INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PROFILE

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Date of observation: _____   Name of setting: _____

Observer: _____   Teacher (s): _____

Time observation began: _____ Time observation ended:_____

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The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)

Rationale and Purpose

The *Inclusive Classroom Profile* (ICP) is a structured observation rating scale designed to assess the quality of provisions and daily classroom practices that support the developmental needs of children with disabilities in early childhood settings. Ratings on the measure's items indicate *the extent to which adult support and adjustments of various elements of the classroom promote the diverse needs of children with disabilities as a group, within the context of their peer interactions.* As a research tool, the ICP may be used to assess aspects of quality in inclusive classrooms. It can also allow researchers to investigate the relationship between classroom quality and children's developmental progress. The ICP can also be used as a self-assessment tool or as a tool to use in program quality assessment for achieving desired levels of quality and enhancing classroom practice to better accommodate children's needs. The ICP might also inform professional development models to support those involved in meeting the individualized needs of children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The ICP is designed to be used in conjunction with other early childhood environment rating scales and measures, such as the *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale–Revised* (ECERS-R; Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 2005).

Structure of the ICP

The ICP is a 7 point Likert- type rating scale which rates the quality of daily classroom practices ranging from 1(Practices considered highly inadequate) to 7 (Practices that promote to the highest degree the developmental needs of children with disabilities included in the classroom). The measure includes 11 items, each comprised of quality indicators under the form of qualitative descriptions of various practices and adult behaviors. These are:

1. Adaptations of space and materials/ equipment
2. Adult involvement in peer interactions
3. Adults' guidance of children's play
4. Conflict resolution
5. Membership
6. Adult-child social communicative interactions
7. Support for social communication
8. Adaptation of group activities
9. Transitions between activities
10. Feedback
11. Planning and monitoring of children's individual needs and goals

Observation Focus

The scale uses the inclusive classroom as the primary unit of assessment. Ratings are made by observing **all children with identified disabilities in the classroom as a group** (children 2.5-5 years old). Scores on each item represent the overall quality of observed practices implemented by staff to support the developmental needs of children with disabilities as a group. As the focus of the scale is on inclusive practices, many indicators also assess what adults do with the rest of the group in order to support children with disabilities in the classroom's community. However, unless an indicator clearly guides assessors to provide their rating (YES/NO) based on observation of ALL children (children with and without disabilities), the vast majority of indicators within the scale's 11 items are rated based on observation of children with disabilities as a group.

A unique aspect of the ICP is the conceptualization of classroom practices in terms of *inclusive adaptations.* The concept of *inclusive adaptations* embodies the idea of individualization within inclusive contexts. This idea was essential in the development of items because it views quality as a reflection of the extent to which adjustments of various elements of the classroom can accommodate individual needs while also encourage children's active engagement in the group. Accordingly, items reflecting inclusive adaptations score at the highest level those embedded practices which deliberately encourage peer interaction or *inclusiveness,* through adjustments that might differ from child to child. Specific examples clarify the different ways that these practices can be embedded in the classroom to support the diverse needs of children with disabilities.

Administration and Scoring

To administer the rating scale appropriately, raters need to be familiar with the scale's items, administration and scoring procedures. It is recommended that users receive appropriate training prior to using the measure formally. Information on training can be provided upon contacting the author of the rating scale.

ADMINISTRATION TIME

The ICP was designed to be administered in a two and a half hour observation period.

Terminology

ADULTS: Refers to all individuals responsible for the education of the children in the classroom (e.g., teachers, teacher assistants, specialists, therapists)

ALL: Refers to children with and without identified disabilities in the classroom.

A.C.S: Alternative Communication Systems

IEP: Individual Education Plan

Psychometric Properties of the ICP

The ICP has been field tested in 45 inclusive pre-k classrooms. Inter-rater reliability was established in a separate set of classrooms (n=10), and results suggested that independent observers were highly consistent in their ratings of individual items. The mean weighted kappa for all items was 0.79. Cronbach's Alpha analysis was conducted on the scale's items and assessed the measure's internal consistency (α=0.79). The factor structure of the Inclusive Classroom Profile was tested through confirmatory factor analysis**.** The one factor model filled the assumptions and showed good values for model fit; Model fit indices were: χ^2= 35.164, df= 35, p=.460, CMIN/df = 1.005, RMSEA= .010, NNFI = .998, and CFI= .998. To assess construct validity the ICP was compared with other measures of classroom quality. The total score of the ICP showed a .626 (p<0.001) moderately high correlation with the ECERS-R, suggesting the two instruments are measuring similar but not identical constructs.

References

Harms, T., Clifford, R. M., & Cryer, D. (1998; 2005). *Early childhood environment rating scale* (Revised ed.). New York: Teacher's College Press.

