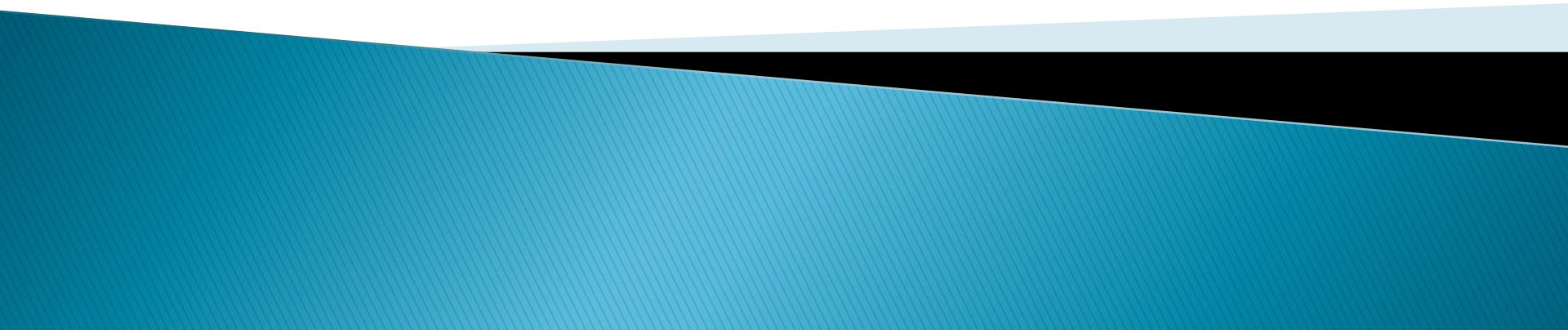


Event and Time Sample Methods of Observation

Definitions, Advantages and Disadvantages



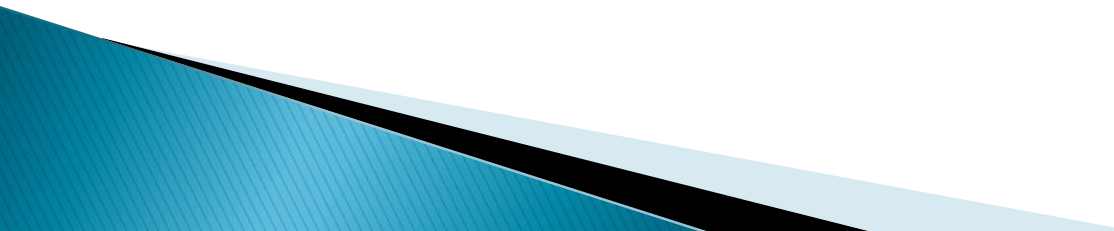
Event Sampling

Event Sampling or Diary Observation

Non-participatory

- ▶ Records the sequence and frequency of events or a particular behaviour.
 - ▶ Recording takes place only when that particular behaviour occurs.
 - ▶ Emotional development of the child and their response to particular events can also be recorded.
 - ▶ Tends to be recorded over 1 – 2 days, any longer and it becomes a longitudinal study or diary observation.
- 

Event Sampling

- ▶ Observes the child and records events as they happen.
 - ▶ Used to record children's aggressive behaviour in situations which are a cause for concern.
 - ▶ Details of the day and length of time is recorded.
 - ▶ Trigger factors for patterns of behaviour can be recorded as well as consequences.
- 

Event Sampling

- ▶ Observer waits to record a specific pre-selected behaviour each time it occurs over a particular period (can be longitudinal).
 - ▶ Used to study the conditions under which particular behaviours occur or their frequency.
 - ▶ When recording behaviour look for ABC:
 - ▶ Antecedent
 - ▶ Behaviour
 - ▶ Consequences
- 

Event Sampling

Event	Date/Time	Situation	Comment
1	10/09/09 08.30am	Arrives at nursery with Nan	Has comforter in mouth as handed to nursery nurse
2	15/09/09 9am	On carpet	Has comforter in hand, shakes head when adult asks 'can I have that?'
3			

