Polish adaptation of the Early Social Communication Scale (ESCS). What are the cultural universals and differences?

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INTRODUCTION

The project aims to describe the communicative competence of 12-month-old children. We plan to adapt a tool – the Early Social Communication Scale (ESCS; Mundy et al., 2003) to Polish conditions to measure communicative competence (CC).

We assume that CC consists of joint attention (JA), behavioural requests (BR) and social interaction behaviours (SI) (Mundy et al., 2003).
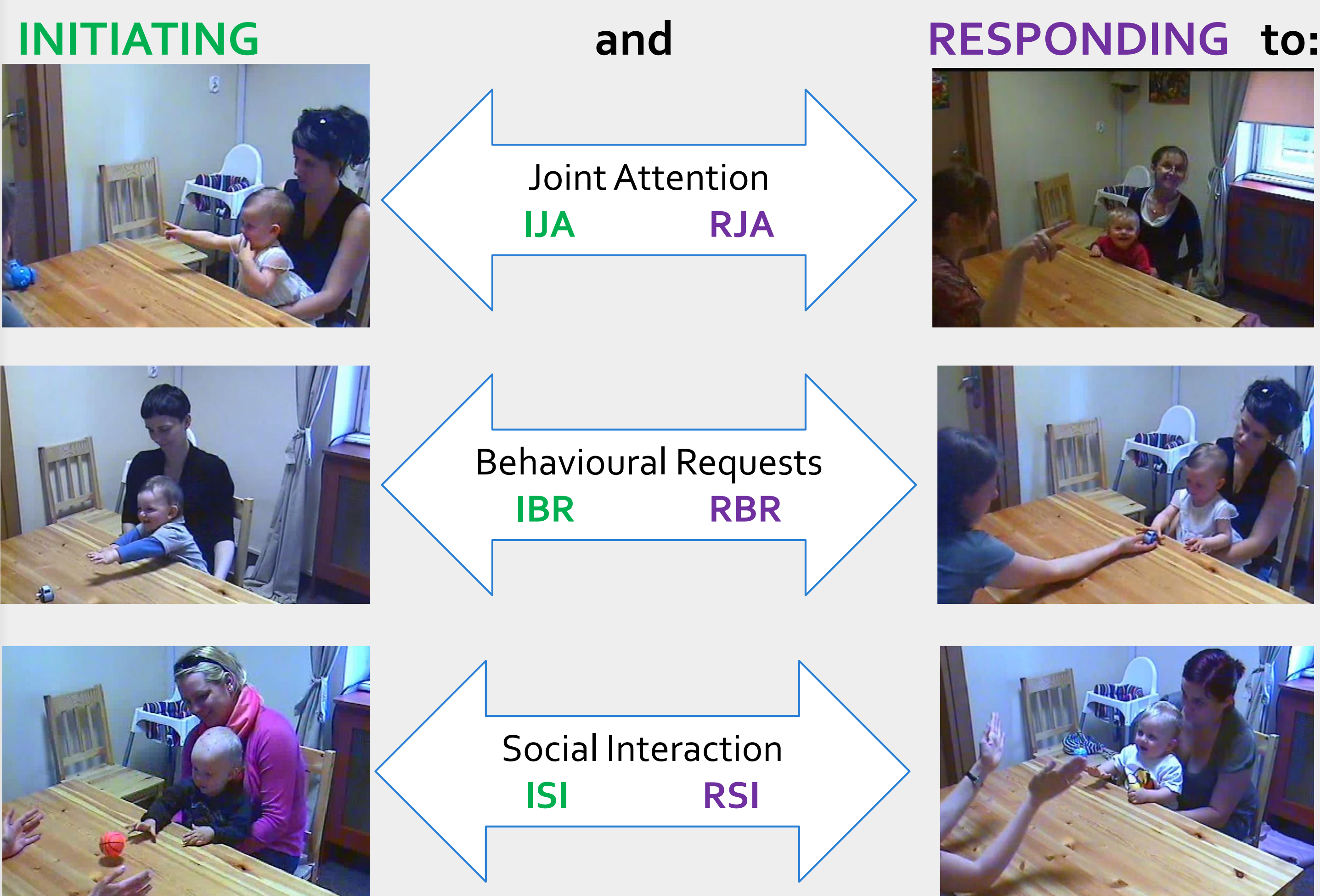
Goals of the study:

- To assess whether the Polish version of ESCS is a valid and reliable tool for measuring CC
- To test whether the elements of CC are universal across cultures (Callaghan et al., 2011; Liszkowski et al., 2012).

METHOD

311 children aged 12 months (M=52.39 weeks, SD=1.38; 140 girls, 171 boys) participated in the study, conducted in the Child Development Psychology Laboratory.

