



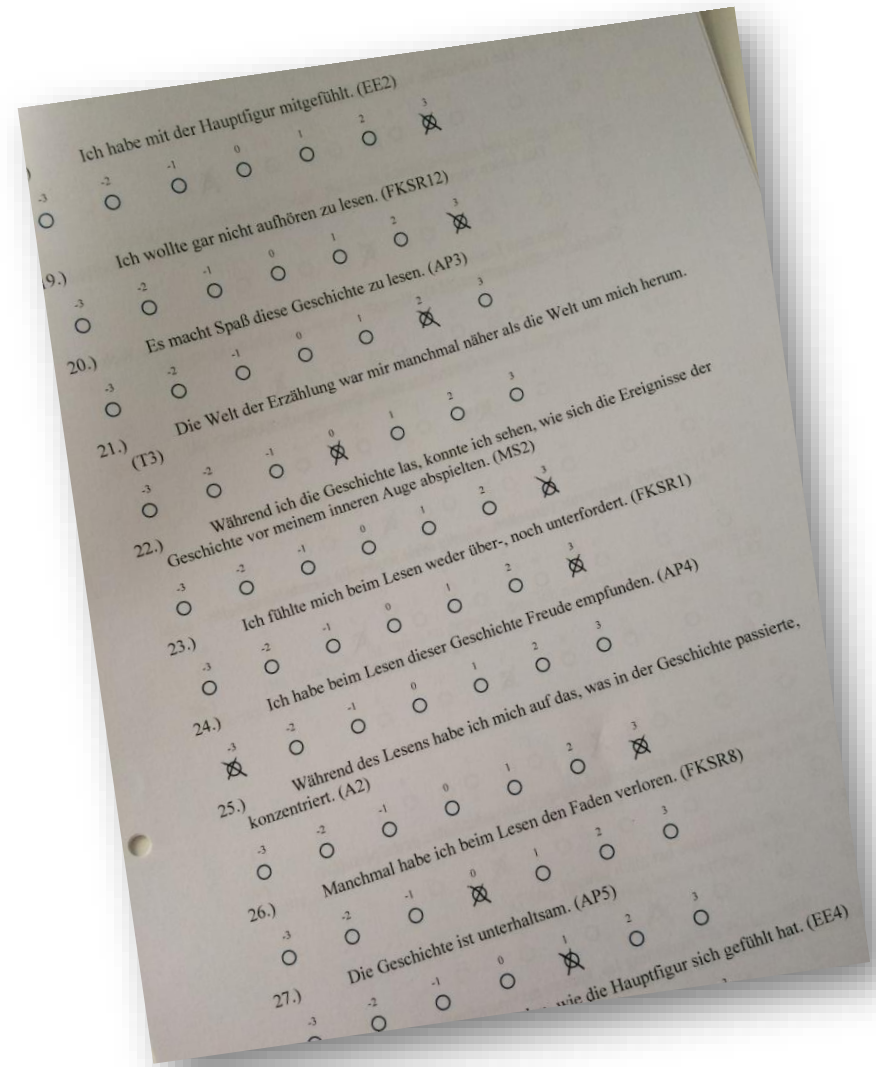
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Capturing Narrative Empathy with self-report instruments

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The importance of measures

How you define and operationalize the variables at stake in your design will influence what you will (be able to) find



Choosing your measures

You need to do *extensive* literature research on your measures

- Do you feel confident of your historical-conceptual analysis of the concept you want to measure? Are you confident it is measurable?
 - Be critical of instruments you find: what do they actually measure? Are they validated and reliable?
 - Be critical of your own research aims: do I really need to develop a new measure, or can I work with an instrument that is already available?
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When choosing or developing your instrument, keep in mind:

- Your target audience (e.g., difficulty of the wording, length of the questionnaire)
 - Your statistical analysis plan (e.g., measuring level of your questions, experiment design)
 - Reproducibility and embedding (e.g., are you building on previous research, how old is that research)
 - The other measures you are using (e.g., same or different response format, negatively and positively worded items)
 - Practical matters (e.g., costs, translation or adaptation takes time)
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Measuring Narrative Empathy

What is narrative empathy?

- Is it a trait or an experiential state?
 - Is it a unidimensional or multidimensional construct?
 - Can it be measured uni-methodologically or should it be measured multi-methodologically?
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Measuring Narrative Empathy

Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET; Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Hill, Raste, & Plumb, 2001)

Performance measure → captures disposition rather than experience

PLAYFUL

COMFORTING



IRRITATED

BORED

TERRIFIED

UPSET



ARROGANT

ANNOYED

JOKING

FLUSTERED



DESIRE

CONVINCED

<https://www.questionwritetracker.com/quiz/61/Z4MK3TKB.html>

Measuring Narrative Empathy

- The **unidimensional** Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ; Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, & Levine, 2009)
 - Common variance (for a single factor)

 - The **multidimensional** Interpersonal Reactivity Inventory (IRI; Davis, 1983) **with facets**: Fantasy, Perspective Taking, Empathic Concern, Personal Distress
 - Common variance (for one superordinate factor) *and* specific variance (for each of its component facets)
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Measuring Narrative Empathy

What about state narrative empathy?

Suzanne Keen's idea of Narrative Empathy:

“The discipline of aesthetics [...] has been interested for over a century in empathy as a facet of creativity and an explanation of human response to artworks” (2006, p. 213)

- How could we operationalize *state* narrative empathy?
 - How is it related to emotional engagement as part of absorption constructs (Kuijpers et al., 2014), or identification (Cohen, 2001)?
 - Is empathy the umbrella or is it a facet?
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Discussion points

- What does the “narrative” in narrative empathy stand for?
- How does your conceptualization of “narrative” in narrative empathy influence your operationalization?



- Is there a scale available that captures your conceptualization of narrative empathy?
- Discuss its reliability, embeddedness, practical use...



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Thank you
for your attention.

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