

Home > Journal > Social Sciences & Humanities > PSYCH

[Indexing](#) [View Papers](#) [Aims & Scope](#) [Editorial Board](#) [Guideline](#) [Article Processing Charges](#)

PSYCH > Vol.2 No.9, December 2011

OPEN ACCESS

Psychologists' Diagnostic Processes during a Diagnostic Interview

PDF (Size: 121KB) PP. 917-924 DOI: 10.4236/psych.2011.29138

Author(s)

Marleen Groenier, Vos R. J. Beerthuis, Jules M. Pieters, Cilia L. M Witteman, Jan A. Swinkels

ABSTRACT

In mental health care, psychologists assess clients' complaints, analyze underlying problems, and identify causes for these problems, to make treatment decisions. We present a study on psychologists' diagnostic processes, in which a mixed-method approach was employed. We aimed to identify a common structure in the diagnostic processes of different psychologists. We engaged an actor to simulate a client. Participants were asked to perform a diagnostic interview with this "client". This interview was videotaped. Afterwards participants first wrote a report and then were asked to review their considerations during the interview. We found that psychologists were comprehensive in their diagnostic interviews. They addressed the client's complaints, possible classifications, explanations, and treatments. They agreed about the classifications, more than about causal factors and treatment options. The content of the considerations differed between the interviews and the reports written afterwards. We conclude that psychologists continuously shifted between diagnostic activities and revised their decisions in line with the dynamics of the interview situation.

KEYWORDS

Clinical Decision Making, Diagnostic Interview, Stimulated Recall, Simulated Patient

Cite this paper

Groenier, M., Beerthuis, V., Pieters, J., M Witteman, C. & Swinkels, J. (2011). Psychologists' Diagnostic Processes during a Diagnostic Interview. *Psychology*, 2, 917-924. doi: 10.4236/psych.2011.29138.

References

- [1] American Psychiatric Association (2000). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th revised ed.). Washington, DC: Author
- [2] Brammer, R. (1997). Case conceptualization strategies: The relationship between psychologists' experience levels, academic training, and mode of clinical inquiry. *Educational Psychology Review*, 9, 333-351. doi: 10.1023/A:1024794522386
- [3] Bus, A. G., & Kruijzenga, T. H. (1989). Diagnostic problem-solving behavior of expert practitioners in the field of learning disabilities. *Journal of School Psychology*, 27, 277-287. doi: 10.1016/0022-4405(89)90042-3
- [4] Caspar, F. (1997). What goes on in a psychotherapist's mind? *Psychotherapy Research*, 7, 105-125. doi: 10.1080/10503309712331331913
- [5] De Bruyn, E. E. J., Ruijsenaars, A., Pameijer, N. K., & Van Aarle, E. J. M. (2003). The diagnostic cycle. Learning from practice. Leuven: Ac-co.
- [6] Dijkstra, W. (2002). Sequence viewer 3.0. Amsterdam: Department of Social Research Methods, Vrije Universiteit.
- [7] Dijkstra, W., & Taris, T. (1995). Measuring the agreement between sequences. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 24, 214-231. doi: 10.1177/0049124195024002004
- [8] Eells, T. D. (2007). Handbook of psychotherapy case formulation (2nd ed.). New York: The Guilford

- [Open Special Issues](#)
- [Published Special Issues](#)
- [Special Issues Guideline](#)

[PSYCH Subscription](#)

[Most popular papers in PSYCH](#)

[About PSYCH News](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Recommend to Peers](#)

[Recommend to Library](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Downloads: 247,364

Visits: 543,608

[Sponsors >>](#)

- [9] Eells, T. D., Kendjelic, E. M., & Lucas, C. P. (1998). What' s in a case formulation? Development and use of a content coding manual. *Journal of Psychotherapy Practice and Research*, 7, 144-153. <http://jppr.psychiatryonline.org/>
- [10] Eells, T. D., Lombart, K. G., Kendjelic, E. M., Turner, L. C., & Lucas, C. P. (2005). The quality of psychotherapy case formulations: A comparison of expert, experienced, and novice cognitive-behavioral and psychodynamic therapists. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 73, 579-589. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.73.4.579
- [11] Fernández-Ballesteros, R. (1999). Psychological assessment: Future challenges and progresses. *European Psychologist*, 4, 248-262. doi:10.1027//1016-9040.4.4.248
- [12] Fernández-Ballesteros, R., De Bruyn, E. E. J., Godoy, A., Hornke, L. F., Ter Laak, J., Vizcarro, C., Westhoff, K., Westmeyer, H., & Zaccagnini, J. L. (2001). Guidelines for the assessment process (GAP): A proposal for discussion. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 17, 187-200. doi:10.1027//1015-5759.17.3.187
- [13] Field, A. (2000). *Discovering statistics using SPSS for windows*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.
- [14] Garb, H. N. (1998). *Studying the clinician: Judgment research and psychological assessment*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- [15] Garb, H. N. (2005). Clinical judgment and decision making. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1, 67-89. doi:10.1146/annurev.clinpsy.1.102803.143810
- [16] Gigerenzer, G. (2000). *Adaptive thinking: Rationality in the real world*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [17] Groenier, M., Pieters, J. M., Hulshof, C. D., Wilhelm, P., & Witteman, C. L. M. (2008). Psychologists' judgments of diagnostic activities: Deviations from a theoretical model. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 15, 256-265. doi:10.1002/cpp.587
- [18] Groth-Marnat, G. (2003). *Handbook of psychological assessment (4th ed.)*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- [19] Haverkamp, B. E. (1993). Confirmatory bias in hypothesis testing for client-identified and counselor self-generated hypotheses. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 40, 303-315. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.40.3.303
- [20] Haynes, S. N., Mumma, G. H., & Pinson, C. (2009). Idiographic assessment: Conceptual and psychometric foundations of individualized behavioral assessment. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 29, 179- 191. doi:10.1016/j.cpr.2008.12.003
- [21] Haynes, S. N., Smith, G. T., & Hunsley, J. D. (2011). *Scientific foundations of clinical assessment*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- [22] Hillerbrand, E. T., & Claiborn, C. D. (1990). Examining reasoning skill differences between expert and novice counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 68, 684-691. www.counseling.org
- [23] Kagan, N., Krathwohl, D. R., & Miller, R. (1963). Stimulated recall in therapy using video tape: A case study. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 10, 237-243. doi:10.1037/h0045497
- [24] Kuyken, W., Fothergill, C. D., Musa, M., & Chadwick, P. (2005). The reliability and quality of cognitive case formulation. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, 43, 1187-1201. doi:10.1016/j.brat.2004.08.007
- [25] Lichtenberg, J. W. (1997). Expertise in counseling psychology: A concept in search of support. *Educational Psychology Review*, 9, 221- 238. doi:10.1023/A:1024783107643
- [26] Müller, J. M. (2011). Evaluation of a therapeutic concept diagram. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 27, 17-28. doi:10.1027/1015-5759/a000053
- [27] Nelson-Gray, R. O. (2003). Treatment utility of psychological assessment. *Psychological Assessment*, 15, 521-531. doi:10.1037/1040-3590.15.4.521