

APPROACH IN TAKING TESTS

A Technique for Studying the Examinee's Behavior

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Argument over the validity and reliability of tests continues; so, happily, does research. One of the persistent criticisms of tests in general has arisen from the varied temperaments of the subjects, the differing conditions under which the tests are given, and the diverse reactions to the test situations. All of these without reference to content of the test or the particular human characteristic which it was supposed to test. Keen to sense the fact that this behavior is also a most important evidence of the make-up of personality, psychologists have seized upon it as a valuable diagnostic tool. Throughout Europe the psychotechnicians will show you test after test designed primarily to reveal the individual's manner of approaching it. The most elaborate analysis of possible actions and alternative interpretations is Dr. Baumgarten's, which is included in Die Testmethode, her contribution to the Handbuch der biologischen Arbeitsmethoden, edited by E. Abderhalden. We translated it from the German, discussed it at her home in Solothurn, Switzerland, and received her approval of our version. We believe it will be of deep interest to our readers.

F. J. K.

OBSERVATION SHEET FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE EXAMINEE DURING THE TEST PERIOD

Behavior

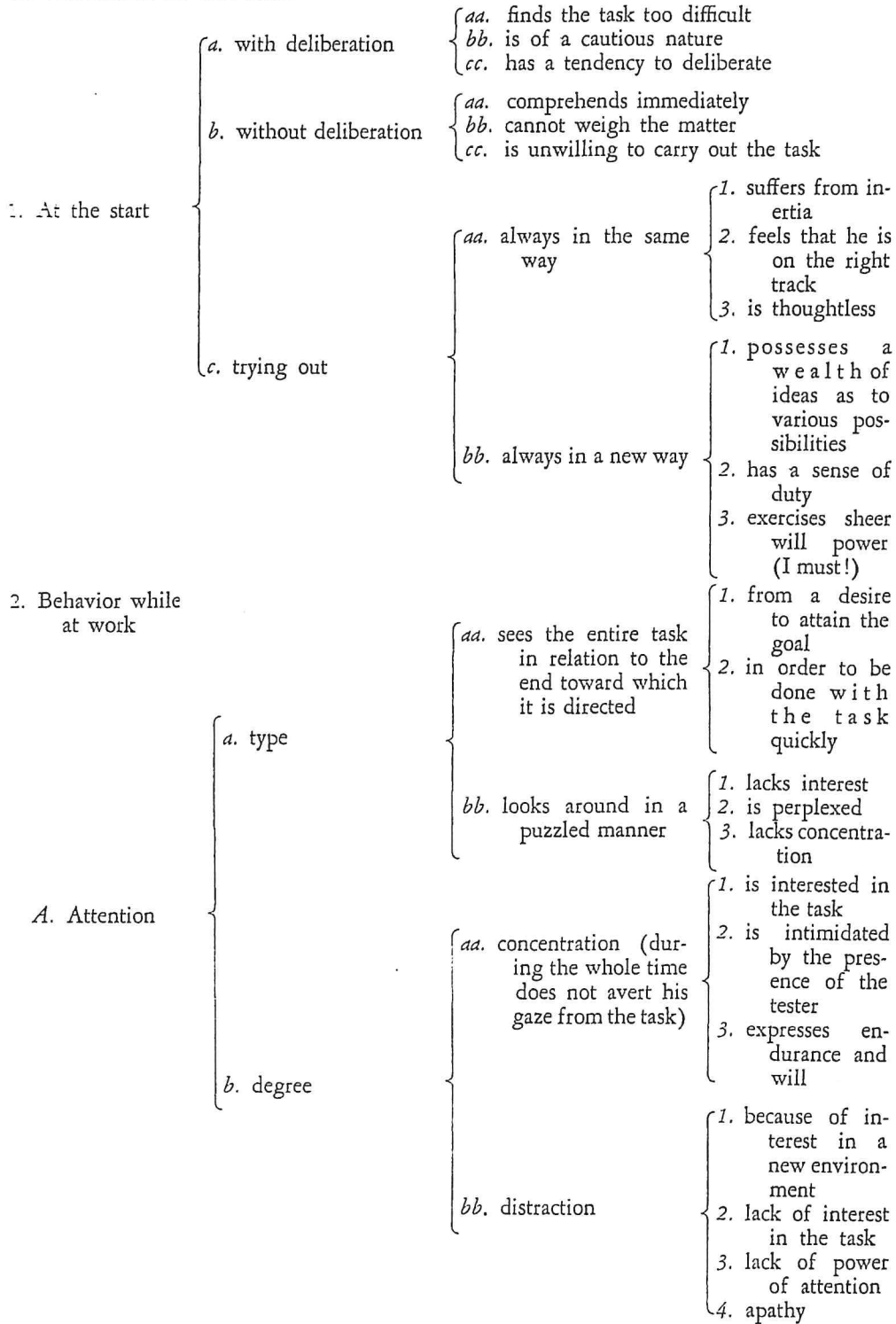
Interpretation

I. DURING THE PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Listens attentively, looks steadily at the examiner B. Gazes around the room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is really attentive b. can look at a person without listening |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. can give effective divided attention b. is not able to concentrate c. is not interested in the subject matter |
| 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Asks questions B. Asks no questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. has heard im-
perfectly b. has not understood c. has not been particularly interested in the subject matter d. wishes to gain time and not be compelled to do the task immediately (evident from the type of question) |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. poor hearing bb. lack of concentration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is stupid b. has understood everything well c. is in a hurry to accomplish the task |

