Cultural and Practice Perspectives on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System: Voices from American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Programs

Breakout Session: Culturally Grounded Methods to Advance an Equity Lens in Early Childhood Care and Education Research

Jessica Barnes-Najor, Ann Cameron, Michelle Sarche, Teresa Smith, Mavany Verdugo, Patty Brown

Prepared for CCEEPRC 2018

Introduction

Background

Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC)

CLASS Community of Learning

The CLASS

Classroom Assessment Scoring System

Uses

- Evaluation
- Prediction
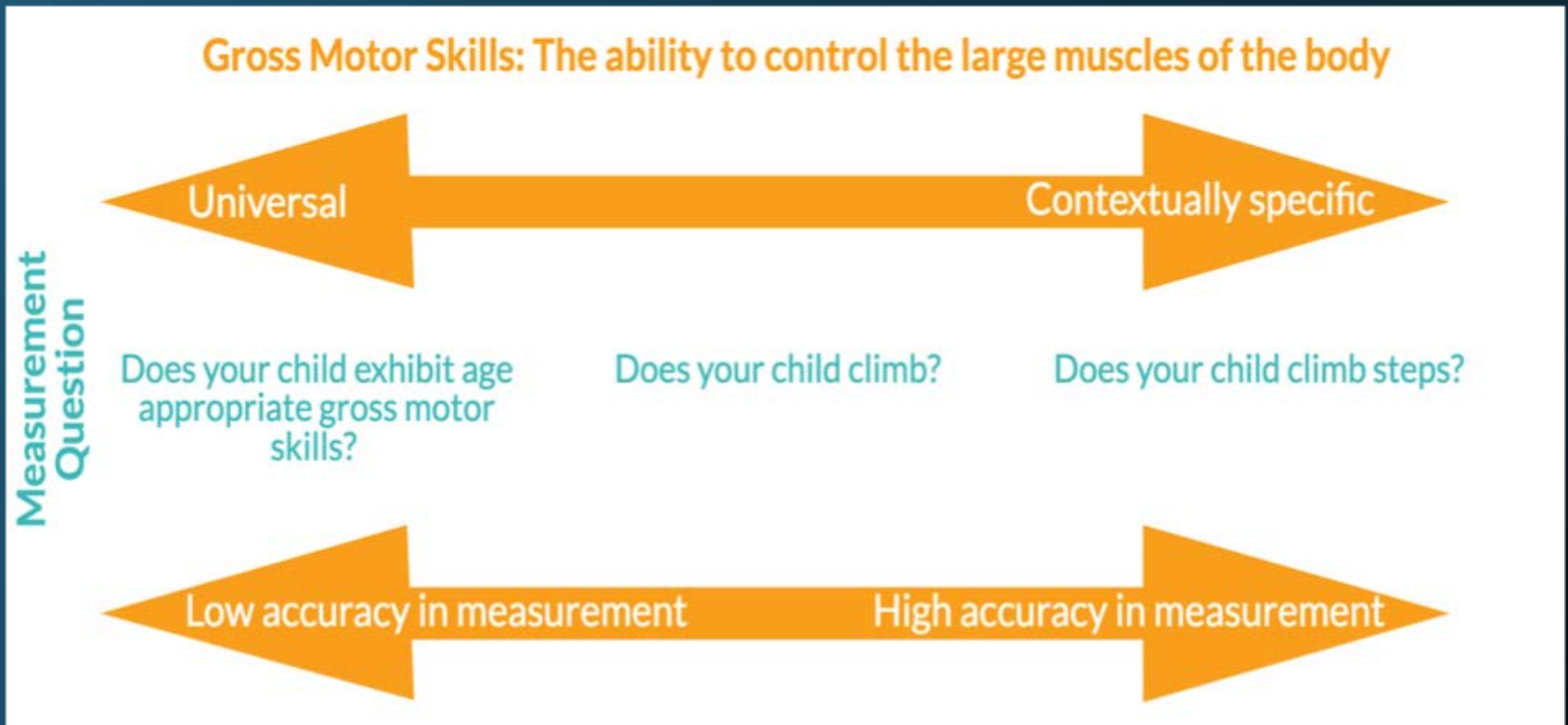- Theory

Observer characteristics

- Child centric beliefs
- Intentional teaching beliefs
- Ethnicity

The CLASS in Multicultural Contexts

- Research with Latino and Hispanic Children
- Research with Children in Finland
- Research with Native Children

Multicultural Measurement

The universality-cultural specific continua

Gross Motor Skills: The ability to control the large muscles of the body

Measurement Question

Universal ← → Contextually specific

Does your child exhibit age appropriate gross motor skills?   Does your child climb?   Does your child climb steps?

