

Reading guide to Leeper's chapter on Brunswik

In his chapter, Leeper discusses:

- 5 misconceptions regarding Brunswik's work (see "limited use of Brunswik's ideas" starting p. 408)
- 4 possible main reasons for these limited understandings (starting p. 409)
- 8 main (substantive) ideas in Brunswik's work (starting p. 413)
- 8 main methodological principles of Brunswik (starting p. 417)
- Leeper's own critical analysis of Brunswik main ideas and methodological principles (many sound; some hard to grasp) (see "some more specific proposals... starting p. 427)

Parts to skip or pay less attention to

Pay less attention to:

- Main idea 6 (perception is ratiomorphic, or somewhat like thinking; which just says that thinking or top-down processes plays a role in perception, or that perception involves hypothesis testing)
- Main idea 7 when thinking versus perception is discussed (but do read the first part on vicarious mediation)
- Methodological principle 8 on the use of (partial-)correlation to do systematic analysis on ecological data rather than factorial experiments (see also van Rijswijk & Haans, 2017 for an explanation of this)

Skip:

- Leeper's own criticism on Brunswik (starting p. 427 "some more specific proposals on a number of main concepts")

Some hints at interpreting some ideas and principles

- Methodological principle 2 indicates that random sampling of stimuli is needed to measure the true effect of something in the real world (see also van Rijswijk & Haans, 2017)
- Methodological principle 5 (which I do not understand fully) seems to stress psychologist should focus on behavioral outcomes / achievements rather than proximal behaviors. See last slides and exercise for next week workshop
- Methodological principle 7 argues that Brunswik did realize that non-representative studies (structuralist or reductionist--non-molar--approaches) do have their value in the psychological sciences

While reading keep in mind that many of Brunswik's ideas and methodological principles derive from three main ideas:

- The organism as being optimally adapted to function in his or her ecological niche
- The environment as being ambiguous, thus perceptual processes being adapted to deal with ambiguous situations
- The emphasis therefore on distal-central-distal relationships: understanding how psychological (central) process mediate perception and behavioral achievement in an organism's ecological environment