Soucacou, E. P., & Sylva, K. (2010). Developing observation instruments and arriving at inter-rater reliability for a range of contexts and raters: The early childhood environment rating scales. In G. Walford, E. Tucker & M. Viswanathan (Eds.), *The sage handbook of measurement*. London: Sage.

Soucacou, E. P. (2007). *Assessment of classroom quality in inclusive preschool settings: Development and validation of a new observation measure.* Unpublished D.Phil Thesis. Department of Education, Oxford University.

1. Adaptations of space and materials/equipment (O)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inadequate		Minimal		Good		Excellent

1.1 **Most physical space precludes** children from accessing many classroom areas and activities and adults don't help children access classroom's areas (e.g., stairs, various ground levels preclude children from accessing classroom areas). **(O)** 1.2 Materials/equipment are **not accessible by children** either because they are not adapted appropriately or because adults do not offer the necessary help. **(O)**	3.1 **Some physical space is accessible** by children and adults usually help children, when needed to access classroom areas (e.g., a ramp is available for child with physical disability; special chair or walker provided etc). **(O)** 3.2 In most classroom areas there are **at least a few materials/equipment** that children can **access independently. (O)** *NA Permitted* 3.3 **Adults** generally **help children access** materials/equipment in the classroom, when needed (e.g., adult helps child reach a toy from shelf; adult places adaptive scissors on table close to where child is working). **(O)**	5.1 **Children can access many classroom areas independently** (space is accessible for wheelchairs; there is enough space and clear ways between activity centers; classroom areas are well defined so that children know where to go; rooms and activity centers are labelled with pictures, words or signs depending on children's individual needs). **(O)** *NA Permitted* 5.2 In most classroom areas, there are **many materials/equipment** that children can **access <u>and</u> use independently**. **(O)** *NA Permitted* 5.3 Adults **monitor** how children use materials/equipment **and provide the necessary support** for individual children who have difficulty using materials purposefully (e.g., adult helps child use scissors to cut on paper; adult gives hand over hand assistance to child doing a puzzle; adult models for child how to hold pencil or use sand). **(O)**	7.1 Adults **deliberately organize the physical space** (including materials/equipment) during the day **to encourage peer interaction** (e.g., teacher adds a chair to computer area for child who is standing and watching a peer playing; adult sets-up circle area to encourage children to read together; adult takes out more puppets to encourage other children to join the puppet area; adult repositions child on wheelchair so that she can face her peers). **(O)** 7.2 Classroom **has a great variety of professionally recommended** toys, materials and equipment carefully selected to accommodate individual needs (e.g., sensory toys for child with sensory disorder, specialized equipment for visually impaired; adaptive toys for children w/ physical disabilities). **(O)**

2. Adult involvement in peer interactions (O)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inadequate		Minimal		Good		Excellent

1	3	5	7
1.1 Children **are excluded from participating** in activities and routines with their peers. **(O)**	3.1 Children **are allowed to participate** in many classroom activities and routines with their peers (e.g., children can all play together in many activity areas). **(O)**	5.1 **Adults actively support peer interactions either by helping children initiate** social interactions with peers **or by helping children respond to** peers' initiations appropriately (e.g., adult prompts child to respond to his peer during snack time; adult models for child how to request toy from peer; adult helps child roll a ball back to his peer). **(O)**	7.1 **Adults** support children **in sustaining social interactions with their peers** (e.g., adult uses verbal prompts to help child sustain conversation with peer; adult sets up a group table game and helps children take turns; adult comments on children's group project with enthusiasm to encourage peer interaction and helps children sustain their cooperative play by elaborating on their behaviors and suggesting new ways to continue their play). **(O)**
1.2 **Very few or no attempts** to **acknowledge or respond to children's peer interactions** in encouraging ways (e.g., adults constantly ignore children's efforts to interact with peers). **(O)**	3.2 Adults **occasionally acknowledge and/or respond to children's peer interactions in encouraging ways** (e.g., adult praises two children reading a book together, smiles at children's social engagements; adult comments on how well children are cleaning up their toys together).**(O)**	5.2 Adults **strike a balance between getting involved in peer interactions and allowing** the development of natural, spontaneous interactions among children (e.g., adults avoid interrupting children's conversations; adults let children play off on their own; adults usually build on what children are interacting about). **(O)**	
1.3 Adults **consistently control and restrict** the initiation and development **of spontaneous social interactions** among peers (e.g., adults interrupt children's conversations; discourage spontaneous social exchanges between peers). **(O)**		5.3 Adults actively **encourage more socially competent children** to model for or interact with children who find it difficult to form social relationships (e.g., adult invites child to play with isolated child; adult purposefully pairs two children for an activity; adult teaches child how to model appropriate requests for peer). **(O)**	7.2 **Adults actively encourage collaborative problem-solving** between children and their peers. (e.g., Adult joins children's block building and helps children work together to generate hypotheses, solve problems and make decisions). **(O)** *NA Permitted*