The Adult Attachment Interview and psychoanalytic outcome studies

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During the last two decades, the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) has attracted growing interest from psychoanalysts concerned with empirical research. The paper discusses the application of Crittenden’s Dynamic-Maturational AAI method for assessing the outcome of psychoanalysis. The aim is to demonstrate, through a case presentation, how therapeutic change can be expressed in the AAI. The pre- and post-treatment interviews of one patient, having completed a four-times-a-week psychoanalysis, are presented. It is demonstrated that the detailed discourse analysis of the AAI, based on transcribed tape-recorded interviews, focuses subtle formal elements of language and speech reflecting dominant patterns of affect regulation and object relating. The AAI text analysis provides possibility for coding procedural memory as conveyed by the handling of the relationship to the interviewer, incorporating the dynamic relationship between researcher and subject and thus complying with a methodological prerequisite regarded by many psychoanalysts as necessary for capturing data that are relevant to psychoanalysis. On this background, the method emerges as promising for psychoanalytic outcome studies.

Keywords: Adult Attachment Interview, outcome studies, discourse analysis, attachment patterns, relational strategies, therapeutic change

Introduction

Psychoanalysts often feel that psychotherapy research lacks clinical relevance. One of the reasons is the failure of outcome criteria to do justice to the complexity of the human personality, and to the specific changes sought by psychoanalysis. Thus, outcome research in psychoanalysis is in need of valid and reliable methods capturing personality dimensions that are relevant and meaningful for psychoanalysis (Gullestad, 1996).

The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) is a method that, during the last two decades, has attracted growing interest from psychoanalysts concerned with empirical research. The AAI, created by George et al. (1985) and further elaborated by Crittenden (1995, 1997, 1999–2001), is an instrument constructed to evaluate attachment patterns in adults, and to assess individual differences in attachment quality. Until recently, the AAI method has mainly been applied within developmental and longitudinal research of normative samples, for example, for assessing the relationship between attachment patterns in parents and patterns of attachment in their children (Fonagy et al., 1991). However, the interview also comes forward as a tool for studying treatment (Fonagy et al., 1996; Diamond et al., 1999; Tyrrell et al., 1999).

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate, through a case presentation, how therapeutic change can be expressed through the AAI. Presentation of the pre- and post-treatment interviews of one patient will illustrate that the detailed discourse analysis of the AAI focuses subtle formal elements of language and speech reflecting dominant patterns of affect regulation and object
relating, thus addressing psychological dimensions that are relevant for psychoanalysis. The discussion is based on material from a process-outcome study at the Norwegian Psychoanalytic Society (Oslo II study—Varvin, 1999), seeking, through the detailed study of tape-recorded psychoanalyses, to identify process factors and interventions contributing to positive outcome. Therapeutic outcome is assessed through several dimensions, including symptom improvement, modification of personality structure and changes in experienced self states, using a variety of methods (SCL 90; IIP; SASB; AAI; Rorschach; clinical interview). The analysts participating in the project have been trained in Patricia Crittenden’s Dynamic-Maturational (D-M) version of the AAI method. The D-M method, which is discussed in this paper, was developed with a view to differentiating patterns of attachment that reflect distortions of thought and behaviour, and applies a modified discourse analysis and a modified classificatory model to the AAI, as compared with the method of Main and Goldwyn (1998).

The Adult Attachment Interview: A presentation

Whereas the Strange Situation approach (Ainsworth et al., 1978) studies attachment in the young child through behavioural patterns, the AAI method, which has been called an adult analogue to the Strange Situation (Stein et al., 1998), aims at systematically registering patterns of attachment in the adult in terms of internal representations. Through the Strange Situation, three distinct reaction patterns, called secure (= B), avoidant (= A) and ambivalent (= C), were identified. In 1985, Crittenden (under Ainsworth’s guidance) added A/C, to account for patterns combining the avoidant and the ambivalent strategies (Crittenden, 1985; Radke-Yarrow, 1985). The AAI interview provides a basis for classifying individuals according to the three patterns delineated by Ainsworth. Main and Goldwyn (1998) later added unresolved trauma or loss as a modifier of other classifications, and the category cannot classify (CC) (Hesse, 1996), referring to disorganised behaviour (Main and Solomon, 1986). While the Main and Goldwyn system provides little differentiation among clinical cases, Crittenden’s method, expanding Ainsworth’s categories through the addition of new constructs tied to distortions of information that provide the basis for new behavioural and mental organisations, covers a broader array of possible patterns reflecting distortions of thought and behaviour.

The AAI is a semi-structured interview comprising fifteen specified questions with person-specific follow-up probes addressing the individual’s experiences of primary caregivers in childhood and their effects and influences upon the individual as an adult. After a general description of the family and of the relationships to mother and father, the subject is asked to choose five (semantic) words or phrases characterising the relationship to each parent, and to describe episodes illustrating each of them. Next, there are questions regarding everyday happenings of illness, injury and emotionally upsetting events, and experiences of rejection, separation and loss. Crucial to the method are the integrative questions, placed at the end of the interview, addressing the person’s reflections about how childhood experiences have formed his/her adult personality, and why the parents behaved as they did.

The concept of coherent conversation, elaborated by the linguistic philosopher Grice (1975), serves as an overriding principle for interpretation (Main, 1991). Grice lists four criteria for assessing discourse: quality, quantity, relation and manner. ‘Quality’ requires having evidence for what one says; ‘quantity’ indicates the ability to answer sufficiently, yet not too much; ‘relation’ refers to relevance, while ‘manner’ refers to the way of relating. Coherence of

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1 The Oslo II study is part of a multi-centre study consisting of research groups in Amsterdam, Stockholm, Helsinki and Milan. Although collaborating in methodological discussions etc., each group has developed specific research designs.
discourse is related to metacognitive monitoring (Main, 1991), also called reflective function (Fonagy and Target, 1997; Fonagy et al., 1997) or integration (Crittenden, 1999–2001), implying the ability to think about thinking, that is, to reflect upon the nature, source and validity of one’s own representations. The presence of metacognitive processes in the narrative has been viewed as an indication of a secure or balanced, in Crittenden’s terms, internal world (Main, 1991; Fonagy et al., 1995). The coding is based on psycholinguistic qualities of the individual’s discourse—the structure and syntax of language hold centre stage—and comprises paralinguistic aspects of communication, such as intonation and affective sounds accompanying speech—like sighs, deep breathing, crying, laughing. Interpretation thus focuses on the form of the narrative rather than its content.

