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The Interactional Dimensions Coding System: A Global System for Couple Interactions

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This chapter presents up-to-date conceptual and empirical information on the Interaction Dimensions Coding System (IDCS; Julien, Markman, & Lindahl, 1989). The purpose of the IDCS is to provide an efficient means of coding both positive and negative dimensions of couple interactions. It is global in nature, so that it can capture the entirety of an interaction, including affect and content components, yet the system is based on research findings from microanalytic coding systems such as the Couple Interaction Scoring System (CISS; Notarius & Markman, 1981) and the Marital Interaction Coding System (MICS; Summers, 1983). The system provides nine individual codes (i.e., each partner receives a separate rating) and five dyadic codes (i.e., the couple is rated as a whole). For all 14 codes, the entire interaction is the unit of analysis. To date, this system has mostly been used to code heterosexual couples' discussions of problem areas in their relationships, yet it is applicable to a diverse set of couples and tasks.