

PREFACE TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE

In front of you is a second edition of the *Context in Psychology*, a special issue of our journal devoted to the study of how context can be defined in different domains of psychology and how it affects various behavioural and cognitive processes. This issue covers a range of topics from perception to number processing and thinking.

Riccardo Luccio, in his text "*Psychologia – the birth of a new scientific context*" gives an overview of the development of a distinctive term (and concept) of psychology, its historical usage in the very beginnings until its usage within modern psychology. The historical context of the development of the term *soul* was truly interesting, and this text offers a lot of important facts which are probably not really known to a majority of psychologists. We are confident that the readers will find this text provocative and do hope that it will motivate other psychologists to explore the historical development of the term psychology in more detail.

In the field of pain perception, despite was it experimental or clinical settings, authors like word context. Very often they use term context as a description of very complex circumstances of pain perception (i.e. a variety of factors which could modulate pain perception), or as an independent variable, where specified factors are described as *the context factor* of pain modulation. Herbert Janig and his colleagues demonstrated such position of use of context as a variable in pain assessment: "*Does professional context influence the assessment of pain - do physicians, physiotherapists and patients agree?*" We hope that physicians will read the text.

In the previous edition of context effects (*Review of Psychology*, 17(1)) Anja Podlesek gave a clear and short overview of the role of sequential stimuli in series (i.e. context effects) as a very important variable in psychophysics. In the current issue, Anja and Vesna Mlinarič demonstrated an additional possibility of sequential (context) effects but in the field of personality measurement ("*Item context effects on big five personality measures*"). We view this demonstration of sequential effects as just another confirmation that context effects are ever present.

In the paper entitled "*The role of context in Müller-Lyer illusion: The case of negative ML illusion*" Pavle Valerjev and Tanja Gulan describe a novel form of Muller-Lyer illusion which they named negative Muller-Lyer. They found a reversal of the standard Muller-Lyer illusion after prolonged exposure to the inducing fins. Furthermore, authors quantified the magnitude of the new illusion using psychophysical method of constant stimuli. Although the reversed Muller-

Lyer is much weaker when compared to the standard illusion, it points to the importance of temporal context in the perception of geometrical figures.

In the paper entitled "*What is left and what is right? Spatial position as a context for conceptual processing*" Mirjana Tonković presents results of two experiments aimed to investigate relationship between conceptual and perceptual processing. Currently, this is a hot topic in cognitive psychology with many interesting theoretical developments and empirical findings. She found that concepts related to time and quantity were mentally represented on a horizontal line. For instance, small numbers are processed faster when presented on a left side while large numbers are processed faster when presented on a right side of a display suggesting a spatial representation of number concepts along a mental "number line".

Valter Prpic and his colleagues in a paper entitled "*A SNARC-like effect for music tempo*" present results of two experiments which examined association between musical tempo and spatial representation of magnitudes. They found that manual response to slower tempo is faster with left-hand compared to right hand while opposite pattern is observed for faster tempo. Such a finding suggests that musical tempo as quantitative dimension is mapped onto the same magnitude representation as is pitch or number lending further support for a theory of magnitude (Walsh, 2003).

Vesna Buško and Amela Mujagić ("*Predicting intraindividual changes in learning strategies: The effects of previous achievement*") put the contextual effects in the domain of self-regulated learning (or vice-versa). Contextual nature of learning strategies has mostly been focused on the effects of different contextual factors on interindividual differences in learning strategies utilization. The research questions in this article (possible importance of context) were analyzed under the psychometric framework of the latent state-trait theory, and using structural equation modeling methodology. We could say that this approach opens new possibility in the analysis of context effects.

Igor Bajšanski, Tanja Gulan and Pavle Valerjev in "*Visual priming and directionality of conditionals*" present a novel and interesting result on the role of visual priming on deductive reasoning. Results indicate that perception can serve as a context for the construction of mental model during deductive reasoning. Their finding suggests that mental representations on which mental models are constructed are tied to perception. Such result is highly relevant for modern

theories of grounded cognition which typically addressed relatively simpler processes compared to deductive reasoning.

We hope that the readers will find this collection of articles on contextual influences on manifestations of psychological constructs, phenomena and processes, interesting

and inspiring. We wish you to enjoy reading this special issue.

Dražen Domijan and Dragutin Ivanec,
Guest editors