Coding is also based on the representation of attachment relationships within different memory systems. Main and Goldwyn address semantic, episodic and working memory. Crittenden (1997), on the basis of modern cognitive neuroscience, also includes imaged and procedural memory. By probing the same classes of experience through different memory systems the interview reveals the integration, or lack of integration, of different forms of representation. The individual may, for example, present mother as loving, caring, available etc., while being unable to provide episodes justifying this characterisation. A discrepancy of this sort points to idealisation. Thus, the AAI not only registers conscious, ‘ideological’ versions of attachment histories, but triggers the individual’s underlying ‘state of mind’ (Main, 1999) with respect to attachment.

Patterns of attachment, as registered through the AAI, are ways of relating that the individual has developed in a specific interpersonal environment to maximise safety and minimise anxiety. They reflect individually constructed, experience-based internal working models (Bowlby, 1973), which represent cognitive-affective schemas of the self, of the caregiver and context, and of the interaction among them. Attachment patterns express context-adapted, self-protective strategies (Crittenden, 1995) that function to elicit protection and comfort from attachment figures across the life-span. Patterns of attachment express relational strategies and thus emerge as a unit of analysis in line with a general object relational orientation pervading present-day psychoanalysis.

Clinical material

In what follows I shall present material from two AAI interviews2 from a patient I have called Edward, whose four-times-a-week psychoanalysis lasted for three years. The AAI interviews were taken before start of treatment and six months after termination. The process of psychoanalysis will not be discussed in this paper. The focus is on the AAI as an evaluative tool.

Edward is 41 and seeks psychoanalysis because of ‘low self-esteem, recurring depressions, aggression, thoughts of revenge, chronic feeling of guilt and panic anxiety’. In his work as an artist he generally functions productively, but for periods he is incapacitated, due to feelings of worthlessness and insecurity. He is married and has three children. The marriage functions poorly with violent quarrels and without intimacy to his wife. The ICD 10 diagnosis was recurrent depressions (F33.1). Edward has been in several psychotherapeutic treatments before, including marital therapy, which has given him some ‘understanding’, but no real help. He has

2Both interviews have been coded independently by the Oslo group, by Crittenden and by an international AAI work group.
also been treated with SSRI medicaments, which produced a feeling of ‘deadness’. Edward applied for psychoanalysis because he wanted to penetrate ‘deeper’ in understanding himself.

Edward’s mother was severely alcoholic with several suicidal attempts and recurrent commitments to psychiatric institutions. She came from a bohemian family with artists and intellectuals, and had a turbulent upbringing with a lot of alcohol. His father was a businessman with his own firm, a powerful, cold and authoritarian man who punished Edward in a systematic way in the form of spanking. When Edward was 6, the parents divorced, and father was accorded the parental responsibility. Edward’s childhood was unstable with several stays at an orphanage and little feeling of safety. There was a complete break in contact with mother for twelve years, between the ages of 13 and 25.

**Pre-treatment AAI**

*Interviewer:* I’ll ask you first to give me an orientation about your family as a child; where you were born, who your family consisted of, where you lived, what your parents did, whether you moved a lot. So that I get to know a little generally, before we begin.

*Edward* (extract): That, that such childhood, it was marked by—the fact that she was an alcoholic, then. It was such—such a usual saying, that ‘Mother is tired’. And that meant that she was drunk, without our understanding quite what it was.

... But there is—I remember very few episodes from those such first six years, then. And there are somehow such insignificant episodes, lots of them. Such that we somehow stood in the kitchen and turned out the lights, and suddenly then could see the car outside in the dark. Hmm. You could not if the light was on and such things. And somehow watched father driving away. Such is such an episode, for example. Otherwise, it was such characterised by her ... it was quite such unstable then . . . Hmm. It was such that—that we were locked—we were locked in. Then we did tricks—then cut off the telephone line outside the house and ... once we took all the furniture in, in the children’s room and threw them out of the window. And then I remember, then we were locked in. Locked into the room. And then we took—then we took our own stools and just smeared it over all the walls. Then such ... kind of episodes, that I remember, such. There are also such nice things. In front of the—in front of the radio in the morning, you see?

**Analysis of the material**

Edward does not say ‘when I was a child’, but uses a noun—‘that childhood’. The past becomes an entity, an impersonal ‘thing’ he can contemplate and describe like an outside observer. Such *nominalisation* is a discourse marker for the dismissive type A\(^4\) style of speech, coded as one aspect of *procedural memory*.

‘Then’ and ‘such’ are used extensively. ‘Then’ conveys that something follows as a consequence of something else, coded as *temporal* and *logical order*. If there was chaos in Edward’s childhood, it is—at least today—a chronological chaos! ‘Then’ also has a summing up quality, expressing that something is a matter of course. In this way, Edward makes sure he

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\(^3\)The material is transcribed from tape-recordings. Due to constraints of space only a selected sample of the interview material is presented, including the general description of the family situation, the relationship to mother and father, and integrative questions. Discourse markers (words, sentences, affective reactions) that constitute the observational background for interpretation of the narrative are in italic.

\(^4\)Crittenden has maintained the original Bowlby/Ainsworth classification of \(A =\) avoidant; \(B =\) secure; \(C =\) preoccupied. The Main and Goldwyn system (1998) uses the following letters: \(D_s =\) avoidant/dismissing; \(F =\) secure/free/autonomous; \(E =\) preoccupied.
is in a well-known landscape—he is not taken by surprise. The word ‘such’ implies a thrust. When used as frequently as here, the flow of the sentence is disturbed. The account becomes staccato—and the affective connection is disrupted.\textsuperscript{5}

After signalling that he remembers very little, and only insignificant episodes, Edward relates two episodes of great significance: little Edward standing in the dark, watching his father leaving in a car, and Edward and his sister being locked into the children’s room. By classifying the events in the beginning, he creates distance and gains control—Edward is the one that defines how the story is to be evaluated. The distancing strategy is also revealed in the sudden shift of focus—from the traumatic confinement to the mention of ‘such nice things’.

The account of being locked in is not a full episode (Crittenden, 1999–2001). Even if what preceded the episode—cutting of telephone lines etc.—is mentioned briefly, neither the affective expressions of the caregiver, nor Edward’s own feelings are conveyed. Edward speaks in terms of conclusions, the mental states explaining the actions being absent. The D-M code is fragmented episode, characterised by low reflective functioning. The conclusions are conveyed in a somewhat dry, cynical manner with a sardonic humour disparaging the value of the self.