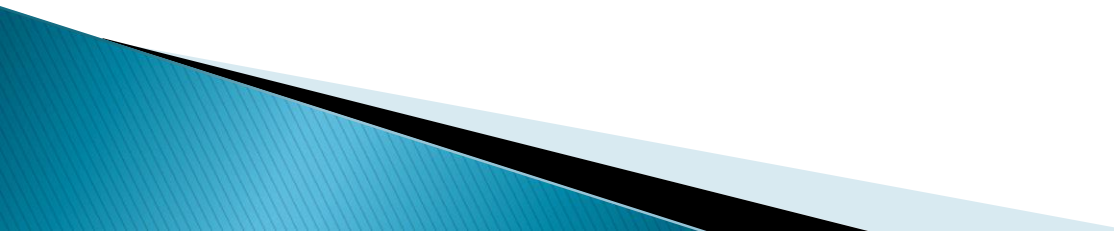
Event Sampling

- ▶ When using event sample to observe language and socialisation (e.g. in the video o Laura) you could use the following headings in your chart:
 - ▶ Event number
 - ▶ Date and time
 - ▶ Those present e.g. adults and children
 - ▶ Description – brief account of what is happening – include details of any interaction including non-verbal cues, who initiates the interaction and responses.
 - ▶ Speech – record exactly what the child says and how they say it.
- 

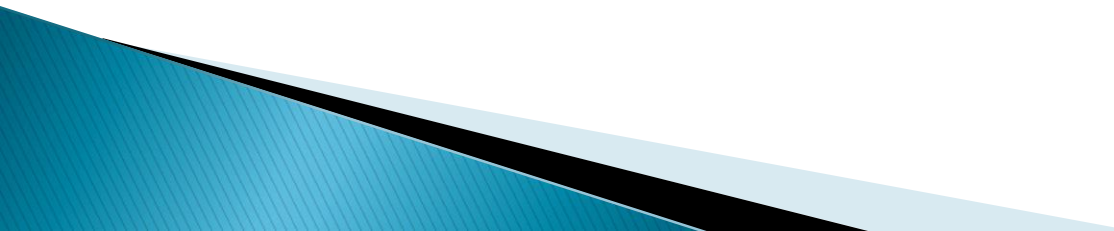
Time Sampling

Time Sampling

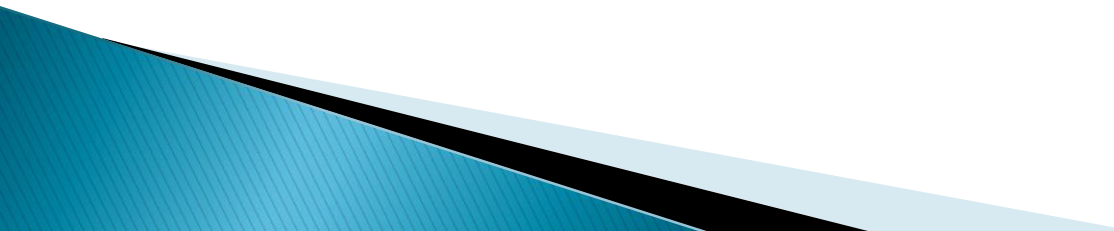
Non-participatory

- ▶ Used to observe a child or group of children over a period of time.
 - ▶ A child's behaviour is recorded at regular intervals over a set period of time.
 - ▶ Observations tend to focus on language and interaction over 2 minute intervals (e.g. every 10 to 15 minutes) for at least an hour, or during a session or all day.
 - ▶ Precise timing is required.
- 

Time Sampling

- ▶ It is a simple method to use but does require some preparation in advance.
 - ▶ Chart could include time, behaviour, language and social group.
 - ▶ Can be used for follow up observations at a later date.
 - ▶ Useful in identifying types of behaviour patterns that are overt and frequent.
 - ▶ Can identify how equipment is being used.
 - ▶ Can identify the effectiveness of activities or resources provided.
- 

Time sampling

- ▶ A series of observations to give a picture of an individual child's holistic development.
 - ▶ Good to record behaviour in detail.
 - ▶ Can be recorded on a prepared chart or as a written description.
- 

Time Sampling Chart

Time	Activity	Comment
9:00am	Arrives in classroom	Child A holds tightly onto his mother's coat. He starts to cry as she is leaving. He runs to the window. He does not respond when approached by adult.
9:15am	Carpet time	
9:30am		

