

Camila Baravelli Oliveira

April 30th, 2020

ECE 209 – 191 (L)

Prof. Leslie Capello

Commentary Report

The observation of the 11 months old baby takes place at what looks like a daycare center, the baby is wearing a red long sleeve onesie and gray socks, he has light skin, thin and straight brown hair and brown eyes. There are other adults, including his mother, and other children in the room, the adults are sitting on the floor close to the infant but are silent for most of the video, it looks like a small room with a carpeted area, some pillows on the floor and toys placed throughout the room. There is a space on the far end of the room that has baby gates and some caregivers are sitting inside. The room looks like it has a good amount of open space which is important for infants specially around his age, to have room to crawl around and explore.

The video starts off with the baby looking at the camera while shaking a toy and then he smiles, he looks from the camera and then to his mom. Already starting off with clear indicators of social & emotional development and attachment. Babies tend to look for the adult that they trust when they are seeing or experiencing something new, in this case, it was the camera. He starts climbing on her leg while still shaking a toy and looking back and forth between all the people in the room, and by shaking the toy in his hand while pulling himself up and climbing on his mother's lap, his physical development, particularly his fine and gross motor skills are at

work. He is using his fingers to grasp the object and shake it and at the same time using his entire body to pull himself up. Back to the initial attachment indicator, it makes me think that he was looking to his mom for security and approval, he was looking directly into the camera and then when he looked to his mom, it was almost as if he was asking her “is this okay? Can I do this?” which is a very common way of communicating for infants and toddlers, to look for the adult they trust for security and wait for their “eyes of approval”, and I would say that this action done by the baby is a good indicator that he has a secure attachment with his mother and caregivers. A baby with avoidant attachment might have not looked for the parent for comfort, “children who do not seek out a parent for comfort or security and who do not believe that the attachment figure or adult will protect or provide for them” (Barbre, J. (2013) *Foundations of responsive caregiving: infants, toddlers, and twos*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press. Pg 35). A child with resistant/ambivalent attachment might have started crying and started acting clingy and anxious, “they exhibit a mixture of approach and avoidance in the adult’s presence” (Barbre, J. (2013) *Foundations of responsive caregiving: infants, toddlers, and twos*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press. Pg 35) and a baby with disorganized attachment would have avoided eye contact and acted unresponsive to the adults “They may cry, freeze, or stare blankly into the distance. They may make poor eye contact and appear distant and unresponsive to the adult.” (Barbre, J. (2013) *Foundations of responsive caregiving: infants, toddlers, and twos*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press. Pg 35) The baby during the observation showed signs that he has a secure attachment and that he is confident around his mom, by constantly going back to her for a second but leaving again confidently.

He then goes to a next toy, a set of circular stacking blocks, he holds the first orange block for a second and observes it, and then throws it to the side before reaching for the second block, he

holds the yellow block for a second and now picks up the orange block and starts hitting them together. This shows his physical development at work – motor skills, he’s strengthening his fine motor skills by hitting two small blocks together; His perceptual development – his sensory experience is hearing the sound that the toys are making, and his cognitive development, through cause and effect “if I hit these toys together, there’s a sound” while babbling and making eye contact, indicating language development – babbling is a form of communication and expressing himself, expressing the excitement from playing with those toys; and also social & emotional development skills are shown when he’s able to fixate eye contact comfortably, not long after, he throws both pieces again and goes back to get a different color block, green, he brings it to his mouth but lets it go in an instant and starts crawling away. By bringing the object to his mouth, he’s showing signs that his perceptual development is at work, babies will often bring to their mouths whatever object they are holding, and it is a way they experience that object, they want to feel what it tastes like and what the texture feels like in their mouths and it is a big part of their development.

There is a metal toy in his way when he starts crawling and he picks it up and throws it across the room, he hears the sound it makes when it hits the floor. His perceptual development here is observed through the hearing sense, he hears the loud noise the toy makes and stops what he is about to do. After he pauses for a few seconds, he crawls towards it, picks it up and puts this metal toy in his mouth, crawls to his mom and then crawls back to where the toy was and climbs on the adult that was sitting there, while babbling. He shows here that not only was he intrigued by the sound that the toy made (hearing), he also wanted to experience the toy by touch, picking it up again after hearing the sound it makes, and by taste, because he brings the toy to his mouth too. According to Piaget’s stages of cognitive development, this 11-months old baby is in the

sensorimotor stage, where “Infants learn about the world with their eyes, ears, hands, and mouths. Infant use sensorimotor skill to begin solving problems. They develop object permanence and are beginning to understand the properties of objects around them.” (Barbre, J. (2013) *Foundations of responsive caregiving: infants, toddlers, and twos*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press. Pg 25)

The action he took after that, of going back to his mom, almost makes it seem as if he wanted to make sure she noticed the experience he just had, wanted to “share” it with her. The same goes for the other adult that was sitting close to where the toy fell and made the loud noise, he goes back to her and climbs on her while babbling happily and making sounds as if he’s trying to communicate his excitement with her.