ESCS measures:

INITIATING   and   RESPONDING to:

Joint Attention
IJA   RJA

Behavioural Requests
IBR   RBR

Social Interaction
ISI   RSI

VALIDITY MEASURES:

In a lab during a FRUSTRATION TASK (Braungart-Rieker & Stifter 1996) POINTING to the desired object was observed.
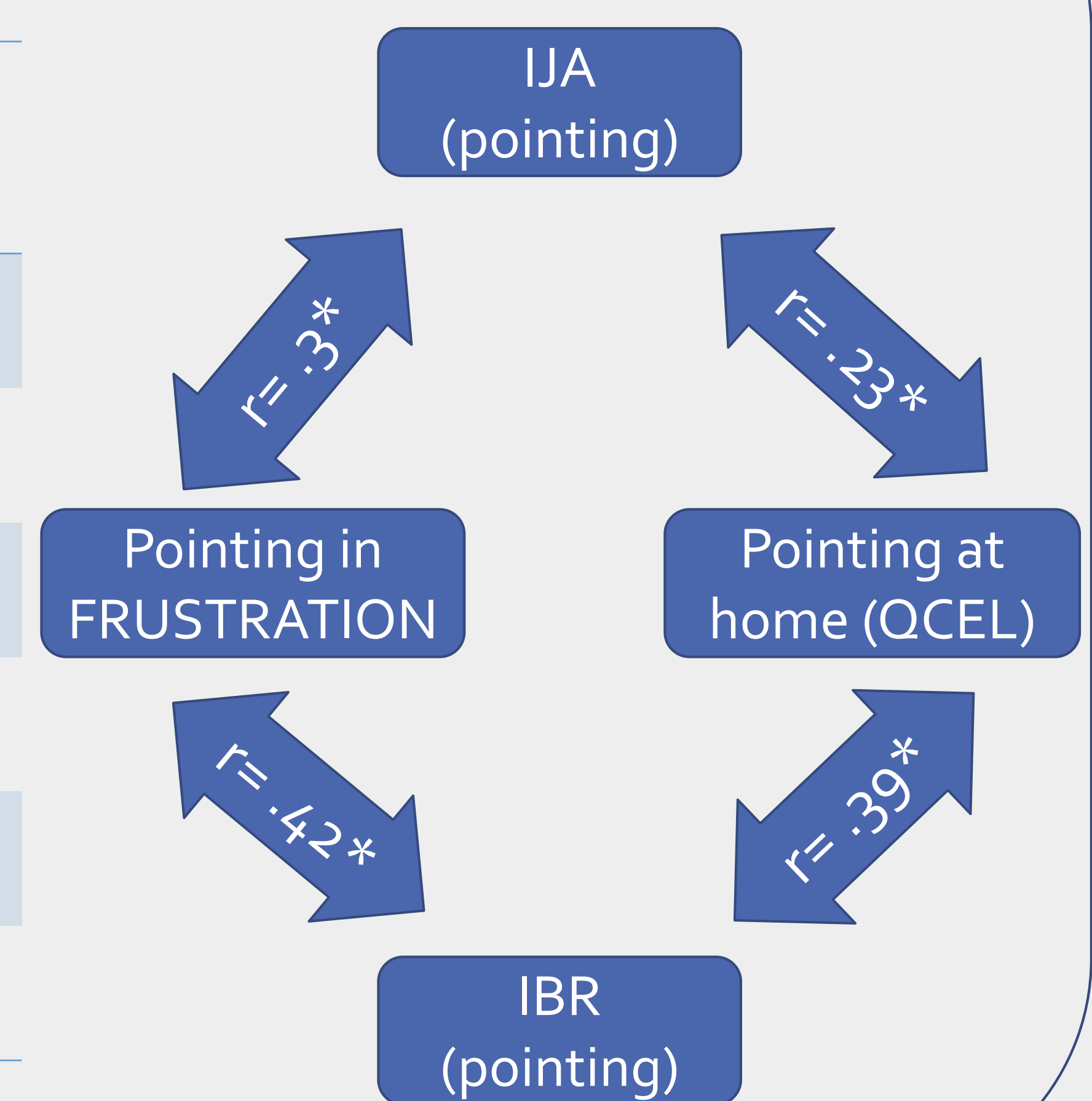
At home parents filled in a Questionnaire for Communication and Early Language (Camaioni et al., 2008) and we calculated how often children use POINTING to communicate with an adult.

RESULTS

PSYCHOMETRIC VALUES OF ESCS

RELIABILITY

	Kappa coefficient	r (Pearson correlation)
IJA	0.27*	0.83*
RJA	0.72*	0.75*
IBR	0.44*	0.76*
RBR	0.59*	0.89*
ISI	0.03	0.52*
RSI	0.63*	0.71*

* p < 0.001

VALIDITY

IJA (pointing)

r= .3*   r= .23*

Pointing in FRUSTRATION   Pointing at home (QCEL)

r= .42*   r= .39*

IBR (pointing)

AMERICAN-POLISH RESULTS

	Mundy et al.		Białecka-Pikul et al.			
	mean	SD	mean	SD	p	Hedge's g
IJA	18.28	10.45	17.23	9.43	0.35	-
RJA %	48.12	24.07	52.92	20.79	0.059	-0.216
IBR	25.85	12.97	25.39	11.43	0.74	-
RBR %	66.76	34.85	66.63	26.67	0.97	-
ISI	2.09	3.64	1.15	0.9	0.0007	0.39
RSI	7.75	5.31	9.2	2.39	0.001	-0.37

DISCUSSION

The results show that ESCS is **a valid and reliable tool** that can measure culturally universal competencies of one-year-old children. Polish infants demonstrate all types of behaviours distinguished in the ESCS, which may confirm the universality of joint attention and prelinguistic communication. **Substantial individual differences** were observed in joint atttention skills as well as in requesting and social interaction behaviours. This makes it difficult to compare the results between cultures. **The lower level of initiating social interaction and higher level of responding to them, together with the higher level of responding to joint attention expressed by Polish infants** may indicate an early manifestation of cultural specificity of Poles, who are less independent (individualistic) than American infants. However, small effect sizes of these results suggest that significance of these differences should not be overestimated.

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