Psychology; Health Psychology [Psicologia della Salute] F. Angeli Editor.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Italian mother-tongue

English fluent both written and oral

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

OPL, Italian Psychological Professional Association

AIP - Italian Psychological Association (past)

ISSI-Trust, International Society for the Study of Interpersonal Trust

References

(Please, ask before contact them)

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Dr. F. Lecciso, Senior Lecturer
Università del Salento
Piazza Tancredi, 7
73100 Lecce, Italy
Email: flavia.lecciso@unisalento.it

Prof. K.J. Rotenberg, Full Professor
Keele University
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ST5 5BG, Staffordshire, UK
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