

The Child Attachment Interview: A Psychometric Longitudinal Validation Study in a German Sample

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Abstract : The assessment of attachment patterns in toddlers and adults has been well researched, and valid diagnostic methods (e.g., Strange Situation Test, Adult Attachment Interview) are applicable. For middle and late childhood, on the other hand, there are only few validated methods available so far. For the Child Attachment Interview (CAI) promising validation studies from English-speaking countries are available, but so far a comprehensive study on the validity of a German sample is lacking. Within the scope of a longitudinal project, the results of the first point of measurement are reported in this study. A German-language version of the CAI was carried out with 111 primary school children (56% female; age: $M = 8.34$, $SD = 0.49$). In relation to psychometric quality criteria, parameters on interrater reliability, construct validity and discriminant, and convergent validity are reported. Analyses of the correlations between attachment patterns and internalizing and externalizing behavior problems from parent and teacher reports are presented. The implications for the German-language assessment of attachment in middle and late childhood in research and individual case diagnostics, e.g., in the context of conducting expert evaluation reports for family courts, are discussed.

Keywords : attachment, attachment assessment, developmental psychology, longitudinal study

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