3. Approaches the test
- A. quickly
 - a. is lively
 - b. has an active nature
 - c. is interested in the test (this can also result from the two foregoing reasons)
 - d. comprehends quickly
 - e. lacks foresight
 - B. slowly
 - a. is apathetic
 - b. lacks interest in the task
 - c. is both apathetic and uninterested
 - C. hesitatingly
 - a. does not understand the task
 - b. is cautious
 - c. cannot come to a decision
 - d. is shy
 - e. is unwilling to take the test
4. At the close of the task
- A. Serious
 - a. is of a serious nature
 - b. is impressed at the moment with the importance of the task
 - c. is troubled by grief
 - B. Playful
 - a. happens to be in a good humor
 - b. task seems like play
 - c. is of a carefree nature
 - C. Zealous
 - a. is greatly interested
 - b. desires to have the task over with quickly
5. Anticipatory expressions with reference to his own capacity for accomplishment
- A. As if it were easy
 - a. feels task is easy
 - b. does not overlook the difficulties
 - c. tends to boastfulness and overbearing attitude
 - B. Enthusiasm
 - a. is interested
 - b. is uncritically enthusiastic
 - C. Will not be able to do it
 - a. is conscious of his own powers
 - b. has an inferiority complex
 - c. does not properly understand the task
 - d. wishes to ward off a resulting lack of interest
6. Judgment upon or criticism of the task
- A. Aloud
 - a. desires to cooperate
 - b. tends toward faultfinding
 - c. tends to take a position which will emphasize his ego
 - B. Through mimicking signs
 - a. is interested
 - b. does not like
 - c. disdains

II EXECUTION OF THE TASK



B. Expression of feelings and emotions (pleasure, dislike, surprise)	a. gives expression	aa. during the entire test, dependent upon vigor and type, may be a sign that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. trusts in the tester 2. is of a cooperative and cheerful character 3. lacks respect or attends poorly
		bb. during single phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. experiences joy in gradual success of accomplishment 2. also possible as a result of 1, 2, 3 (in preceding bracket)
	b. no expression	aa. experiences no emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. through education 2. through custom or habit 3. through his own will power
C. Movements (of the body)	a. the body coordinates with the task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. is clever bb. has had gymnastic training cc. is animated by the thought that he will as quickly as possible attain the goal 	
	b. does not coordinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. has no control over movements bb. possesses no flexibility of thought 	
D. Work tempo	a. quick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. has a lively nature bb. wishes to free himself of a burdensome task 	
	b. slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. has a phlegmatic nature bb. is lazy cc. is indifferent to the task 	
E. Movements of the hands	a. careful, measured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. has had practice bb. has a natural tendency 	
	b. sure, quiet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. possesses natural ability bb. possesses a strong will 	
	c. quick, nervous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aa. possesses natural ability bb. is ambitious cc. desires to reach his goal as quickly as possible 	

F. Manner of work	a. systematically	{ aa. deliberates bb. loves order	
		b. by fits and starts	{ aa. possesses a great zest for living bb. is nervous cc. is desultory thinker dd. is continually searching for something more interesting
A'. As to order	c. uniformly		{ aa. possesses serenity and insight bb. possesses a strong will
		d. irregularly	{ aa. at first slowly, then more and more quickly <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle;">{</td> <td> 1. great drive 2. gradually the task becomes clearer and apparent 3. interest progressively mounts </td> </tr> </table>
{	1. great drive 2. gradually the task becomes clearer and apparent 3. interest progressively mounts		
{ bb. at first quickly, then slowly <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle;">{</td> <td> 1. loss of interest 2. weak concentration 3. quick fatigue </td> </tr> </table>	{		1. loss of interest 2. weak concentration 3. quick fatigue
{	1. loss of interest 2. weak concentration 3. quick fatigue		
{ cc. alternately at regular intervals, slowly and quickly <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle;">{</td> <td> 1. flexibility of thought 2. fluctuating attention 3. renewed attempts to reenforce the waning power </td> </tr> </table>	{	1. flexibility of thought 2. fluctuating attention 3. renewed attempts to reenforce the waning power	
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B'. As to quality	a. careful, neat	{ aa. possesses an aptitude for correctness and exactness bb. has a particular interest in the task	
		b. careless, sloppy	{ aa. possesses natural tendency
{ bb. lacks interest			
{ cc. has a bad temper			
G. Handling of his tools During the working period does he put the necessary tools in the same place?	a. yes	{ aa. has good memory bb. loves good order cc. has mind for organization	
		b. no	{ aa. is forgetful
{ bb. is careless			
{ cc. is not orderly			
{ dd. lacks mind for organization			

