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## The art of analyzing developmental trajectories: recommendations for developmental trajectory group analyses

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### Propositions belonging to the PhD thesis

The art of analyzing developmental trajectories:  
Recommendations for developmental trajectory group analyses  
Jitske Sijbrandij  
3 April 2024

1. Analysis of developmental trajectories without knowledge of the variables and the theory behind them, is like baking without knowledge of the ingredients. – this thesis
2. “Model selection is an art – informed by theory, past findings, past experience, and a variety of statistical fit indices.” – Ram and Grimm, *International Journal of Behavioural Development*; 2009
3. A plot is worth a thousand words, an exception being a mean trajectory plot. – this thesis
4. Developmental trajectory group analysis is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you’re going to get. – Chapter 4, (paraphrasing Forrest Gump; 1994)
5. Although the discussion on the interpretation of trajectory classes is about as old as the techniques themselves, the biggest leap forward in this field would be a better understanding and reporting of the interpretation of trajectory classes. – this thesis
6. Both in baking and developmental trajectory analysis, decisions made during the process (specifically model specifications), can fundamentally impact the end result. – this thesis
7. The cat’s cradle phenomenon is not a statistical issue, but an issue related to interpretation. – this thesis
8. All developmental trajectory group models are wrong, but some are useful. – this thesis (paraphrasing George Box, *Empirical Model-Building and Response Surfaces*; 1987)
9. A model is only as meaningful as its interpretation. – this thesis
10. The best way to convince people to listen to a talk about statistics, is to not make them realize you are talking about statistics.
11. “Experiments should be conducted by PhD students, not on PhD students.” – VAWO (de vakbond voor de Wetenschap (n.d.), now part of de Algemene Onderwijsbond)
12. “Just bake the cake: (...) Find daily reasons to celebrate and show up joyfully for yourself and others.” – Christina Tosi, *Dessert Can Save the World: Stories, Secrets, and Recipes for a Stubbornly Joyful Existence*, 2022
13. “Finding happiness (...) means riding the waves of joy, and trying to find our way back upward when we’ve been knocked down. ” – Ingrid Fetell Lee, *Joyful*; 2018
14. “A girl’s best friend is equal pay.” – Miley Cyrus; 2018