Low accuracy in measurement ← → High accuracy in measurement

Multicultural Measurement

Etic and Emic Approaches to Multicultural Measurement

etic 🔊

adjective | et·ic | \'e-tik\

Definition of ETIC

Popularity: Bottom 50% of words

: of, relating to, or involving analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who does not participate in the culture being studied — compare EMIC

emic 🔊

adjective | \'ē-mik\

Definition of EMIC

Popularity: Bottom 50% of words

: of, relating to, or involving analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who participates in the culture being studied — compare ETIC
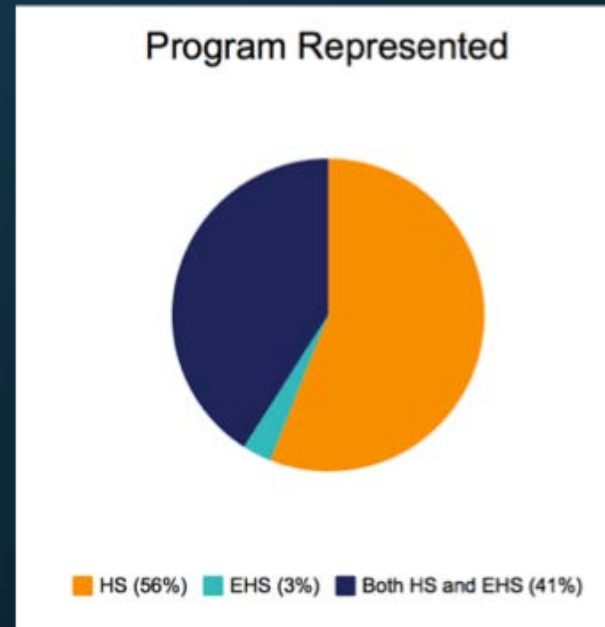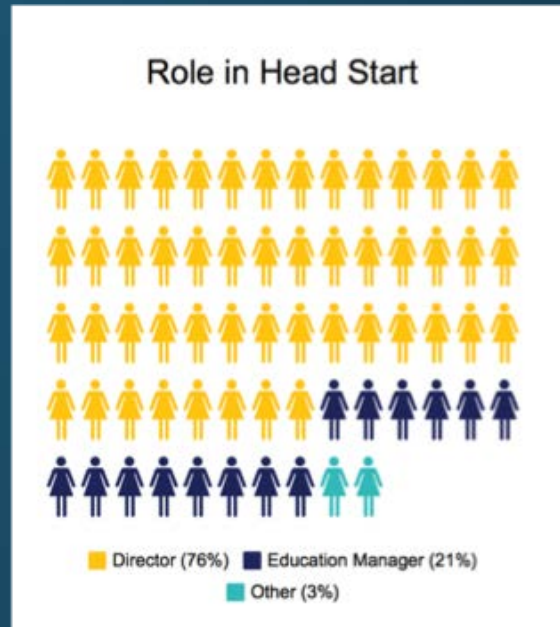
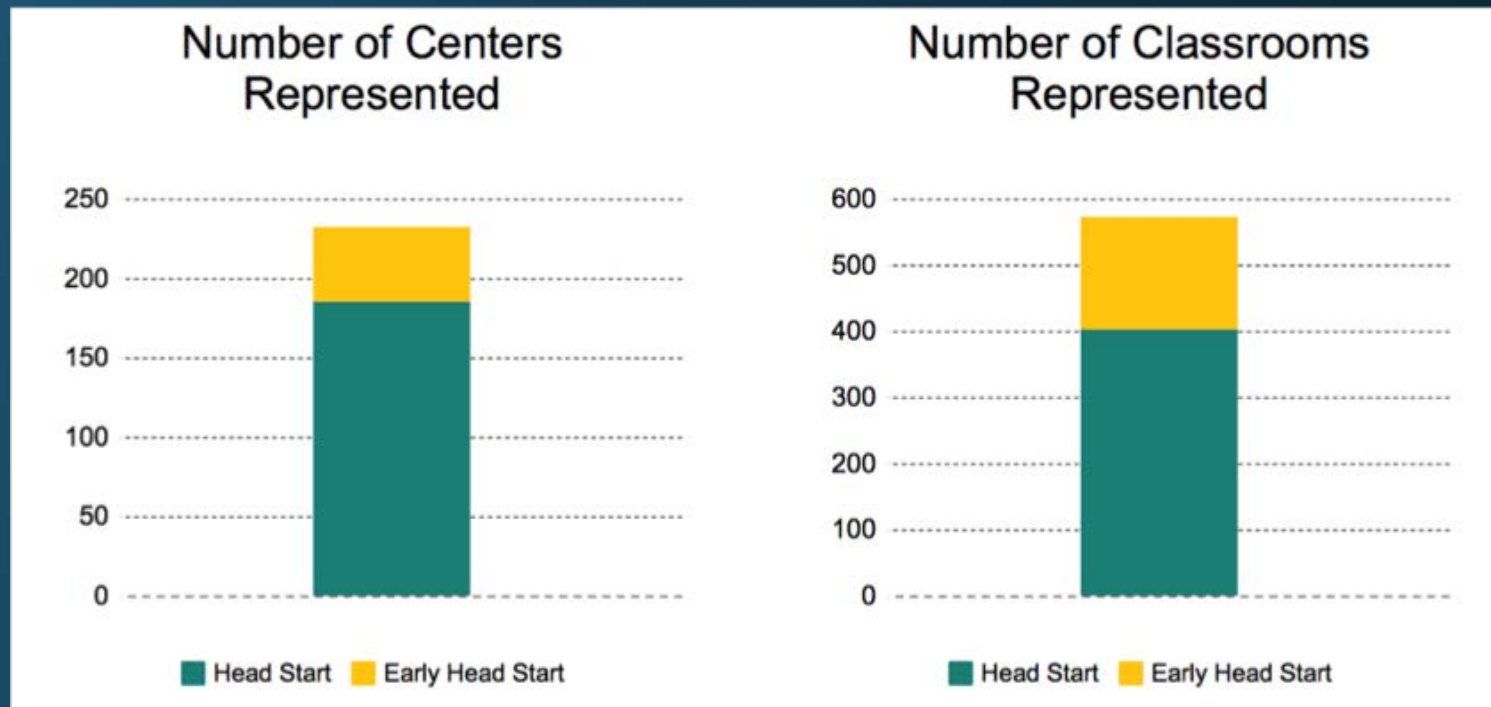# Methods