It is very clearly demonstrated throughout this observation the importance of play and sensory exploration for infant development and learning. We see it when by using play objects and exploring, he is at all times actively developing motor skills, thinking and learning, developing relationships and attachment and working on language. Every single minute of play and exploration might seem not important, but early childhood educators understand the value of those minutes for the development of the infant and toddler.

A big part of caregiving in early childhood is building relationships with the families and understanding their cultural beliefs and practices to work together in the best way possible when it comes to caring for their infants and toddlers. Understanding different families culture allows for us, early childhood caregivers to better care for their babies.

The family I got to know and interviewed is a family of a newly-wed couple and their firstborn son J, a sweet 9 months old baby boy, he's very happy and curious, his mom (K) told me all about his crazy and chaotic birth story. He was born prematurely at 32 weeks on the day of his baby shower! The baby shower was supposed to happen in NJ because that's where most of K's family lives, but while they were getting things ready for the baby shower, K's water broke and she started going into labor. She called her doctor in the city (nyc) and asked the Dr's opinion, should she drive back or go into the hospital in NJ? The Dr. told K that because it was her first baby and she would have plenty of time before contractions and it should be okay to drive. Mom and Dad decided to drive back to nyc to get to their Dr. Of course, during the drive there was traffic, and a little panic, but according to K, as soon as they were in the hospital in the city, she pushed for 2 minutes and little J arrived with no issues and very healthy (but very tiny).

J now loves to jump and loves his bottle (he's not as tiny anymore). He's learned to clap his hands recently too. According to K, he is most active in the morning and you will find him trying to crawl, clapping his hands with toys in his hands and on the move! He loves to walk although he cannot walk, and when you hold him, he wants to go, but has nowhere to go to. This kind of behavior indicates how his cognitive development is ahead of his physical development, he is thinking about moving and wants to move and understands what it means, he is showing signs of being happier when he's able to go around being held by someone, but can't walk by himself just yet. Whenever we put him down now, he loves to roll over. Even in the middle of the night, he rolls over. As mentioned, he has the most energy in the morning, and therefore, he will put his best effort into learning to crawl. Right now, his mom says, he gets on all fours very easily and sways front to back before he lunges/reaches forward. He can turn himself around on the ground and he moves backward like a pro! This is a very good understanding by

the family that according to milestones of physical development, J is “on track”. Trying to crawl is what most infants are working on between 6-10 months of age.

He has been eating more solid foods. His favorite is vanilla yogurt and small pieces of blueberry muffins, says his Dad. K says that a good chewy (bars) always occupies him for a solid 5 mins too, and that he does not like processed baby food or anything too sweet (mom made a comment on how he definitely does not get that from her). From the start, she says, they have introduced him to all-natural foods (yumi baby food) and she thinks that is why he is not very into sugar.

J loves exploring new things and he is super curious and wants to get his hands on everything. According to his mom, he’s been getting bored of his toys easily and doesn’t focus on them for too long, but would rather look at different things, his new favorites are kitchen utensils, K says that a good solo cup, a plastic strainer or a spatula work wonders these days to keep him happy and entertained. This type of play is wonderful for his development through sensory experience, as well as adding to his sense of knowledge about things in the world. Babies in this age want to touch, bite, taste, hit objects together and that is how they learn, so by giving J a cup, a strainer and spatula she is allowing him to explore objects that might feel different or sound different than his toys. It gives him the opportunity to learn through their sounds and through how they feel. He will start learning what he can do with those objects when playing with them. By talking to him while he plays, he might start learning the concepts of the words soft, smooth, bumpy, loud, rough.

J’s family believes in the importance of implementing household object as toys because they want him to grow up feeling involved in what they are doing as a family and understanding the

importance of participating. They already eat together as a family even though J is still only eating pureed food, and they want to start implementing more of what they eat to his diet soon once he's ready for bigger pieces of food. They like to eat together because they believe it will help with creating healthy eating habits for J in the future. They also don't own a lot of light up toys and toys that make loud noises because they don't want him to be overstimulated by them and instead, they prefer focus based activities (such as playing with wooden spoons and plastic spatulas) and teaching him through play and exploration around the house.

Finding out more about the family's culture and values was valuable for me to better understand how important it is to implement a family's values to an early childhood center and how that helps children with their cultural development and identity formation.

Children's home cultures influence their personal identities deeply. Understanding their cultures helps you know how to support their emerging personal identities... Cultural norms and values are transmitted by families. These can take the form of food, music, clothing, holidays, and religious events. High-quality programs honor children's cultural backgrounds and incorporate their traditions into the curriculum

(Barbre, J. (2013) Foundations of responsive caregiving: infants, toddlers, and twos. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press. Pg 72)

The experiences of interviewing a family and observing an infant brought to my attention in more vivid detail everything that I had learnt from early childhood education so far, it installed in me a bigger confidence in myself as an educator and it helped immensely with the understanding of development and culture in infants and toddlers. It taught me how important it is to always

honor and respect family values when caring for an infant/toddler. It also taught me specifically to never take a minute for granted when it comes to their development and how each, big and small, actions mean a lot at this stage in their lives and that I can make a difference as a responsive caregiver.

Works cited

Barbre, Jean. Foundations of Responsive Caregiving Infants, Toddlers, and Twos. St. Paul MN. Redleaf Press. 2013. Print