In contrast to the Main and Goldwyn system, D-M interpretation also emphasises the relationship to the interviewer elicited by the speaker, coded as another form of procedural memory. In Edward’s case, the distancing and ‘summing up’ quality suggests that he endeavours to form a ‘professional’ relation to the interviewer in looking at ‘the case of Edward’. The listener is supposed to agree in a sophisticated way. This type of relation is coded analytic alliance.

That Edward’s own affects are not included in the account gives the style a dryness that contrasts sharply with the dramatic content. The smearing of the stools, which is an unmasked, primitive mention of an anal theme, is presented brutally and without adequate framing—an indicator of low reflective functioning (Fonagy et al., 1997)—as though Edward ‘smears’ his words into the face of the interviewer. The natural reaction of a listener is to feel overwhelmed, confused or affronted. There is an involving element in this strategy, called coercive in the D-M method. Whereas the analytic alliance is characteristic of the dismissive A patterns, the affective involving is the hallmark of the preoccupied C patterns. Edward’s case illustrates that the categories are not mutually exclusive, but may be combined (Crittenden, 1985).

**Relationship to mother**

\textit{I}: Can you give five words that describe your relationship to mother when you were little?


\textit{I}: You said that your relationship with mother was marked by longing. Do you have any episodes and memories that illustrate that?

\textit{E}: Hmm. Yes, I suppose I have missed her, then. Just like I have missed my father also. Missed them in a way . . . Then, such—then such longing, longing for them to be in a different way than they have been then . . . Well, they have been there, but then they somehow haven’t been there all the same. Missed them such that it . . . Sadness . . . [Clears his throat.] . . . Yes, that maybe something of the same thing as longing, then. It certainly is a bit sad that in a way things have been like that then . . . That is what it is about. Also such—yes, such a feeling of sadness . . . Everything has been—everything has been in such a way, somehow. The condition then.

\textsuperscript{5}This interpretation is based on the function of the word for this speaker, and is not inherent in the word.
I: If you take feeling sorry for feeling guilt. [NB—the interviewer is somewhat unclear.] Are there episodes or memories which illustrate that?

E: Yes—what shall . . . yes. Then somehow a little of—then after we—after we moved then, so—then we visited her, for sure. She, I suppose, had such a right to visitations or something like that. I don’t know about that—right to visitation then. And then I felt very sorry for her, for sure. To somehow come on Christmas Eve . . . in the morning to my grandmother’s then, and somehow celebrate Christmas together with us, and then she had to leave and—I saw her downtown . . . outside the pawnbroker’s, in a way . . . Somehow she was lonely then . . . I for sure felt a little sorry for her then. So that is somehow ‘sorry for’. About guilt, did you think about that? About guilt? [Yes.] No, that is certainly something else. Because . . . well, that is more connected with such . . . yes, more such . . . more such a mixture of anger and a little such disgust . . . For her . . . Somehow I have had such thoughts of revenge and . . . I feel in a way that I have seen so much such disgusting . . . Such decay and . . . shit . . . From her . . . That is somehow what is—I have somehow just thought about her in . . . yes, ways that you m—maybe don’t want to think about my mother then. Then I somehow get a bad conscience. And guilt. I could maybe have managed to save her in a way, then, or maybe have taken responsibility for her destiny. In a way that she—to be sure she has in a way went under then. She still lives . . . Well, she somehow does not have anybody. That supports her. You somehow don’t have anyone at all. So—that has somehow really given such a guilt feeling, just that. That . . . yes. That somehow—in a way you have just thought of her with contempt. Maybe not managed to help her either.

I: Why do you think mother behaved like she did?

E: I believe in a way that she had more than enough with herself then. And, and all the bottles. And her problems in a way. And there wasn’t really, there wasn’t maybe any space, then [Hmm.] in her world, for us. In the way that we had needed then.

Analysis of the material

Starting with ‘sadness’ and ‘longing’, Edward continues with ‘disgust’, ‘guilt’ and ‘anger’. There seems to be an escalation in negative feelings, suggesting affective arousal in the here-and-now. As to episodes illustrating ‘longing’, Edward does not do what he is asked to do. The answer is drawn from the semantic memory system representing ready-made categories of ‘how things were or ought to be’. There is no access to episodic memory that represents concrete experiences with objects. ‘I suppose I have missed her’, coded as hypothetical construction, serves to ward off direct expression of feelings. Nevertheless, the sentence comes forward as quite clear. Edward elaborates on the feeling of longing, using verbs. He seems at the edge of describing what happened or beginning to cry—one senses his sorrow and despair. Then a shift to nominalisation—‘longing’, ‘sadness’, ‘condition’—occurs, transforming the feeling into a category, an object. The movement of the sentence expresses a safety manoeuvre, whereby activated affects are kept at arm’s length. The many repetitions bear witness to the intense struggle for control and confirm that this is a pattern, a strategy, and not an isolated instance.

Subsequently there is a rupture, in the form of communication to the interviewer: ‘About guilt, did you think about that?’ Within D-M interpretation, such questions about the question, named stalling, provide significant information about the kind of relationship that is actualised between speaker and interviewer in the interview situation. Stalling gives the speaker time to plan an answer that avoids spontaneous slips, often indicating an anxious attitude with vigilant observation of powerful people. Thus, Edward’s request may suggest that he is studying the interviewer, eager to be a good boy doing the right things. This relational strategy points to a
specific subcategory within the dismissive patterns, called compulsive compliant (Crittenden, 1995). There is, however, no one-to-one relation between the verbal expression and the code given. The specific context of the individual interview must always be considered.

When describing his contempt for mother, a distancing pronoun is used twice. Replacing the personal ‘I’ with an impersonal ‘you’ suggests that affects directed outwards, like contempt, cannot be expressed without omitting the self as the source of the feeling. The theme of guilt, however, implying an aggression which is directed inwards in the form of self-reproach, is spoken of plainly (‘I could maybe have managed to save her’). Instead of acknowledging a self-assertive anger, Edward becomes depressed.

A thorough analysis of the discourse reveals yet another possible way of expressing aggressive affect. The last part of the sentence (‘I could maybe . . . have taken responsibility for her destiny’) may have a cunning, seducing effect. A listener may come to feel ‘No, you can’t do that. No kid can, nor should a child feel he needs to. What’s wrong with this mother?’ thus reproaching mother for putting such a burden on a child. By this manoeuvre the guilt-laden aggression is projected onto the interviewer while Edward himself is exempted, suggesting an involving strategy. On the basis of interpretation of this type of subtle interaction-dynamics, the D-M system explicitly delineates different types of complex relational strategies that characterise clinical patterns. The strategies are called compulsive-dismissing (A3–A8) and obsessive-preoccupied (C3–C8).

