



## **Maria Carmen Usai**

Associate professor

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### ***Education and training***

1991

#### **Master degree in Psychology**

University of Padua

1996

#### **PhD in Methodology of research in Psychology**

University of Genoa

### ***Academic experience***

1996 - 2007

#### **Scholarship for the completion of the doctorate program**

University of Genoa

1998 - 2000

#### **Post-doctoral fellow**

University of Genoa

2000 - 2005

#### **Researcher in Developmental Psychology**

University of Genoa

2005 - ONGOING

#### **Associate Professor in Developmental Psychology**

University of Genoa

### ***Teaching activity***

Teaching courses: Developmental Psychology (since 2001), Development of Individual Differences (from 2009), of Psychology of Disability (2000), Advanced Developmental Psychology (from 2004 to 2009) at the Department of Education Sciences of the University of Genoa.

Director of the first level Master's and Advanced course in Didactics and psycho-pedagogy for specific learning disorders (academic year 2011-12 and 2012-13)

Director of the advanced course in Difficulty and learning disorders (ay 2011-12).

Director of the advanced course in Learning psychopathology (ay 2009-10).

## *Postgraduate research and teaching activity*

### **Supervision of PhD students, residents and post-doctoral fellows**

Member of the PhD program in Psychology and Cognitive Sciences and Anthropology until 2012, she was tutor for the doctoral theses of Dr. Valentina De Franchis (XXII cycle) and Chiara Malagoli (XXVII cycle).

### **PhD committees membership**

- Until 2012, member of the PhD program in Psychology, Cognitive Sciences, and Anthropology at the University of Genoa.
- From 2012 to today, member of the PhD program in Social Sciences at the University of Genoa.

### **Postgraduate (PhD) teaching activity**

She has carried out teaching activities in the PhD programs 'Psychology, Cognitive Sciences, and Anthropology' and 'Social Sciences' at the University of Genoa.

## *Research interests*

- Control mechanisms (executive functions) in the typical and in the atypical development  
This field of research concerns the analysis of the construct of executive functions in the preschool period and the study of the relationship between executive functions and other aspects of child development, such as the acquisition of scholastic skills, the development of language and the development of the behavioral control. This field comprises the study of executive functions in the atypical development (autism, down syndrome) and the development of programs to promote executive function in preschoolers.
- Learning processes and difficulties/disorders  
This area of research concerns the analysis of specific and general factors that influence learning, with particular attention to risk factors for learning difficulties and disorders.
- The relationships between temperamental characteristics, language development, and prerequisites of academic achievement

## *Editorial activity*

Recent publications

- Usai M.C., Viterbori P., & Traverso L. (2018). Preschool Executive Function Profiles: Implications for Math Achievement in Grades 1 and

3, *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, DOI:  
10.1080/02568543.2018.1496957

- Traverso L, Fontana M, Usai MC and Passolunghi MC (2018). Response Inhibition and Interference Suppression in Individuals With Down Syndrome Compared to Typically Developing Children. *Front. Psychol.* 9:660. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00660
- Malagoli, C., Usai, M.C. (2018). The effects of gender and age on inhibition and working memory organization in 14- to 19-year-old adolescents and young adults. *Cognitive Development*, 45, 10-23.
- Morra, S., Panesi, S., Traverso, L., Usai, M. C. (2018). Which tasks measure what? Reflections on executive function development and a commentary on Podjarny, Kamawar, and Andrews (2017), *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 167, 246-258. doi:10.1016/j.jecp.2017.11.004
- Viterbori P., Traverso L., Usai M.C. (2017). The Role of Executive Function in Arithmetic Problem-Solving Processes: A Study of Third Graders. *Journal of Cognition and Development*, 18, 1-22. DOI:10.1080/15248372.2017.1392307
- Usai M.C., Traverso L., Gandolfi E., Viterbori P. (2017). FE-PS 2-6. Valutazione delle funzioni esecutive in età prescolare. Erickson, Trento.
- De Franchis V., Usai M.C., Viterbori P., Traverso L., (2017). Preschool executive functioning and literacy achievement in Grades 1 and 3 of primary school: A longitudinal study. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 54, 184-195.
- Cozzani F., Zanobini M., Usai M.C. (2016). Promoting Language and Executive Function in the Educational Settings: The Drežančić Method. *Early Education and Development*. doi: 10.1080/10409289.2016.1145004.
- Viterbori P., Usai M.C., Traverso L., De Franchis V. (2015). How preschool executive functioning predicts several aspects of math achievement in Grades 1 and 3: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 140, 38-55. doi:10.1016/j.jecp.2015.06.014
- Traverso L., Viterbori P. and Usai M.C. (2015). Improving Executive Function in childhood: Evaluation of a training intervention for 5-year-old children. *Front. Psychol.* 6:525. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00525 (Research topic on Improving working memory in learning and intellectual disabilities).
- Gandolfi E., Viterbori P., Traverso L. and Usai M.C. (2014). Inhibitory processes in toddlers: A latent-variable approach. *Frontiers Psychology*. 5:381. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00381. (Special issue on Development of Executive Function during Childhood).
- Usai M.C., Viterbori P., De Franchis V., Traverso L. (2014). Latent structure of executive function in 5 to and 6 year old children: A longitudinal study. Latent structure of executive function in 5- and 6-year-old children: A longitudinal study. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 11, 447-462.

DOI:10.1080/17405629.2013.840578.

#### Others activities

- Since 2012, she participates in the scientific committee of the editorial series Psychology of disability and developmental disorders, Franco Angeli publisher.
- Referee for national (Clinical and Developmental Psychology, Educational Psychology, Learning Difficulties, Attention and Hyperactivity Disorders) and International journals (European Journal of Psychology of Education, Child Neuropsychology, Infant Behavior and Development, Developmental Psychology, International Journal of Developmental Disabilities, Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Maternal and Child Health Journal, Cognitive Development).
- Since 2010, member of the scientific committee of the annual National Congress AIRIPA Italian Association for Research and Intervention in Psychopathology of Learning ([www.airipa.it](http://www.airipa.it)).

#### *Other professional activities*

- Since 2009, founding member of the IDEE SrL, Intervention on the Disorders of the Evolutive Age, Spin-off of the UNI.T.I. Project at the University of Genoa (<http://www.unige.it/unimprese/Idee.shtml>)  
SECTOR: Treatment of language and learning disorders
- Expert in the Consensus Conference on specific learning disorders for the implementation of the 2018 Guidelines.