Infant and maternal engagement: A coding rubric for infant-mother free play analysis

Kathleen M. Krol^{1,2} & Tobias Grossmann^{1,2}

¹Department of Psychology, University of Virginia, USA

²Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences, Germany

Infant and maternal engagement coding scheme

This coding rubric was developed to assess 5-month-old infant free play interactions with their mothers. Details on setting up this type of interaction and suggestions for creation of “maternal engagement” and “infant engagement” variables can be found in Grossmann et al. 2018, PLOS Biology (DOI: 10.1371/journal.pbio.2005281) (averages) and in Krol et al. 2019, Science Advances (DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.aay0680) (factor analysis). Please cite these two papers when using/adapting this rubric.

1. Variables coded by duration (we used INTERACT software):

- a. **Active touch:** Goal-oriented touch (i.e., the mother reached out to hold infant’s hand, stroke infant’s face, etc.)
- b. **Passive touch:** “Unintentional” contact due to proximity (i.e., infant’s foot bumps into mom’s leg)
- c. **Infant smile**
- d. **Infant laughter** (infant smile + vocalization)

2. Variables coded via 1—5 Likert scale:

- a. How **talkative** was the mother?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Very much</i>	

- b. How close was the mother to the infant (**proximity**)?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Very far</i>			<i>Very close</i>	

- c. How **attentive**/engaged was the **mother** to the infant’s needs?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Very much</i>	

- d. How **attentive**/engaged was the **infant** towards the mother?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Very much</i>	

- e. What was the general **mood of the mother**?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Negative</i>			<i>Positive</i>	

- f. What was the general **mood of the infant**?

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Negative</i>			<i>Positive</i>	