Anger is also expressed indirectly through the concluding sentence (‘you somehow don’t have anyone at all’), which conveys an aggressively tinged bitterness, implying that others are to blame for desertion. At the same time, the ‘you’ makes a distance to the feeling. Notwithstanding the presence of indirect anger and blame, the over-attribute to the self of responsibility for negative happenings is nevertheless a hallmark of Edward’s self-protective strategy.

The unambiguous mention of mother’s shortcomings is striking—‘she had more than enough with herself . . . and the bottles’. Mother’s behaviour is understood in terms of her mental states, justifying a code of reflective functioning (Fonagy et al., 1997).

### Relationship to father

**I:** Could you give me five words or phrases that characterise your relationship to father as a child?

**E:** When I was a child, yes. [Yes.] He was maybe absent . . . Eh—afraid . . . Yes. Absent or that is, that is scared and threatening, such threatening may be . . . Angry . . . That is somehow from early on? [Yes.] Yes. [Clears his throat.]

**I:** You said father was absent. Do you have any episodes or things you remember?

**E:** Hmm. No, well I somehow don’t remember anything. I just remember exactly that about the car driving away. [Hmmm.] That—the car that left. With him . . . So—no. I re—, there isn’t such a . . . eh—when we went to Italy then. He didn’t come with us then. We didn’t see him for one year. [Breathes heavily.] [Hmmm.] . . . So he was a bit absent then. I think that’s right. Yes, a little such—he was absent.

**I:** You said you were scared. Episodes?

**E:** No, well, I certainly was afraid of him then, because he was a big, angry . . . angry man that could . . . give us a spanking. If that was needed. So I was scared of him. It is evident that I was scared of him then. He was a threatening . . . threatening figure . . . It was somehow he that . . . was—yes, he was the one to execute the punishment, in a way. [Hmmm.] So that is what it is to be scared.

**I:** Why do you think father behaved like he did?
E: ... He in a way was such a shellfish. It was maybe hard for him to express [Clears his throat.] It wasn’t easy for him to express his feelings then ... Yes, maybe he was just irritated in the situation. [Hmm. Hmm.] Or may be he was a little ... yes. He had to live in a quite strained condition then, all of the time, in a way. A wife that was alcoholic and the children that he was anxious about, that they got what they needed, and ... it was may be a burden that, no, I don’t know then. It, but it certainly is possible that he, that he has shown us a lot of love. Without me being able to remember. [Hmm.] ... Yes.

Analysis of the material

As to episodes illustrating ‘absent’, the lack of episodic memory and preference for staying safe within semantics is again demonstrated. Edward answers by picturing father’s car driving away (‘the car driving away’; ‘the car that left’) — an example of imaged memory (Schacter and Tulving, 1994; Crittenden, 1997) coded as unconnected image, suggesting that the image is not integrated into an episodic account, but rather stands isolated and without context. Imagery represents affect in a powerful way; the image of the little boy left alone when the car (father) drives away contains strong affect. One senses Edward’s despair and desolation. The affect that cannot be expressed directly is conveyed through the image.

Edward breathes heavily, as he does several times during the interview—scored as expressed affect, a third aspect of procedural memory. The code is somatic arousal, implying that affects that are not mentalised are expressed somatically or through body language.

Neither in the description of ‘afraid’ are there any episodes. Most striking here is the use of categorisation: ‘big angry man’; ‘threatening figure’; ‘the one to execute the punishment’. In this way, Edward protects himself from experiencing fear, anxiety and aggression that cannot be represented explicitly such as such.

When invited to reflect on why father behaved like he did, Edward takes his father's perspective. Certainly, his father had to endure hard times—his situation was strained with an alcoholic wife etc. Usually, the ability to empathise with others suggests psychological maturity. What is crucial here, however, is that Edward exclusively takes father’s viewpoint, omitting entirely his own. Father is subtly excused, exempted from responsibility for being absent, and for the cruel punishment. The code is exoneration, implying that feelings of missing father, as well as anger at being deserted, are warded off. In line with this, a hypothetical construction (‘it is certainly possible’) emphasises that love was certainly there, but that he is unable to remember it. Once more Edward himself is to blame.

Integrative questions

I: How do you think what happened in your childhood has influenced you as an adult?

E (extract): Eeeh, something has happened, I have ... done something quite irreparable ... in a way. Something funny has happened. I have done something quite irreparable, one time or another ... But I have had such—really such dreams about ... killing my mother, you see? And in the dreams then, physically, eh ... well, in the dreams that she constrains me. And it has been a matter of life and death and ... I suddenly have a head as a lion then. That I have had a lion's head. And just bit off or torn off her head.

... Those are such—such repetitive dreams then, that—where I’m just executed then. Somehow I’m called to account—and I shall be executed, and I just try to say that I somehow can’t get a punishment which is that severe. [Hmm.] Those are such dreams of the kind that you are going to be executed. And then they say that ‘We just put the electric current on six’. And then I say, ‘No, make it eight, because then it goes faster’, in a way. ‘No, six is enough.’
And then—no, and then it is decided on six then. And then I am executed. But I don’t have the slightest idea why.

**Analysis of the material**

The integrative question invites Edward to take up a reflective attitude. Edward’s focus, however, is on a fantasy of having done something wrong, followed by a dream of being punished. Being overwhelmed by concrete associations, Edward loses his ordinary preferred position as an observer. There is a striking loss of distance equally in relation to his own inner fantasies and to the interview situation. The affects expressed in the dream, and activated by relating it, comprise intense hatred against an engulfing and constraining mother figure, and subsequent guilt feeling and self-punishment. Edward’s conclusion is that he has done something unforgivable—he is bad. The dream symbol of the aggressive, biting lion holds centre stage. In another section of the interview, in response to questions about loss, Edward relates his loss as a child of a beloved dog that had to be shot because it bit Edward on the forehead. It would seem that Edward has identified with the dog, whose aggression was punished by death. In D-M interpretation the dog and the lion represent *obliquely connected images*, containing an affect-laden self-representation which is warded off, coded as *distancing* (A) discourse style. The themes of aggression, crime and punishment seem too overwhelming to be talked about in an integrated manner, and instigate a regressive process with a loss of reflective functioning.