3. Conduct as the difficulties emerge
- a. indifferent attitude
 - aa. lacks interest
 - bb. is apathetic
 - cc. is careless
 - b. immediately throws up the sponge
 - aa. has a passive nature
 - bb. has a conviction that effort is useless because of a knowledge of his own meager abilities
 - cc. possesses an unjustified inferiority complex due to lack of ambition
- A. Asks no help
- c. Overcoming of difficulties
 - aa. incidental
 - 1. immediately
 - a'. knowledge and power are present
 - 2. gradually
 - a'. he thinks very slowly (he racks his brain)
 - b'. because of pressure ("I must do this thing.")
 - c'. takes joy in overcoming difficulties
 - bb. inherent
 - 1. through correct methods
 - a'. chance
 - b'. ability
 - c'. efforts at reasoning
 - 2. through a trick
 - a'. flash of genius
 - b'. deception
- B. Asks help from others
- a. several times
 - aa. has a correct feeling of his own limited powers
 - bb. has an inferiority complex
 - cc. has developed bad habits (burdening people with questions)
 - dd. lacks self-understanding
 - b. once
 - aa. has made mistakes, is possibly destructive
 - bb. encounters a difficulty arising from lack of knowledge

- C. Conduct while being helped: Receives it:
- a. indifferently {
 - aa. apathy
 - bb. a conviction that help must be given to him (that it is owed to him)
 - b. happily {
 - aa. joy in being able to read the task and not to be left in the lurch
 - bb. an interest in the thing itself
 - cc. the task is lightened for him and he needs no longer take pains with it
 - c. with a thankful glance {
 - aa. the same motives listed under (b)
 - bb. good will
 - d. skeptically and critically {
 - aa. a weak belief in its authoritative nature
 - bb. because of pride
 - cc. real ability
 - dd. a tendency to object
 - ee. insight
 - e. trustfully and credulously {
 - aa. lack of a critical mind
 - bb. is well-disposed
 - cc. trained obedience
 - dd. suggestibility
 - f. feels hurt {
 - aa. feeling of independence
 - bb. ambition (with reference to his colleagues)

4. Carrying out the instructions

A. Exactly (possesses the knowledge and attributes demanded of him)

- B. With deviations
- a. of a positive kind {
 - aa. chance
 - bb. rich fantasy
 - cc. greater knowledge
 - dd. special interest
 - b. of a negative kind {
 - aa. weak attention
 - bb. weak memory
 - cc. lack of interest
 - dd. lack of persistence
 - ee. lack of knowledge

III. POSITION WITH REFERENCE TO HIS OWN PERFORMANCE

- A. Critical
Does he perceive mistakes in his own performance?
- { a. yes
 b. no
- { aa. chance
 bb. self-control for the first time at the end of his work
 cc. during the work (always proves his results before he proceeds)
- { aa. he keeps his mind on the end result
 bb. he proves his results neither during the work nor at the close
- B. Indifferent
- { a. apathy
 b. a deep conviction with reference to his own strength
- C. With mild feeling
- { a. content
 b. vexed

IV. CONDUCT AT THE END OF THE WORK

- A. Remains silent and watches quietly
- { a. is shy
 b. is well educated
 c. lacks decision
 d. lacks knowledge as to what to do
- B. Announces the result himself
- { a. is overjoyed at having solved the problem
 b. is loud-mouthed and unruly
 c. believes he must do it
- C. Asks questions: "Is that not true?"
 "Is that not so?"
- { a. feels necessity for telling others
 b. lacks certainty, a desire to gain confirmation
 c. greatly desires to hear himself praised
- D. Emotional expression of
- { a. contentment
 b. vexation
- { aa. satisfaction at having finished the job
 bb. satisfaction at having solved the problem (sensitivity to his own powers of perfection)
 cc. satisfaction at not being taunted by his comrades
- { aa. his ambition has been thwarted
 bb. his assurance has been destroyed
 cc. he expects to be punished

It is also important to observe the conduct of a worker after the completion of a task, and indeed:

1. whether he leaves his place of work quickly or slowly
 2. in what condition he leaves his tools
 3. whether he handles the material—economically, wastefully.
- { a. in order (he has a love of order; he is interested in the good of others, he has been taught, has been accustomed)
 b. in disorder (he is disorderly; he is restless; he does not consider the welfare of others; he has no time)