

Midterm paper: infant observation

Education



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Midterm Paper: Infant Observation The infant chosen for observation is eleven an month old boy, d B. who is cared for at home in a stable Muslimfamily including mother, father, and grandmother. There are no other children or pets in the family. The infant has frequent contact with extended family, mainly female. The observation took place in the middle of the morning and I was invited to drink tea with both parents while the child was playing on a mat in the main living room. It was a cool day, and the room was comfortably furnished, with a good selection of toys for the infant to use. After the usual greetings, the mother served tea and the father spoke to the child and tickled him so that he began to smile. I could see that the father was happy to be involved in the care of the child. Baby B. was sitting securely on the floor and reaching out for some building blocks. From time to time he twisted round to look at me, and then turned back to his father. He did not seem very interested in me, which I thought was strange. Infant B. waved his arms around, and made babbling noises. I do not think that he was saying any words, but he was forming sounds and laughing. I could observe that infant B had a strong back and neck, and he sat quite securely on the floor with his back to the furniture. He he could pick up bricks in one hand and wave them around. He tried to build a castle with them, but he always knocked the pile down. This made him laugh. He threw the brinks roughly in the direction of his father, which is evidence of quite advanced gross motor skills in his arms, and good hand to eye co-ordination. He began also to crawl towards the toy box in the corner of the room and pulled himself up on the side of the box. He did not walk independently, but he pulled himself along the side of the box, and sat down again with a large wooden toy in his left hand. This shows that he is able to move his whole

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body using a combination of arm and leg strength, and he can control direction, speed and distance from obstacles. It is clear that baby B had developed the ability to sit, stand, and walk so long as he had an object to lean on, and he was able to alternate between these positions. This is evidence that he has mastered the appropriate gross motor skills for his age (Gross, 2011, p. 185) I did not see him use a pincer grip to pick anything up, but this may be because the objects he had were all quite large. I could not be certain whether or not he can manage the fine motor skills that are usual at eleven months because of lack of evidence (Gross, 2011, pp. 183-184). I was thinking that this infant is confident and happy, and I felt pleased that he had made such a good start in life. He seemed content with his toys, and still did not pay much attention to me, even though I was a new person to him. After about thirty minutes of observation he flapped his hands and shouted at me, as if to make it plain that he had noticed my presence. I did not want to frighten him and so I waved at him and smiled. He opened and closed his fists, in a kind of waving response, but he did not stretch out his arms, and he looked at the ground, as if to show that he felt shy. This shows that he is learning to interact with people using gestures, and he can control his limbs well enough to convey simple messages. I think both of his parents were very proud of infant B, and watching the way that the parents had eye contact with the child, and made encouraging noises to him, I realised how important their role is for his development. We mentioned in class that children have an instinct to reach these development milestones, and that mothers usually give children what they need. New mother seem to manage very well to communicate with their infant. In this family setting I realized for the first time just how important the family is in motivating an infant to try

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new things. I wonder now whether he would have been as happy and confident if they had neglected him. This made me think about child poverty and the harm that is done to young babies when they do not have safe homes and caring parents. I think perhaps they need very specific stimulus and praise, so that they have the courage to take the next shaky step in their development, and they obviously enjoy the feeling of achievement that they gain when they do things for themselves. References Gross, Dana. *Infancy: Development From Birth to age 3*. 2nd edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.