CoL approach

Participants

Data

Analysis approach

How did we work together?

Who participated in the study?

Role in Head Start

Director (76%) Education Manager (21%)
Other (3%)

Program Represented

HS (56%) EHS (3%) Both HS and EHS (41%)

Programs and Centers

Number of Centers Represented — Head Start, Early Head Start

Number of Classrooms Represented — Head Start, Early Head Start

What information did we gather?

- CLASS CoL survey
  - Cultural inclusion
  - Use of the CLASS
  - Perceptions of the CLASS

- Reflections from the CLASS CoL group members

- Notes from the CoL disucssion

How did we analyze our data?

• Subgroup analysis of qualitative data

• Large group analysis using the Cultural Lens Approach by Hardin et al. (2004)
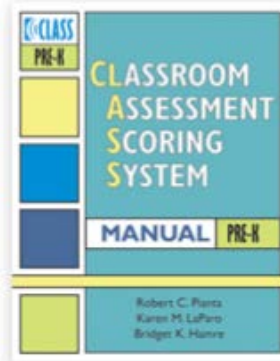 • 5 step process

(CLA; Hardin et al., 2014)

Results

CLA Responses

Hypotheses

Conclusions

"A significant contribution of our work is that 'cultural accommodations' (Goldenberg, 2008) are not treated as indifferent to or somehow separate from classroom interactions deemed as universal in quality. Rather, we suggest that culturally responsive interactions can actually support, even underlie, high-quality interactions. In other words, equally high-quality interactions in the classroom might come in different varieties, as discussed in the CLASS manual (Pianta et al., 2008). Those variations, unmeasured in extant research, could be consequential to the development and learning of culturally diverse students."

(Reese et al., 2014, p. 520)

3 Identify the relevant dimensions underlying cultural variability.

4 Evaluate the definitions/operationalizations of the central constructs (step 1) in the context of broader cultural knowledge about those groups (step 3).

"It doesn't catch subtle, visual, or non-verbal interaction. It does not understand cultural components that include listening, reflection, and being quiet as being more important."

- Head Start Education Manager

5 Derive research questions and specific hypotheses based on the answers from step 4.

Do the CLASS domains, dimensions, indicators & behavioral markers fit within the cultural context of AI/AN early childhood education programs

- Hypothesis 1: We believe that the domains and dimensions will fit well within the context since these constructs are more abstract and thus apt to be universal.

- Hypothesis 2: We believe that there will be indicators and behavioral markers that will not fit well within the cultural context.

- Hypothesis 3: We believe that there will be indicators and behavioral markers important to the dimensions for young AI/AN children that are currently not present in the instrument.

What are the processes needed for the CLASS to be conducted effectively in AI/AN early childhood education programs?

- Hypothesis: We believe that a CLASS coder who does not have an in-depth knowledge of the tribe's culture will be unable to provide accurate data about an AI/AN classroom.

Conclusions

Recommendations

- A qualitative study
- Revise CLASS based upon results from qualitative study
- Large scale quantitative and qualitative study
- Enhanced coder training

Thank you!

- Jessica Barnes-Najor: barnes33@msu.edu
- Ann Cameron: ann@itcmi.org