**Summing up—pre-treatment AAI**

The discourse is marked by nominalisation, hypothetical constructions, impersonal pronouns and temporally ordering conjunctions, and mainly takes place within the semantic system, with little access to episodic memory. These markers are typical of the avoidant attachment patterns, characterised by dismissing of affect. In psychoanalytic terms it is a matter of *isolation*, that is, the mechanism separating words from affects, which is a hallmark of the intellectualising defence style. Isolation is obtained through different forms of pauses or breaks, creating distance between the spoken language and the activated affect, thus separating *signifier* and *signified* (Killingmo, 1990). Edward’s discourse provides many examples of such breaks. To conclude, Edward’s attachment strategy is characterised by *distancing*. Authentic feelings of anger, fear, longing and desire for comfort are warded off. Affects are partly contained in images, and partly expressed somatically. They are not symbolised and expressed in direct speech.

While the literature describes *idealisation* as a main dismissing strategy, Crittenden (1999–2001) has developed more differentiated categories to capture the range within the dismissing style. In Edward’s case, negative properties of the parents as well as painful events are present in the narrative and not simply denied. Indeed, the interview comprises strikingly direct statements, especially of mother’s shortcomings, scored for reflective functioning. When Edward, nevertheless, falls into a dismissing pattern, it is because affects are not ‘owned’ and expressed directly. In short, Edward does not represent his perspective. The subcategory of dismissing patterns that best fits his strategy, is A6—*compulsively self-reliant/isolated* (Bowlby, 1980; Crittenden, 1995). This pattern is characterised by exoneration of attachment figures, meaning that in part the story is told from parental perspective, such that the parent’s actions and ways of being are excused. Still another distinguishing mark is the attribution of responsibility for negative events to the inadequacy of self. Edward is the guilty one. In A6, the relationship to the interviewer is intellectualised and analytical, as opposed to ‘avoidant’, as in
Main and Goldwyn’s Ds1 and Ds3 classifications. Finally, the dominating relational strategy is emotional withdrawal and isolation. The need for contact is averted through self-sufficiency. Edward is the lonely wolf.

For a full classification of Edward, a compulsive compliant—A4 pattern, characterising his relationship with the interviewer, should be added to the overarching classification of A6. Also an angrily preoccupied C3 component has to be included, referring to the occasional intrusion of aggression. Finally, the whole classification is modified by unresolved trauma (Utr), as regards the abandonment by father, which is dismissed (Ds), and depression (Dp). The full classification is Dp Utr (ds) A4, 6 C3.

**Post-treatment AAI**

**Relationship to mother**

_I:_ Can you give five words or phrases that describe your relationship to mother when you were little?

_E:_ Yes, you can say it was . . . distant. And unpredictable. Ehm—yes. Something like—it was maybe a little bit exotic. In a way . . . Yes, drunk. That one can say. Well, I can, it’s easy to mix the memory of her from later on, you see, into that memory from [little laughter], from that old time. I do think that I thought a lot about her as a woman, then. [Yes. Hmm.] Feminine, in a way.

_I:_ You said the relationship to mother was unpredictable. Are there memories and episodes illustrating that?

_E:_ Yes, that you come—or not you [little laugh], I, it is I that come, and I shall hug her. Or, seek comfort. And then it’s either open or it’s closed. And that is not predictable then. Whether it’s the one way or the other.

**Analysis of the material**

The words given to describe the relationship to mother—‘distant’, ‘unpredictable’, ‘exotic’, ‘drunk’, ‘feminine’—have a distinctly different flavour as compared with the first interview. The concepts of disgust, guilt and anger are gone—although the theme of mother’s alcoholism is contained in ‘drunk’. A completely new theme referring to mother’s exotic femininity has emerged. The description of mother as a ‘quite dashing, dashing woman’ who was ‘quite attractive’, followed by a gratuitous negation: ‘I wasn’t in any way attracted to her’, indicates an emerging but not fully worked through oedipal theme. In this paragraph Edward also demonstrates awareness of the changing, or reconstructive, nature of memory (‘it’s easy to mix the memory of her from later on . . .’ etc.). This awareness of change is scored for reflective functioning (Fonagy et al., 1997).

Although mother’s unpredictability was implied in the first interview, the word itself was absent. ‘Unpredictable’ implies a more direct characterisation of mother’s ambivalent attitude. In describing this attitude, Edward corrects himself—from a distancing ‘you’ to a personal ‘I’. He demonstrates in vivo an awareness of his own strategy, that is, to render the account impersonal in order to avoid direct affect. A process of reflection takes place in the interview itself, coded as integration, occurring in procedural functioning and, indicating, therefore, a substantive form of change. The little laugh indicates an awareness of the listener’s perspective,

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6 In the Main and Goldwyn system, unresolved for loss or trauma is the sole modifying condition, given as a secondary classification. Crittenden (1999–2001) has extended the notion of modifiers to include depression, reorganisation and disorganisation.
suggesting that Edward is conversing with the interviewer. The D-M code is appropriate affect—an indicator of a co-operative way of relating.

**Relationship to father**

*I:* Could you give me five words or phrases that characterise your relationship to father as a child?

*E:* To him? [Yes.] It was—fear is a cue. [Breathes heavily.] Eeh—distance. And . . . helpless . . . Yes . . . Feeble. Now I talk about him then. Well, my experience of him then.

. . . Yes, well, he maybe isn’t feeble, really. Such—‘I feel sorry for him’ . . . No. I don’t think I find a fifth one. That was four.

*I:* About distance—any episodes?

*E:* Well, it’s more so, yes, we didn’t manage, in a way, to communicate. We had, it was just tottering, in a way. One-word sentences. In a way we didn’t share anything. There was certainly a distance. We somehow didn’t have any fun together or didn’t have things together. Anything in common. There was such a distance. [Yes. Yes.] We somehow didn’t find the way then.

*I:* Why do you think father behaved like he did when you were a child?

*E:* And I believe in a way that he—he somehow didn’t get things out. He didn’t manage to express himself then, what he felt for us . . . I think that quite early I had, I had a kind of feeling that behind him there was another. That was the real one. Well, in front there was this, and then behind there was in a way another figure. It was him it was all about, but I never got hold of him then. And I believe that was—it was that he, he didn’t manage to express himself, in any way.

