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► To cite this version:

Alisée Bruno, Annique Smeding, Jean-Charles Quinton, Benoit Dompnier, Céline Darnon. Measuring achievement goals: A methodological contribution based on mouse-tracking data. 18th General Meeting of the European Association of Social Psychology, Jul 2017, Granda, Spain. . hal-01966803

HAL Id: hal-01966803

<https://hal.science/hal-01966803v1>

Submitted on 29 Dec 2018

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Measuring achievement goals : A methodological contribution based on mouse-tracking data

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Introduction

Developing and sustaining students' motivation to learn represents an essential educational challenge for teachers, parents, and policy-makers alike, because this motivation should foster learning and achievement. [1]

Although it has been assumed that the motivation to learn – or mastery (approach) goal endorsement – and to perform better than others – or performance (approach) goal endorsement - predicts learning and achievement, findings are still inconsistent in the literature. One explanation may be related to response biases, and more specifically *social desirability bias*.

The aim of this research was to develop an implicit measure of mastery and performance goals by recording computer mouse movements. Mouse-tracking allows measuring participants' hand movements, which reflect underlying cognitive processes, including neural competition involved in decision making dynamics. [2]

In this study, Area Under the Curve (AUC) was used to measure implicit achievement goals. Convergent validity between the implicit measure and achievement goals' explicit, self-reported equivalent measures was tested.

Method studies 1 & 2

Participants. Study 1 : 142 psychology students (*Age* = 20.3, *SD* = 3.4) Study 2 : 133 psychology students (*Age* = 20.9, *SD* = 2.78)

1) **Pre-test**: 10 words for performance goals (**COMPETITION**) and 10 for mastery goals (**COMPREHENSION**), $\chi^2 (p < .05)$.

2) **Implicit measure (Imp)**.

