

Child observation report

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Such studies are inducted by scientists or researchers wanting to study the behavior of an organism (including humans) in a natural setting. It can be useful in collecting data that clearly reflects the constraints of an organism's normal environment and in the case where experimental techniques would be impractical or unethical. This report outlines the data collected during the sessions with each child. Will refer to Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory to demonstrate how it is useful in determining different stages of development. I will also outline my observations of both children in terms of where they fit in regards to Piaget's

Cognitive Development Theory. Setting My observations were of two siblings; a four year old girl and a five year old boy. I made arrangements to do the observation through a friend of mine, who has two children under the age of six. I have known this family for three years. The first observation was of the four year old girl (M), which took place on August 19, 2014 starting at 2:23 pm outside in the backyard of their home. Present was her older brother (T - 5 years old), her mother (J), a female friend of the family (C), a medium sized German shepherd, who is the family dog (K) and myself.

The backyard was quite large with a large play center with a swing set attached. The sky was a little clouded over, but it was still warm outside. The adults were sitting on the deck around the patio table. The children were told was there to do some work. They did not really pay too much attention to me. I interacted a little with the adults at the table so that I did not seem out of place to the children. My presence did not seem to affect the children at all. Sat with my chair facing the whole backyard so that I could see the children at all times.

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The second observation was of the five year old boy I made arrangements with the mother to do the second observation with this child later the same week. The observation took place on August 22, 2014 at 1: 08 pm outside in the backyard of their home. This family is preparing to move in one week; therefore the backyard was the best place to do the observation at the home. Present was his younger sister (M- 4 years old), his mother (O), a medium sized German shepherd, who is the family dog (K) and myself. The backyard was quite large with a large play center with a swing set attached.

The sky was a little clouded over, but it was still warm outside. The mother and I were sitting on the deck around the patio table. The children were told I was there again to do some work. They again did not really pay too much attention to me. I interacted a little with their mother at the table so that did not seem out of place to the children. My presence did not seem to affect the children at all. Sat with my chair facing the whole backyard so that could see the children at all times. Results I. Self-concept: M pointed out that she did her hair all by herself when C arrived and M also showed C her new purse.

M also shows the ability to describe how she is feeling about her brother's actions, " I don't like it when T hits me with his sword" or when she tells T, " I want to be alone right now". . Gross Motor Skills: M demonstrated gross motor skills indicative of normal 4 year old. During the time of observation she displayed running around the backyard both with her brother and with the family dog, walking over to the play center, climbing over the chair on the deck, somersaults in the grass and jumping off the chair and off the family friend's lap. III. Fine Motor Skills: M demonstrated normal fine motor skills.

She cut open her fruit snack package with scissors without difficulty. She put on her own shoes (fastened believer) on the correct feet before going outside to play. IV. Vocal & Language Development: M demonstrated the ability to form sentences more than 4 to 6 words. For example; " I told you I want to be alone". She showed the ability to ask 'Why ' questions. She shows an understanding of prepositions when her mother told her that her purse was behind her. She does, however have some grammatical difficulties and people other than her family do have difficulty deciphering what she is saying at times.

According to her mother she has been seen by a Speech & Language Pathologist and will be working with them on her speech. V. Social & Emotional Development: M showed a lot of interest in playing with her brother; however was also fine playing with the family dog as well. She appeared to really enjoy the imaginative play with her brother while playing the sword fight; however did upset easily if the game was not going her way and did change the rules quite a bit to her brother's dismay. She was quite distracted by the family dog and tended to her a lot.

She displayed some difficulty with moral reasoning on the swing set when she was calling her brother a " party pants" repeatedly until he got upset. When her brother kept getting in trouble instead of her she did not seem to be aware of his feelings when he was upset, instead she kept antagonizing him. VI. Cognitive Development: M understands the concept of grouping and matching as displayed when she was helping her mother with the puzzle and when taking items out of her purse. She also showed the ability to count from 1 to 10 when she was taking the items out of her purse.