. . . I wouldn’t say the relationship to him changed very much, until just before the end. And then I got a kind of feeling, a kind of clue that there had been something more behind. It was—it remained such rigid and, such reporting in a way then. I think he failed very much then. I must say so. I think so. I had, well, friends with fathers, you see. I remember I thought, I thought it was fantastic what they did, in a way. The friend . . . friendship between them, and what they did and the atmosphere, in a way. So I envied them a lot. It somehow became my fault then. [Laughs a little.] I somehow took the responsibility for . . . [coughs] for . . .

**Analysis of the material**

As to ‘distant’, Edward focuses on the quality of communication between father and son, giving a more personal account as compared with the first interview. Interactive effects (‘We somehow didn’t find the way then’) are emphasised, coded as an aspect of reflective function/integration (Fonagy et al., 1997; Crittenden, 1999–2001).

Whereas the description of the distant, absent and threatening father figure is present in both interviews, the words ‘helpless’ and ‘feel sorry for’ convey a new feeling state in relation to father. Edward relates that father was something ‘more’ than a strict, authoritarian figure: ‘behind him there was another’. This indicates awareness of the difference between appearance/reality, which is another indicator of reflective capacity (Fonagy et al., 1997; Crittenden, 1999–2001). In the post-treatment interview, Edward describes his search for this ‘other’—a softer, more vulnerable man masked by the threatening figure. During treatment, Edward also got to know his father’s history better—and to understand him in the light of this history. Father was left by his father, much in the same way that Edward was abandoned in connection with the divorce. In this process, Edward seems to discover the humanity of his father. The account is coloured by sadness and recognition of loss: ‘but I never got hold of him then’. Feelings of vulnerability and pain are to a lesser degree dismissed. This suggests that
raw affects have been transformed into more mature emotions (e.g. regret, sadness, etc.)—yet another aspect of integration.

At the same time Edward is much clearer in attribution of responsibility: ‘I think he failed very much then.’ However, Edward does not take a blaming, aggressive stance, making father a scapegoat. He states that father failed, at the same time demonstrating compassion for father’s life, indicating an integrative dimension called empathy for all participants (neither demonising, nor idealising any person).

‘It somehow became my fault then. [Laughs a little]. I somehow took the responsibility’ implies that Edward’s former strategy in relation to father is put into words, and thus mentalised. This suggests an observational stance making reflection possible. Communicating to the interviewer with a small, appropriate laughter an awareness of his self-protective strategy indicates a reversal of that strategy, also scored as an indication of integration.

**Integrative questions**

_I_: If you think about what you have told me up till now, what have you learnt from your experiences as a child?

_E_: No, it may be a little bit bombastic to say that I’m somehow glad for . . . eh, for what has happened. That certainly isn’t, well, it—of course it isn’t like that. However . . . it’s somehow life itself in a way . . . Even if the content could have been different, it’s sort of thoroughbred existence in a way. So, so I feel in a way that it has been rich.

. . . And maybe it influences my way of thinking, when working. I work as an artist. Develop a kind of mentality in the way you work and the way things become. I think I succeed quite well then. That I succeed may be because of those happenings in a way. For some reason or other [little laugh].

. . . Well, I believe I will continue to live with those things forever then. Now I’ve been to psychoanalysis, and I feel life has become much better. Easier. But then I never can escape from what has been. But, so then it’s not a thing of the past, even if I made my way, ehm, so I, I feel in a way that it’s still there. But it’s certainly very much that—I certainly feel that it’s such a work then. To live. I still feel so. That it is—I’m an optimist, for sure. If that’s possible. [Yes.] It isn’t that easy to excuse oneself, to excuse myself any longer. [No, sure.] It’s up to me. And responsibility, that was something of the most important in the end. It’s a responsibility that you have yourself, and that’s how it is. Very much depends on that. If things go well, then it’s my responsibility in a way. A matter of will. I believe so. I thought that everything—to begin with, I thought that everything should just fall off, in a way, and disappear somehow and be engulfed by the sea. And nothing should be—everything should just be easy in a way. I didn’t know what psychoanalysis was about. I had kind of idea [little laugh] that was a bit different than the reality, I believe. But now it’s really a very all right end to it, I think. I don’t know if I can say anything more about it.

**Analysis of the material**

The characterisation of his childhood experiences as ‘thoroughbred’ and ‘rich’, giving access to creative forms of mentality, implies identifying ‘something good that can be drawn from negative events’ (Crittenden, 1999–2001), an aspect of integration. ‘It may be a little bit bombastic’ also suggests reflective awareness that these may appear as big words.

Edward ascertains that problems are not surmounted once and for all, but are still with him (‘I never can escape from what has been’)—demonstrating an aspect of integration called acceptance of irreversible effects. To live implies confronting his own repetitive patterns, problems and conflicts, and this means active psychic ‘work’. Life is his own ‘responsibility’. 
It’s up to him. A magical conception of change (‘everything should just fall off’) has yielded to an awareness of change as a slow, ongoing integrative process. These changes suggest that Edward has acquired a strategic position in his life that he did not have before. ‘It isn’t that easy to excuse oneself, to excuse myself’ is coded for procedurally demonstrated reflective functioning.

As concerns integration, Edward responds with the interviewer’s perspective—and question—in mind. Reflections are tied to his own experiences (‘continue to live with those things forever’), and not simply learned or ‘rehearsed’, which is necessary to speak of real reflective functioning or integration (Fonagy et al., 1997; Crittenden, 1999–2001).

**Summing up—post-treatment AAI**

The post-treatment AAI is marked by the following changes: (1) As reflected in narrative content, responsibility for negative events is no longer attributed solely to the self, and the theme of guilt is no longer present. Shortcomings of the parents, especially of father, are presented in a more unequivocal way. (2) The dominating relational strategy of self-blame is mentalised and brought into reflection. (3) The distancing strategy of using impersonal pronouns is corrected during the interview, procedurally demonstrating the working function of psychic processing. (4) The theme of crime and punishment that led to loss of reflective functioning is no longer present. (5) Responses to integrative questions indicate realistic assessment of his situation. (6) Increased integration is illustrated by direct, semantic representation of and reflection about the longing for father, which in the first interview was solely represented in imaged memory (the leaving car) representing affects preconsciously (Crittenden, 1997). (7) Procedurally, the distanced, analytical style, with occasional intrusions of aggressive material ‘without warning’, is replaced by a more direct communication style, with appropriate affect and with the interviewer’s understanding in mind, coded as co-operative.

The main change in the post-treatment interview is that Edward distances himself from painful feelings of longing, anxiety and anger to a lesser degree. He has become more direct. Internalised object relations are represented with fuller integration of affect. All in all, affect regulation is modified.

