



Methodical positioning of the SEIs in the context of scientific Psychodiagnostics

Not classic personality diagnostics

Our life and work biographies are longer today than in previous generations, and our current living and working environment changes more rapidly and to a greater extent in just one human lifetime than during centuries in the past. "Tempora mutantur, nosque mutamur in illis" (Times change and we change in them) was already a saying in the Renaissance. Even more so in the 21st century, we should recognize: We as human beings are always a "work in progress".

Presumably, underlying personality traits do exist that are stable over time, constants in change, as it were. But to what extent can such characteristics be determined based on the high retest reliability of personality scales? Are they perhaps more likely to be detected in long-term biographical analyses, and are possibly of a distinctly individual (idiographic) rather than of a universal (nomothetic) nature, e.g., personal sense of humor, personal style of speaking, personal style of working?

The SEIs do not capture personality traits carved in stone, but rather internal psychological structures that can change over time as a result of life experiences and, even more importantly, how these have been gradually processed. Some of these structures are naturally more viscous, others more fluid. However, to speak of a mere "snapshot," as is the case and intended with diagnostic procedures (e.g., adjective checklists) for momentary state measurement ("state" vs. "trait"), would equally miss the SEIs. An SEI conveys an inner-psychic picture of a current life situation, i.e., it is a kind of location analysis in the course of a biography.

Not psychometric tests

The SEIs are not tests - in a twofold sense. First, no one is "tested" in the sense of "examined" with these tools. There are no "good" or "bad", "strong" or "weak" results. Second, the SEIs are also not psychometric tests in the sense of psychological testing theory. The evaluation categories are not inductively, factor-analytically obtained scales, but the application of meta-models to the respective subject of an SEI. In contrast to classical test construction, the items of the SEIs



were thus not the primary, empirically processed source material but were generated secondarily on a theoretical basis.

The meta-models have their origin in decades of research work, in which contemporary approaches, as well as principles of millennia-old, Vedic and, Ayurvedic psychology, have flowed together. A deeper insight into the meta-models of SEI can be found in the book by Claudio Weiss: „Lebensqualität schaffen. Wahre Werte wirksam machen - im eigenen Leben, in der Arbeitswelt, in der Gesellschaft“, Bielefeld, 2018.

All models used in the SEIs have in common that the structurally complementary categories used in them complement each other to 100 percent in each case. The entries to be made in each case consist of selecting and/or weighting items. This is an ipsative procedure, which allows intra- as well as inter-individual comparisons of evaluation patterns, respectively, of several intra-individual profiles. Comparisons of individual evaluations with a norm population, however, do not take place and will also not be aimed at.

Quality criteria*

Because the SEIs are not tests, the usual quality criteria of a test can only be applied here to a limited extent and in a somewhat modified manner. The following pragmatic-qualitative, non-statistical-quantitative, quality criteria can be established and verified in practical application:

- 1. Objectivity:** This is guaranteed in the SEIs thanks to the standardization of the procedures (online instructions, - questions, - items, - handling, automated evaluations, and graphical representations). While the objectivity of execution and evaluation is unrestricted, the objectivity of interpretation can in principle only be approximated. It is supported by interpretation texts in the SEI. The danger of a possible arbitrary interpretation can also be counteracted by carrying out a [Cognosco Coaching](#).
- 2. Validity:** Validation of the SEIs using possible external biographical criteria requires rigorously controlled long-term studies, which have not yet been possible due to a lack of time and financial resources. Cross-validating correlation studies between SEI evaluations and other diagnostic procedures with which a content-related connection can be assumed are also still pending for the same reasons. At present (spring 2021), the validity criterion that can be established is high diagnostic valence and practical relevance: The graphical and verbal evaluations

resonate strongly with the individuals exposed to them, triggering "eureka experiences". The person recognizes him/herself in them, which leads to a deeper self-understanding, increased self-acceptance, and strengthened self-guidance. The increasingly frequent, healing-supporting application of individual SEIs in medical and psychotherapeutic settings can also be seen as a recurring, casuistic validation. The evaluations prove to complement well the respective symptom picture and reveal salutogenic resources.

- 3. Reliability:** Classical, correlation-statistical reliability parameters such as internal consistency measures (e.g., Chronbach's alpha) or the retest reliability of scales can be neglected for a "non-test" such as a SEI. A high retest reliability in the sense of very similar evaluation patterns within a time interval of several days has certainly shown up casuistically, but probably tells more about the memory performance of the individuals concerned than about a "measurement accuracy" of the repeatedly used instruments. If short-term retest reliability of these tools were to be determined, parallel forms would have to be created, which would be tantamount to a doubling of the current number of items and would require an enormous, currently economically unjustifiable effort. As criteria for diagnostic reliability, which are appropriate for the SEIs, can be established:
- *Inter-individual variability:* If all evaluations of an SEI were similar to each other, the SEI would simply be useless as an idiographic (!) diagnostic instrument. No two evaluations, however, are alike in the practical application of an SEI. For all components of the SEI, a very high inter-individual variability is shown, whereby the characteristics of all individual evaluations scatter over the entire respective possible range. Each SEI profile is unique. The mandatory requirement for the reliability of an idiographic diagnostic instrument is thus fully met.
 - *Intra-individual long-term continuity and variability:* Repeated evaluations at intervals of several years have so far only been conducted in single cases. They show both continuities and changes, which can be explained biographically in each case.
 - *Interpretation precautions:* Interpretations of intra-individual differences in evaluation patterns (profiles) are only permitted if they are pronounced. Small differences in evaluations could be due to "measurement inaccuracies" and must therefore not be interpreted.



* References to past observations in the following statements often refer to predecessor versions of the SEIs, to the awaremem® motivators radar (in use since 2012) and the Berufungskompass für junge Menschen (BKJM, in use since 2015).