

Strategies for analyzing complex cognitive impairments – a dynamic testing approach

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Research strategies can be related to pragmatic or epistemic goals. The strategies presented in this paper are mainly developed within the framework of a pragmatic perspective of generating knowledge: The research questions which are formulated are guided by goals of integration (rehabilitation) or symptom reduction (therapy) with handicapped persons. Critical issues of this approach are the selection of the specific cognitive variables and of particular methods of intervention. These issues are addressed in cognitive remediation research by three types of interrelated studies: Feasibility studies, studies of functional relations (with regard to indicators of goals) and generalizability studies (with regard to performance change).

We proposed to extend this approach by adding the component of interindividual differences in modifiability. This component is theoretically and methodologically addressed by the Dynamic Assessment approach. In Dynamic Assessment, domains of analyzing modifiability refer to the characteristics of the task, of the person, and the type of intervention applied. A corollary to this is the identification of groups of persons that are different in modifiability, thus indicating different educational or therapeutic needs.

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