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Standardized Testing

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Kaylee Dudley
Logan Utah
November 21, 2017

Standardized Testing
Occupational Folklore

Informant:

Brooke D is a 28-year-old woman who loves working with children. She holds the following degrees: Bachelor's of Science with a Psychology Major and a Pure Mathematics Minor and Masters of Occupational Therapy. Brooke has worked with people with disabilities since 2005 in a multitude of settings. She is passionate about making a difference in people's lives and feels strongly that her first focus should be on building rapport and getting to know the goals of the people with whom she works. Since 2015, she has worked as an Occupational Therapist (OT) in a public school in Illinois and provides home health therapy services for children ages 0-3. Prior to that, she worked for two years as an OT in a pediatric outpatient hospital setting.

Brooke lives in Illinois with her dog and fiancé. She enjoys spending time outdoors. During the summer, most of her weekends are spent fishing and staying at a lake house in central Wisconsin. During the winter, she enjoys shooting on an archery league with her fiancé and curled up inside with a warm drink and a book. Brooke is close to her family and feels it is a priority to maintain good family relationships.

Context:

I interviewed Brooke over the computer using a program called Zoom in order to record the interview. She was at her home in Illinois at the time and I was at home in Logan in my living room. I chose to talk to Brooke because of her involvement with the disability community. This because I am currently enrolled in a social justice course so when it came time to collect folklore I decided I would turn to the disability community for my content.

This item of folklore is a standardized test called The Peabody Development Motor Skills 2nd Edition and it looks at both gross and fine motor skills. She learned about this assessment while in school and was taught that it should be given in a particular order. This assessment is given to those children ages 0-6 entering into or enrolled in the occupational therapy program of the state. This test is organized by age and developmental capability norms and expectations of children at different ages. When the test is being administered in a school setting usually the student is pulled out of their classroom and taken to a smaller, quieter work space. In a clinic they are taken to a similar small, quiet space. However, the test can be administered in a child's home in which case it will be in a place away from distractions where Brooke and the child might usually interact.

Brooke will typically only administer the fine motor skills portion of the test as an Occupational Therapist. She said that there was no situation nor audience for which she would be required to administer this test differently, and she said she would simply document in a report that she did not go in the standardized order. She said she tried to go in order once and that the attempt did not work well.

Text:

When we do standardized assessments um there's one in particular that we use and when you follow like the standardized protocol you do every test item in order. Um and that's the way you are expected to do the test protocol that's the only way it's standardized assessment but I have never met a therapist in my entire life who goes in that order. There's def [Inaudible as speaker and collector say something at once.] There's an unspoken rule between therapists that you do similar test items together. (Okay) So like um some of the test has um kids imitate block designs like building with little blocks. Um and you would never like you would never ask a kid to build a tower and then take the blocks away and then, give them uh beads to string and then take the beads away and then give them the blocks back and back and forth. So like every therapist gives them cause they're like, the test is set up so it's developmental. So they should be able to stack two blocks and then they should be able tooo uummm, gosh I don't know the next item, but, but they don't go. And then and then five items later then they should be able to stack five blocks. But I'm not gonna give a kid two blocks and be like "Stack it!" [said in tone as if to child]. Um you know I'm gonna give them all the blocks and see how high they can stack. (right) And then I'll count all the test items they got correct. Um, or then there's another one where you imitate a train so you put three blocks, down and then one on top. And so when the kid has the blocks I just ask them to do *all* of the block items. Um and then there's writing items. So there's that you know one item is drawing a vertical line and another item is drawing a horizontal line another one is drawing a circle um. And those test items are spread out throughout the assessment but I just give them all the writing together.

Texture:

Brook didn't really go into her interaction with the children very much, but when she mimicked telling a child to "Stack it!" You could tell she was using a tone for a child. She sounded excited

and engaged even in her imitation of the usual request. Brooke was fairly serious during our conversation, but smiling as well. She emphasized the practicality of going out of order in this assessment, saying that there is a benefit of more accurate test results and the child's engagement level remains high when the toys are not constantly being given and taken away from them. She says that she was in the middle of an assessment one day when she realized that she was in fact not going in order even though she knew the manual said otherwise. She says she knows that collecting accurate data and following standard protocol is normally very important in the OT field and that this test is really the only exception to that rule. She says that the OT community has overwhelmingly accepted this exception.

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