It should be emphasised, however, that the second interview, too, is characterised by a certain distancing. Although not to the same extent, dismissing discourse markers like categorisations, hypothetical constructions etc. as well as compulsive repetitions are still present, and the language style does not emerge as radically changed. Also, a tendency to view the self in slightly negative terms persists. How does this effect the evaluation of the change obtained? In answering this question, one has to analyse the context—does the discourse serve defensive or integrative purposes? Distancing, in the second interview, implies that Edward brings forward the most reconciling aspects of mother and father, underlining extenuating circumstances. While shortcomings of attachment figures are realistically brought to the fore, the most traumatising events are kept at bay. Edward lets go of that which can only demean him. There is reconciliation with emphasis on the most self-protective, positive aspects of reality, but without distortion. This type of distancing is to be considered as adaptive. Hence, the post classification falls within the balanced categories. In Crittenden’s system it is B2, positive.

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7 It should be noted, however, that the second interview is inadequate in the probing questions concerning punishment by father. Edward’s account is drawn solely from the semantic system. It is not probed for episodes, which is necessary for assessing integration of this traumatising aspect of the interaction with father.
reformulation of the past. This category is marked by emphasising ‘the best’ of the past, without, however, idealising and disavowal of painful experiences. Whereas the B1 slightly idealises past, B2 indicates slight negating of self, fitting Edward’s tendency to self-blame.

Discussion

In an overall evaluation of change, procedural memory and integration present themselves as overarching dimensions. ‘Procedural memory’ represents temporally ordered information preconsciously regulating everyday behaviour (Tulving, 1979). The importance of attending to procedural memory is currently being emphasised as an essential correspondence between modern cognitive neuroscience and contemporary psychoanalysis (Clyman, 1991; Kandel, 1999; Leuzinger-Bohleber and Pfeifer, 2002; Westen and Gabbard, 2002), and as crucial for understanding therapeutic change (Fonagy, 1999), because procedurally displayed object-relations scenarios may be viewed as constituting a ‘gate’ to qualities of internalised object relations that are not easily expressed in symbolic or semantic representations. It is a specific asset of Crittenden’s method to attend to procedural memory as conveyed by speech manner, by affect expressed in the interview situation and by the handling of the relationship to the interviewer. Being a method not restricted to the study of mental end-products, but incorporating the dynamic relationship between researcher and subject, it complies with a methodological prerequisite regarded by many psychoanalysts as necessary for capturing data that are relevant to psychoanalysis (Thomä and Kächele, 1975; Killingmo, 1992).

Most analysts will agree that integration is a superordinate concept in describing the outcome of psychoanalysis. How does the AAI contribute to the evaluation of integration? As I have tried to demonstrate, the specification of a concept of reflection/integration (Fonagy et al., 1997; Crittenden 1999–2001) provides the possibility of identifying different aspects of integrative capacity. However, answering the integrative questions of the AAI with appropriate reflections is not sufficient to speak about integration. Reflective functioning in describing an attachment figure may also exist within a relational strategy of self-blame, as illustrated by Edward’s first interview. To speak of real integration, a capacity to bring varied representations, expressed in different memory systems, into concordance must be demonstrated. Interpersonally, reflective capacity is expressed as awareness of the interview frame and the interviewer’s perspective. Integration must come forward within procedural functioning, as ability for reflections on the spot through the course of the interview. Thus, integration is a process variable, expressed not in so-called wise, ‘profound’ insights, but in a way of mental functioning.

A common objection from psychoanalysts is that formal scoring ‘violates’ the complexity of psychic phenomena. It is my contention, however, that many psychoanalysts would agree that the discourse analysis of the AAI is able to capture quite subtle nuances of affect regulation and object relating, and thus is closely related to how the analyst listens to clinical material. This can be seen as another argument in favour of the usefulness of the AAI for psychoanalytic outcome studies.

A question that should be asked is how the changes reported in the post-treatment AAI can be related to the treatment process and to the focus of therapy. Certainly, the relevance and validity of an outcome measure for a particular treatment like psychoanalysis necessitate a link to specific processes of therapy. How can we establish a connection between changes as registered through the AAI and the psychoanalytic treatment in the case of Edward? I shall briefly address this question from three perspectives.

(1) The subjective report of the patient. As part of the Oslo process-outcome study, all
patients are interviewed by an independent analyst about their experience of the treatment, both during analysis and after termination. In the follow-up interview Edward gave the following account of the changes obtained: ‘Well, everything seems easier. Maybe the self-contempt is significantly reduced. I think that is very much what it’s about—I somehow don’t sink deep, deep down, trampling on myself and whipping myself all the time. And what that means in relation to others. I think everything is easier in relation to the children and the family and at home and to everybody. I thought about myself as the one—the one who stood outside watching the other members of the family. More like from a distance. Being there also, but somehow those four together, and then there is me, in a way. Now I think of myself as much more important . . .’

‘It was such a long process [i.e. the analysis] where I maybe knew most of it, in a way. But as I said to A [i.e. the analyst], there were a lot of such episodes in my life then, that were black-and-white pictures, that were mere facts. This and that happened, and that’s how life is, and well. Such black-and-white pictures that—when I started talking to her—then they somehow began moving, acquiring colour and smell. It began moving, and that gave rise to a lot of such grief. Much grief then, and I cried very much. And in a way those things became more included. But there wasn’t anything that was new.’

Edward here describes how his position as an outsider has changed during therapy. A ‘me-versus-them’ pattern is transformed to an including ‘we’. This seems to correspond exactly to the change of the distancing attitude of an outside observer, registered in the post-treatment AAI. Also, Edward gives a pertinent account of how his categorising grip on subjective experience kept affects at bay. Once the grip loosened through the dialogue with the analyst, tears were released. His description of the effect of the therapeutic process as a ‘movement’ would seem to provide the experiential counterpart of the decrease in affect isolation that was the most prominent feature of the post-treatment AAI. It should also be noted that Edward himself is clear in attributing these changes to the therapeutic process. Certainly, from a methodological perspective the subjective report cannot be considered decisive in substantiating that the improvement is related to therapy. Nevertheless, it makes it probable that such a connection exists.

(2) Nature of the psychic problems. It should be remembered that Edward sought psychoanalysis after several shorter psychotherapies, including marital therapy and treatment with anti-depressants. His problems—low self-esteem, recurring depressions, guilt feeling—had persisted for years, only temporarily alleviated by the treatments he had received. Thus, his psychic suffering was of a chronic nature, and clearly linked to his character structure. It seems highly unlikely that such problems would be cured by spontaneous remission. Furthermore, in this case there were no other significant life events or external occurrences likely to have caused the observed change.

