*SLO II. Child and Environmental Assessment and Study*

*Students will demonstrate knowledge of assessment issues and perform qualitative and quantitative assessments of children and their environments.*

In my college years, I have learned the importance of assessment to evaluate learning, progress, and other goals. Assessment is a very important tool in education because it allows professionals to assess the classroom environment to know if it is productive and supports students’ growth and learning. For example, assessment gives professionals a better understanding of what students know, students’ abilities, and their individual development. Assessment provides professionals with specific information that could be helpful to improve their teaching strategies. Some developmental assessments can even reveal if the child needs special aid services or other programs.

It is essential for the professional to understand the assessment before using it because some may be a long process. I also learned that assessment is not synonymous with “testing” because assessment is the collection of information and its interpretation. Testing can be part of the collection of information. Assessment is a process that requires some steps to follow, such as to identify the question or the problem, to gather data or information, to interpret the data, and to decide on a course of action.

One of the important things that I learned about assessment is that they need to be valid and reliable. Validity means that the test used in the assessment is measuring what it is supposed to be measuring. Reliability means that we will get the same outcome or results every time we assess something with the same assessment tool. An assessment’s results can be reliable, but they cannot be valid, so we need to be aware of that. Furthermore, the interpretation of the results plays an important role in assessment because it gives meaning to the information gathered. One of the problems that professionals might face when implementing an assessment is their own bias. I personally have a hard time being objective in my observations when assessing a teacher or a classroom setting. It is something that I am still working on it because bias can definitely affect a professional’s assessment results.

It has been a long process trying to understand assessment. First, I have learned how to observe objectively rather than subjectively. Objective observations are crucial in order to obtain accurate assessment results. I have also learned to be aware of my own biases and how they could modify my results. Moreover, in my Child Development Practicum class at the California State University of Chico, I assessed the development of a child using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). This experience was very productive because I became familiar with this assessment tool. For this assessment, I gathered observation notes, pictures, and the child’s work to support my results.

In addition, in my class of Assessment Issues for Children and Families, I had the opportunity to use the Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS). This assessment is an evaluation of the emotional climate that a teacher provides in a classroom. I became familiar with this type of assessment in my class, and we also discussed that this assessment takes more than one time observing because the environment could affect the teacher’s performance. We learned that there are some other factors that can affect assessment such as economic status, climate, environment, time, and health.

In conclusion, I think that assessment is essential and important to offer a supportive learning curriculum. In the future, assessment can help me to grow as a professional. It can also contribute to my learning, so I can provide a quality environment to children. It can also tell me if I am on the right track as long as the assessment is valid and reliable.

1. ITERS-R Assessment: This assignment was very helpful because I became familiar with this type of assessment. I also practiced my observational skills. I discovered that is hard leave out my own biases and how they could affect my results. With this assignment, I increased my knowledge about assessment and the process that it requires.
2. Discussion question: In this assignment we reviewed a general definition of validity and some types of validity. I also reflected on my Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS), mentioning that it was hard to rate a teacher in only 45 minutes. This assignment supports my Narrative Two because it shows that I have learned some of the components of assessment.
3. Child Development Practicum (CHLD 392): Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Evidence Table. This assignment shows that I became familiar with each measure of the assessment. I supported my results with this evidence table, which were based on my own observations and other students’ observations. In the future, I will be more confident implementing the same assessment.