Time Sampling Written Record

9 am Sitting on carpet looking at book

9.15 am Concentrating on story being read by adult

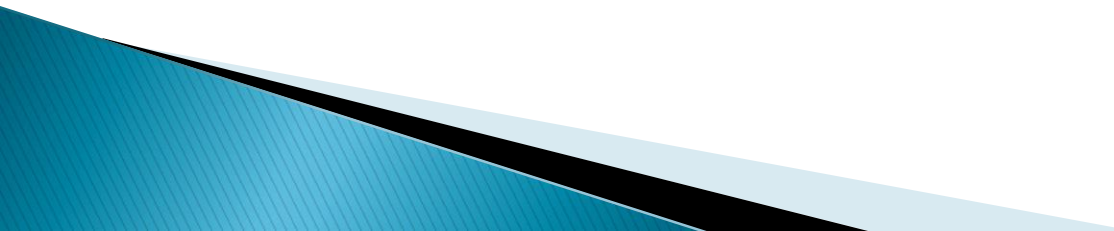
9.30am Poking child in front with right index finger



Advantages and Disadvantages

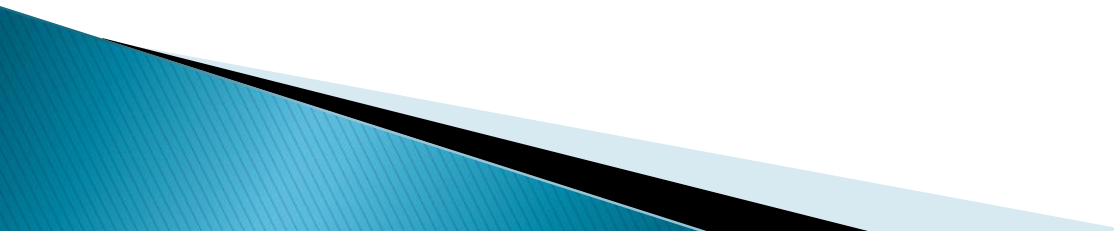
Advantages and Disadvantages of Event and Time Sampling Methods

Advantages:

- ▶ Both allow for child's behaviour to be observed
 - ▶ Both allow for the use of equipment to be observed
 - ▶ Can focus on particular problems
 - ▶ Collect open data
 - ▶ Easy to use and record
 - ▶ Can be used for short or long periods
 - ▶ Easy to see the results
 - ▶ Builds up a picture and shows patterns of behaviour
- 

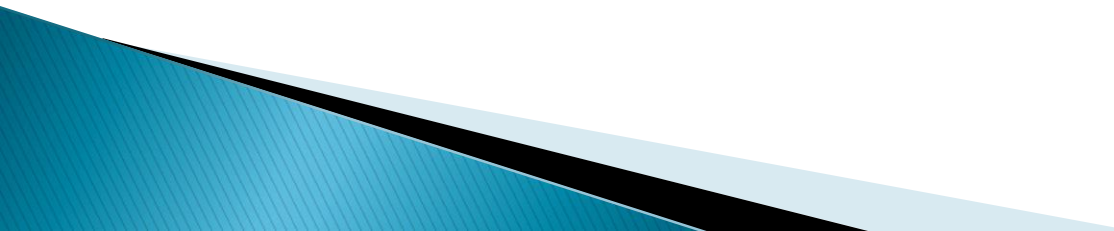
Advantages and Disadvantages of Event and Time Sampling Methods

Disadvantages:

- ▶ Cannot be spontaneous you need to be fully prepared and planned
 - ▶ Time needs to be watched carefully so good time keeping is essential
 - ▶ May not see the specific type of behaviour during the time span allowed
 - ▶ May need to follow child around the setting in order to observe and hear what is going on.
- 

Advantages and Disadvantages of Event and Time Sampling Methods

Disadvantages:

- ▶ Other adult involvement might be required, especially for prolonged recording.
 - ▶ Child may realise that he or she is being watched – may affect outcome
 - ▶ You may get distracted by all the moving around
 - ▶ Other children may want to know what you are doing
 - ▶ Your actions could have a direct effect on the observation
- 

Further Reading

Beaty, J. (2006) *Observing Development of the Young Child*. 7th Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education Inc.

Fawcett, M. and Watson, D. (2016) *Learning through observation*. 2nd Edition. London: Jessica Kingsley Publications.

Hobart, C., Frankel, J. and Walker, M. (2014) *A Practical Guide to Child Observation*. 4th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Riddall–Leech, S. (2008) *How to Observe Children*. 2nd Edition. Harlow: Heinemann.

Smidt, S. (2015) *Observing Young Children: The role of observation and assessment in early childhood settings*. 2nd Edition. London: Routledge.