(3) Nature of the analytic process. The tape-recorded material from treatment sessions, together with the analyst’s account, demonstrate that Edward’s character defence, as expressed for instance in language style, was an essential focus of therapeutic intervention. For example, Edward in describing the family’s everyday life would characteristically state that ‘I am outside’ or ‘I’m an outsider’. The analyst would point out that: ‘You say that you are an outsider. By using this manner of speaking it seems that you describe something given. As if you don’t have a share in it’. This interpretation of form aims at bringing emotional dynamics into a frozen language. The metaphor of ‘the lonely wolf’ was introduced in the therapeutic dialogue to capture his psychological position. ‘You seem to have created a myth of being the lonely wolf. In this way you protect yourself from feeling your need for your children, a feeling which makes you feel vulnerable and afraid of being rejected.’ By pointing to isolation both as
it was expressed in form and content, the ‘entity’ of isolation was brought into reflection, making Edward conscious that the outsider position was one he had chosen. Thus, in my opinion, the specific nature of the therapeutic interventions in this case seems to substantiate a connection between the reported change and the treatment.

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Translations of summary

**Adult Attachment Interview und psychoanalytische Outcome Studien.** Das Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) hat in den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten wachsendes Interesse bei Psychoanalytikern erweckt, die sich mit empirischer Forschung beschäftigen. Der Artikel diskutiert seine Anwendung der Crittenden dynamisch-Reifungs AAI Methode, um das Ergebnis von Psychoanalyse zu überprüfen. Das Ziel ist, durch eine Fallpräsentation aufzuzeigen, wie sich therapeutische Veränderung im AAI ausdrücken kann. Die Interviews vor und nach Behandlung eines Patienten, der eine vier-stündige Psychoanalyse beendet hatte, werden vorgestellt. Es wird aufgezeigt, dass der detaillierte Diskurs der Psychoanalyse, der auf überschriebenen von Tonband aufgenommenen Interviews basiert, sich auf subtile formale Elemente der Sprache und auf Sprache, die die dominanten Muster von Affektregulierung und Objektbeziehung reflektieren, konzentriert. Die AAI Textanalyse bietet die Möglichkeit, das prozedurale Gedächtnis zu kodieren, wie es sich zeigt, wenn der Interviewer die Beziehung managt, und beinhaltet die dynamische Beziehung zwischen Forscher und Subjekt und stimmt damit mit einer methodischen Vorbedingung überein, die von vielen Psychoanalytikern als notwendig angesehen wird, um Daten zu sammeln, die für Psychoanalytiker bedeutend sind. Auf diesem Hintergrund zeigt sich die Methode als vielversprechend für psychoanalytische Outcome-Studien.

**La Entrevista de Apego de Adultos (AAI - Adult Attachment Interview) y los estudios de resultados psicoanalíticos.** La Entrevista de Apego de Adultos ha sido objeto de un interés cada vez mayor de parte de los psicoanalistas que se han ocupado de la investigación empírica en las últimas dos décadas. Este artículo discute la aplicación del método AAI de Maduración Dinámica (AAI Dynamic Maturational Method) de Crittenden, para evaluar el resultado de un psicoanálisis. La meta es demostrar, por medio de la presentación de un caso, cómo puede expresarse el cambio terapéutico en la AAI. Se presentan las entrevistas pre y post-tratamiento de un paciente que completó un psicoanálisis de cuatro sesiones semanales. Se demuestra que el análisis detallado del discurso propio de la AAI, basado en las transcripciones de grabaciones de sesiones, pone de relieve elementos formales sutiles del idioma y el habla, que reflejan los patrones dominantes de la regulación del afecto y el relacionamiento con objetos. El análisis de texto de la AAI da la posibilidad de codificar la memoria procedimental tal como la transmite el manejo de la relación con el entrevistador, incorporando la relación dinámica entre investigador y sujeto y cumpliendo así con el pre-requisito metodológico considerado necesario por muchos psicoanalistas para captar datos que sean relevantes para el psicoanálisis. Con este trasfondo, el método se perfiló como prometedor para los estudios de resultados, en el campo psicoanalítico.

**L'Interview de l’Attachement pour Adultes et les études portant sur les résultats de la psychanalyse.** Les psychanalystes concernés par la recherche empirique au cours de ces deux dernières décennies ont fait preuve d’un intérêt grandissant pour l’Interview de l’Attachement pour Adultes (AAI). Le présent article discute l’application de la méthode dynamique - maturative AAI de Crittenden à l’évaluation des résultats de la psychanalyse. L’objectif est de montrer, à travers la présentation d’un cas, la façon dont s’exprime le changement thérapeutique par le AAI. Nous présentons les interviews avant et après traitement d’un patient ayant acheté une analyse de quatre fois par semaine. Nous montrons que l’analyse détaillée du discours produit par le AAI, à partir d’une transcription des enregistrements des interviews, met en évidence de subtils éléments formels du langage et de la parole qui reflètent des schémas (patterns) dominants de régulation des affects et de relation d’objet. L’analyse textuelle du AAI donne la possibilité d’encoder la mémoire procédurale telle que celle-ci est véhiculée dans le maniement (handling) de la relation à l’intervieweur, en intégrant la relation dynamique entre chercheur et sujet; de ce fait, elle se conforme à une exigence méthodologique que de nombreux psychanalystes considèrent comme nécessaire au recueil de données pertinents en matière de psychanalyse. De ce point de vue, la méthode apparaît comme prometteuse pour les études portant sur les résultats de la psychanalyse.
**The Adult Attachment Interview**

Adult Attachment Interview e gli studi dei risultati della psicoanalisi. Negli ultimi vent’anni l’Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) [Intervista sull’attaccamento negli adulti] ha attirato in maniera crescente l’interesse degli psicoanalisti impegnati nella ricerca empirica. L’articolo discute l’applicazione del metodo maturazionale-dinamico AAI di Crittenden per valutare i risultati della psicoanalisi. Lo scopo è quello di dimostrare, attraverso la presentazione di un caso, come il cambiamento terapeutico possa essere espresso nell’AAI. In questo articolo sono presentati i colloqui pre- e post-trattamento con un paziente che ha terminato una psicoanalisi di quattro sedute settimanali, e si dimostra che l’analisi dettagliata del discorso dell’AAI è stata utilizzata per valutare i risultati della psicoanalisi. 

**References**


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