

Joseph Amaral, M.S.Ed., M.A.

Biography: Joe is a former neuropsychology intern in the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology at the University of Florida. He received his B.S. in 2006 from Indiana University with a major in Psychology and a minor in Studio Art. In 2008, Joe earned an M.S.Ed. from Indiana University in Counseling and Counselor Education. He is currently completing his Ph.D. at the University of Cincinnati under the mentorship of Dr. Heidi Kloos. In September, 2015, Joe will begin a postdoctoral fellowship at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School.

Research Focus: Joe's research interests include exploring cognitive and social development in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), with an emphasis on how contextual factors affect task performance. Current projects examine motor coordination, socialization, mental flexibility, language development and learning patterns. In the future, he hopes to expand his research to include neuroimaging techniques to explore how patterns of neurological coordination relate to behavior change across contexts. The overall goal of this work is to develop innovative assessment and intervention strategies for individuals with ASD.

Grants:

- 2013 Frakes Graduate Research Grant, University of Cincinnati
Title: "Exploring abductive reasoning in autism: Can a weak global bias be advantageous?"
- 2013 GSGA Research Fellowship, Graduate Student Governance Association – University of Cincinnati
Title: "What constrains adaptive behavior in ASD? Exploring the effects of social and non-social factors on hysteresis in grasping"
- 2011 Summer Graduate Fellowship, University Research Council – University of Cincinnati
Title: "Fast-Tracking Noun Learning in Children with Autism"

Professional Memberships: American Psychological Association, Division 40

Courses Taught: Supervised Research (co-instructor), Research Methods in Psychology (teaching assistant), Advanced Psychological Statistics (teaching assistant)

Publications:

- Esbensen, A. J., Johnson, E., **Amaral, J. L.**, Tan, C., & Macks, R., (in press). Differentiating aging among adults with down syndrome and comorbid dementia or psychopathology. *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*.
- Amaral, J. L.**, Kloos, H., Collins, S., O'Connor, S., McAlister, S., & Luzzi, C. D. (2013). Shape categorization in autism: Does it follow a typical pattern of development? *Proceedings of the 35th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. Berlin, Germany: Cognitive Science Society.
- Fitzpatrick, P., Romero, V., **Amaral, J.L.**, Richardson, M. J. & Schmidt, R. C. (2013). Is Social Competence a Multi-dimensional Construct? Motor and Cognitive Components in Autism. In T. Davis, P. Passos, M. Dicks & j. Weast-Knapp (Eds.). *Studies in perception and action XII: Seventeenth international conference on perception and action* (pp. 1-4). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.
- Kloos, H., Morris, B. J., & **Amaral, J. L.** (Eds.) (2012). *Current Topics in Children's Learning and Cognition*. ISBN 978-953-51-0855-9, InTech Publishing.
- Amaral, J. L.**, Collins, S., Bohache, K. T., & Kloos, H. (2012). Beyond the black-and-white of autism: How cognitive performance varies with context. In H. Kloos, B. J. Morris, & **J. L. Amaral** (Eds.), *Current Topics in Children's Learning and Cognition*, InTech Publishing.
- Nabors, L. A., Thomas, M., Vaughn, L., Adams, R., **Amaral, J.**, & Olsen, B. T. (2011). Children's attitudes about an overweight or non-overweight victim. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 23(2), 87-98.