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She showed the ability to identify secondary colors when showing the family friend her new "pink" purse. She was able to answer simple questions. She was also able to identify common objects and what they are used for; for example the family dog's ball, scissors, hat. Results (Child T) I. Gross Motor Skills: T demonstrated gross motor skills indicative of a normal 5 year old. During the time of observation he displayed running around the backyard, skipping, jumping, walking on just his hands, doing handstands, and hanging on the bars upside down on the play centre.

II. Fine Motor Skills: T demonstrated normal fine motor skills. He put on his own shoes (fastened by velour) on the correct feet before going outside to play. He was able to use scissors to open his sour patch kids, which was his snack that afternoon. III. Vocal & Language Development: T demonstrated the ability to form sentences more than 4 to 6 words. For example; "I'm goanna throw it really high", "There is a wasp in your ear, Can I have friends over later"? He demonstrated the ability to ask "why" questions. He does not have any speech or grammatical difficulties.

He appears to have met all of his developmental milestones for his age. VII. Social & Emotional Development: It is quite apparent that T really enjoys imaginative play and is able to accomplish this either with others or by himself. He did not partake in any imaginative play with his sister this time; however did do some imaginative play on his own pretending to be a gymnast who was displaying his talents for a crowd, as he bowed for people when he completed a stunt on the bars or completed a handstand. He also engaged in imaginative play with the family dog pretending she was his dragon.

He also is able to talk quietly to himself while playing on his own, but does not seem to be talking to a third person or imaginary friend. VIII. Cognitive Development: T understands the concept of grouping and matching as displayed when he was putting all the same lord sour patch kids together and separating them. He also noted which ones had less in each group than the others. He let those for last. He demonstrated the ability to count from 1 to 10 and demonstrated the ability to identify primary colors. He was able to answer simple questions.

He was also able to identify common objects and what they are used for; for example the family dogs ball and scissors. Discussion: Integration of behavior with theory According to Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory (Beer, 2010, p. 318), both children are in the operational stage (2-7), and they behave normally. They are classified as operational children, because the definition of the operational stage is as follows; ages between 2-7, preschool children use symbols to represent their early sentiments discoveries.

The development of language and make-believe play takes place; however, thinking lacks the logic of the two remaining stages. T is a very active child. He has been in pre kindergarten over the last year and has been very socialized between school, extra-curricular activities, playground and playmates with friends. He is on a soccer team as well and enjoys this very much his mother says. T was quite active on the play centre this afternoon, especially on the hanging bars showing off his ability to hang upside down. He also displayed his ability to swing on the swings while standing on the swing instead of sitting on it.

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He is quite a daring child. He was engaging in make-believe play acting as though he was doing these stunts for an audience as after each stunt he would get up and bow to the imaginary audience. M was happily swinging on the swing set, petting her dog, doing somersaults in the grass and drawing in the mud with a stick. She has the ability to keep herself busy and is happy to do so. She also enjoyed make-believe play with her brother playing a sword fight. Make-believe play increases in sophistication during the pre-school years (Beer, 2010, p. 318).

M used her stick as her "sword" during the sword fight and as her "magic wand" later on during the observation. This demonstrates her ability to coordinate her make-believe roles and pretend with less realistic toys (Beer, 2010, p. 318). M and T were both using the play center together happily. M fell off her swing and T went up and hit M for no reason and walked over to K, the family dog. T hugs K quite roughly and says "You're my mummy bear" and walks away. I have noted on both occasions during these observations that T displays a bit of aggression.

According to Freud, play can have a cathartic effect, as children try to rid themselves of traumatic events or negative feelings through play. T asks his mother, "Mom, do you have to work today? His mother says "No, not today". T asks "Why"? His mother answers, "Because have the day foot spend time with you and your sister". T says, "Okay, I like that". His language and understanding of language is well formed and has good sentence structure for his stage in development. His has no beech or grammatical issues. He asks "why" questions and understands the meaning to the answers to simple questions and answers.