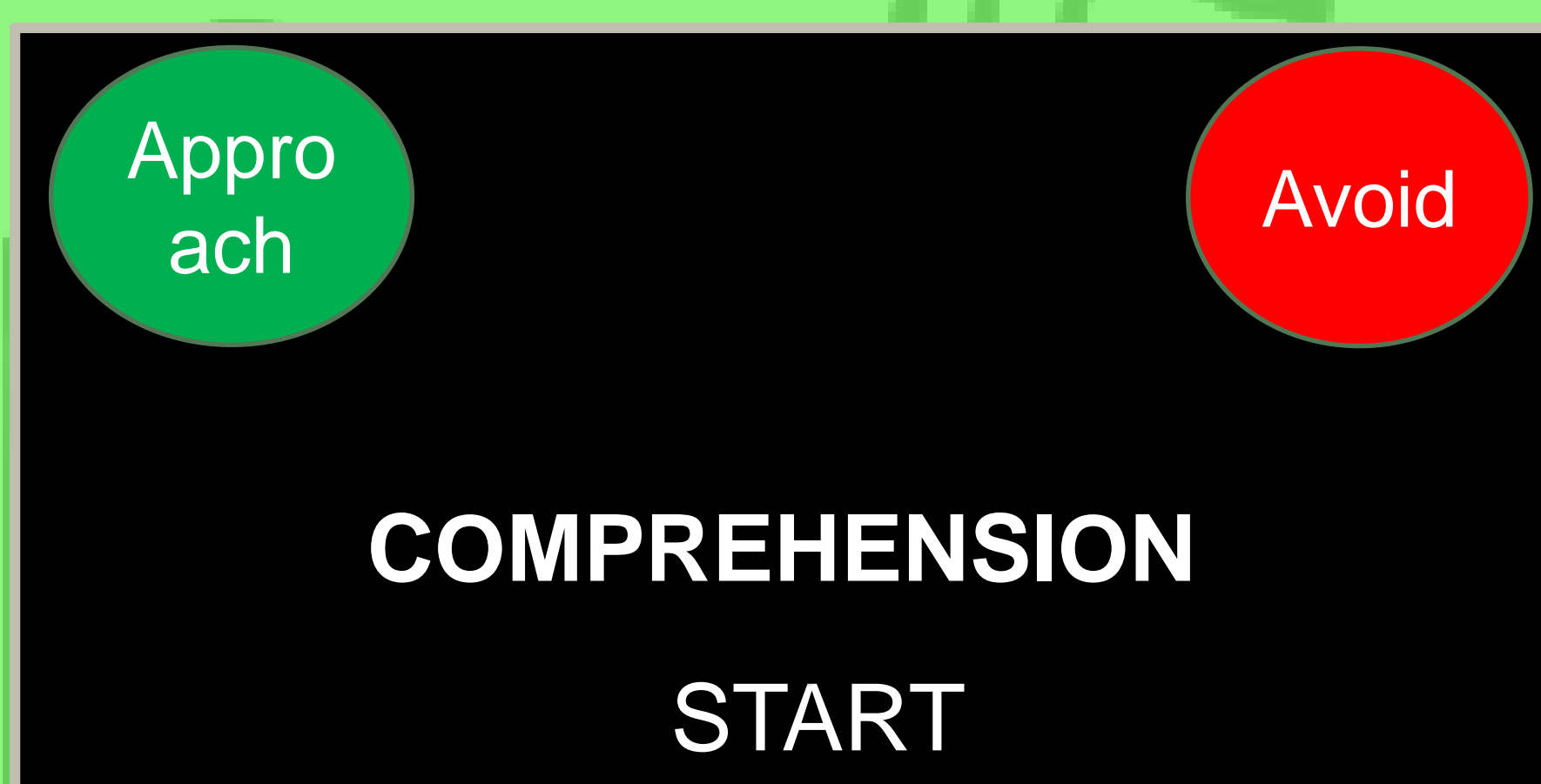


Figure 1. Sample item



Figure 2. Sample illustration of the AUC

3) **Self report measure (Exp)**. 2x2 scale of achievement goals Elliot & Murayama (2008)

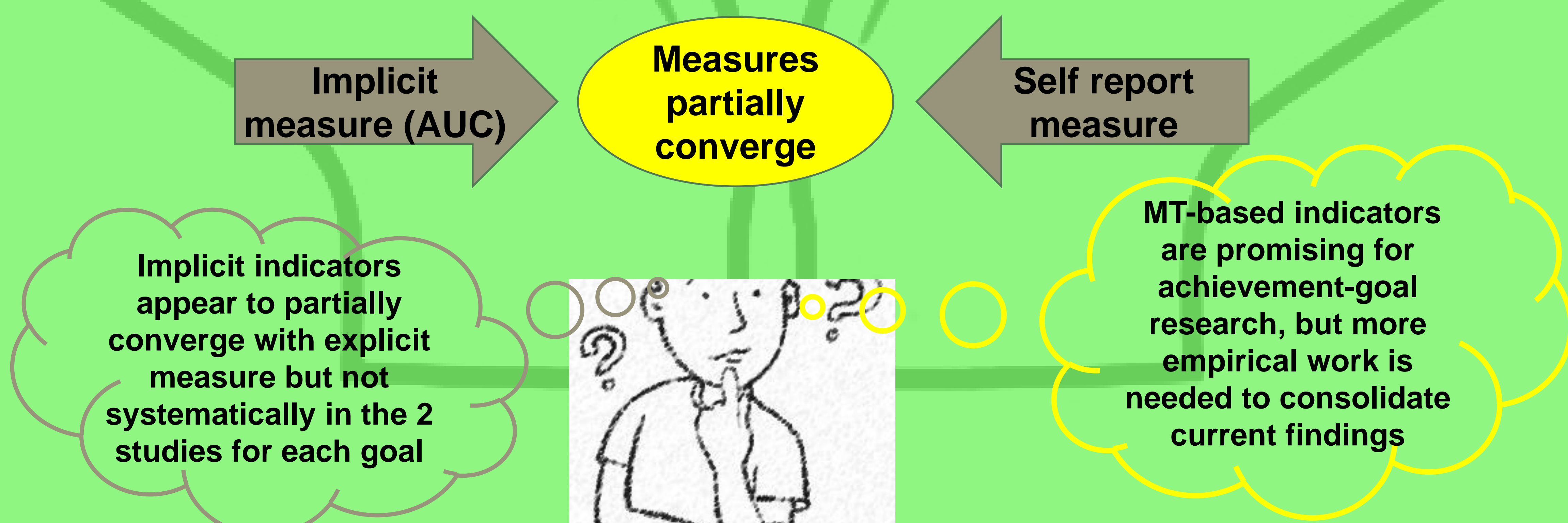
My goal is to learn as much as possible in my studies. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Results

Variables	Mastery-Implicit	Mastery-Explicit	Performance-Explicit	Performance-Implicit	AUC_Performance	AUC_Mastery
Mastery_Implicit	-	.14	.08	.05	.15	-.26**
Mastery_Explicit	.22*	-	.13	.09	.01	-.11
Performance_Explicit	.03	.26*	-	.50*	-.36**	-.23*
Performance_Implicit	.17	.17	.54**	-	-.42**	-.44**
AUC_Performance	.03	-.08	-.19*	-.38**	-	.34**
AUC_Mastery	-.24*	-.24*	.04	-.13	.50	-

Table 1. Values above the diagonal refer to the Study 1 / values below the diagonal refer to Study 2. * indicate significant correlations. $p < .05$ *. $p < .001$ **.

Discussion



[1] Hulleman, C., Bodmann. S., Schrager, M., Harackiewicz, J. (2010). A Meta-Analytic Review of Achievement Goal Measures: Different Labels for the Same Constructs or Different Constructs With Similar Labels? *Psychological Bulletin*, 136, 3, 422–449.

[2] Freeman, J. B. & Ambady, N. (2010). MouseTracker : software for studying real-time mental processing using a computer mouse-tracking method, *Behavior research methods*, 42 (1), 226-241.

[3] Elliot, A. J., Murayama, K., & Pekrun, R. (2011). A 3 × 2 achievement goal model. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 103(3), 632–648.