M told her brother " I want to be alone". Her brother did not leave her alone. M turned to him and said, " I told you, want to be alone"! This demonstrates M's ability to verbalize her feelings and has a solid awareness of what she is feeling and thinking and is able to share it with others readily. During the sword fight, M said " you be the sword, I will be the gun". T did not like this role change and disagreed. M said, " No! I am the gun, you are the sword". She continued to be a gun, which seemed to anger T and he started hitting M with his sword. M screamed and T got in trouble with his mother.

M was able to assign roles; however was not able to negotiate well, which is usually indicated during the operational stage. On the play center, M was swinging on the swing and T was on the bar hanging upside down beside her. M calls T a " poppy pants". T gets off the bar and hits her swing with his sword. M screams. T goes back to the bar. M calls T a " party pants". T hits M's swing with the sword again. M screams again and calls out to her mom. Mom ignores this. M continues to call T a " party pants" repeatedly. T starts hitting M's swing again, as M is screaming.

This goes on for five minutes (timed). Mom finally tells T to stop and tells him that if he hits her swing one more time, his sword will be taken away. M proceeds to call T a " party pants" again. T hesitates to do anything and looks over at mom who is ignoring the situation. M continues to taunt T. Finally, T hits M's swing and M screams. His sword is taken away. T asks mom why M is not in trouble for calling him a " party pants". Mom does not respond and walks away. M calls T a " party pants" one last time and leaves the swing. She runs over to mom and gives her a hug and kiss and says " I love you mommy".

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The mother used presentation of punishment to decrease It's undesirable behavior. The warning and punishment had a positive and negative response. The positive response was that the behavior was stopped. The negative response was that only one undesirable behavior was punished and stopped. When parents treat their children differently by directly varying amounts Of discipline to the two children, sibling relations are likely to be more conflicting and less friendly if children view these differences as unfair, which I believe T did by his reaction.

I found this to be concerning, considering It's amount of aggression he displays in his make-believe play. M also showed a lack of moral reasoning and did not show that she was not aware of It's feelings. M takes her small Barbie's out her purse and other figurines and groups all the Barbie's together and all the figurines together, which displays the ability to draw appropriate inferences about these objects and shows normal categorization, as with the puzzle she was doing with her mother at the table.

M and her brother pretend to hit the family dog with their swords and at times actually hit the dog. They also pretend to cut the dog up with their swords. These behaviors demonstrate animistic thinking believing that their inanimate object (sword) has lifelike qualities and intentions. According to Piaget, because young children egocentrically assign human purposes to physical events, magical thinking is common during the preschool years, (Beer, 2010, p. 321). Conclusion I enjoyed observing these children very much.

I have watched them grow and change over the last three years. I find M very animated and interesting to observe and find T very in touch with his emotions and struggles with them at times. He is very athletic and determined. The reason I chose the children's home environment is because I felt their own surroundings would be a good way to see what their normal daily routines would be and to see how they interact with family members. I found the backyard a bit limiting and would not choose this setting again.

Even though I did not find it was a great setting, did manage to collect some good data. As a mother and grandmother, I did find it hard sometimes during these observations not to jump in and say something to the mother when she was ignoring certain behaviors or when her children clearly just needed some attention. So it was hard at times not to interact with the children. However, I knew I had to control that urge as my role was to observe nothing more. I have learned how to observe and evaluate a child in the operational stage.

I have learned what milestones to look for and where a child between the ages of 2 to 7 should be developmentally. It gave me a better understanding to physically do the exercise rather than just reading a textbook I see the value in observing two different children, as not all children are alike in development and behavior. Ideally, a different setting for each child would have been preferred; however this family is moving in a week and their home is full of moving boxes, so I settled for the backyard with both children.