

“IT’S GOOD THAT HE HAD FELT ANXIOUS AROUND STRANGERS”: CONSIDERATIONS ON THE IRDI METHODOLOGY

Milena da Rosa Silva ¹; Cléo Busanello de Medeiros ¹; Kellen Evaldt Arrozi ¹; Andrea Gabriela Ferrari ¹

ABSTRACT

The IRDI Project in Nurseries aimed to assess 74 infants from 0 to 18 months old attending Nurseries of the Porto Alegre education system for nine months. The IRDI Methodology (Clinical Risk Indicators for Child Development) consists of 31 indicators divided by age groups and articulated into psychoanalytic theoretical axes. The absence of these indicators can show a sign of psychic suffering. This article proposes to revisit the case of an infant assessed by the project who underwent interventions by the researchers, considering that these were important for him to resume his constitutive path. For this, we will be presenting clinical vignettes from the field journals of the researchers who visited the school, reports of the observations, and video footage of the activities carried out during the assessment. Upon returning to school for a new follow-up, this 3-year-old boy no longer had clinical symptoms, and was considered well-positioned in constitutive operations.

Keywords: early childhood education; infants; child psychoanalysis

“Qué bien que él había extrañado!”: Consideraciones sobre la Metodología IRDI

RESUMEN

El proyecto IRDI en la Guardería tuvo por objetivo acompañar 74 bebés de 0 a 18 meses matriculados en Escuelas de Educación Infantil vinculadas a el ayuntamiento de Porto Alegre durante nueve meses. La Metodología IRDI (Indicadores clínicos de Riesgo para el Desarrollo Infantil) consiste en 31 indicadores divididos por Grupos de edad y articulados a ejes teóricos psicoanalíticos. La ausencia de esos indicadores puede apuntar para señales de sufrimiento psíquico. En este artículo se propone visitar el caso de un bebé acompañado por el proyecto que pasó por intervenciones de los investigadores, considerando que estas fueron importantes para la retomada de su trayectoria constitutiva. Para eso, serán utilizadas viñetas clínicas de los diarios de campo de los investigadores que visitaban la escuela, relatos de las observaciones y escenas de los rodajes realizadas durante el acompañamiento. En al retorno a la escuela para nuevo acompañamiento, ese niño, a los 3 años, no presentaba más síntomas clínicos, mostrándose bien posicionado en las operaciones constitutivas.

Palabras clave: educación infantil; bebés; psicoanálisis infantil

“Que bom que ele havia estranhado”: considerações sobre a Metodologia IRDI

RESUMO

O projeto IRDI na Creche objetivou acompanhar 74 bebês de 0 a 18 meses matriculados em Escolas de Educação Infantil vinculadas à prefeitura de Porto Alegre durante nove meses. A Metodologia IRDI (Indicadores clínicos de Risco para o Desenvolvimento Infantil) consiste em 31 indicadores divididos por faixas etárias e articulados a eixos teóricos psicanalíticos. A ausência desses indicadores pode apontar para sinais de sofrimento psíquico. O presente artigo propõe visitar o caso de um bebê acompanhado pelo projeto que passou por intervenções dos pesquisadores, considerando que estas foram importantes para a retomada do seu percurso constitutivo. Para isso, serão utilizadas vinhetas clínicas dos diários de campo dos pesquisadores que visitavam a escola, relatos das observações e cenas das filmagens realizadas durante o acompanhamento. No retorno à escola para novo acompanhamento, esse menino, aos 3 anos de idade, não apresentava mais sintomas clínicos, mostrando-se bem posicionado nas operações constitutivas.

Palavras-chave: Educação infantil; bebês; psicanálise da criança

¹ Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – Porto Alegre – RS – Brasil; milenarsilva77@gmail.com; cleomedeiros1997@gmail.com; kellenevaldtarrosi@gmail.com; andreagaferrari@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

A child's early years of life are extremely important for the overall development. Thus, it is necessary to pay careful attention to our infants in their process of subjective constitution. According to Rapoport and Piccinini (2004), the short period of maternity and paternity leave, the migration of residents from the countryside to the great urban centers (decreasing the network of family support for childcare) and the decrease in the size of families in the past decades has influenced parents in their decision to seek alternative care solutions for their infants. In addition to these factors, the lack of flexibility in working hours, flaws in the implementation of public policies related to childcare and support for families, as well as the fast pace of life in urban centers make many parents unable to care for their children during a considerable part of the day. The typical solution involves leaving the children under the care of babysitters, or quite often, institutions such as child education schools or nursery. Considering the fact that many children spend most of their day at daycare establishments, it is fundamental that these spaces take action towards the constitution of the little individuals growing before their eyes and that nursery practitioners also recognize their role in the subjectivation of babies.

Despite the constitutive importance of a child's early years of life, most of the professionals working at child education institutions still subscribe to a vision of childcare that prioritizes the physical and/or cognitive necessities of children (Ferrari, Fernandes, Silva, & Scarpinello, 2017). It is necessary to think of child education and its potential as a space for the promotion of mental health in childhood, while paying close attention to the children's psychic constitutions. This is the context that gave birth to the research project named "The Impact of IRDI Methodology in The Prevention of Psychic Risk for Children Attending Nursery in Their First Year and A Half of Life" (Ferrari, Silva & Cardoso, 2013), a.k.a. IRDI at The Nursery Home, which aims to assess and monitor the nursery practitioner and infant dyad, based on the IRDI methodology (Kupfer, 2009). The IRDI indicators (Clinical Risk Indicators for Child Development) initially appear as instruments for assessing the mother¹-infant dyad. Later, researchers realized its potential in the professional practice by nursery practitioners at child education institutions and the Instrument has developed into a methodology, aiming at a systematic observation of infants and institutions. The inspiration for this project came from previous research works by Kupfer

¹ It is understood that the mother is not necessarily the one who is going to perform that function. That function will be performed by whoever is in charge of the primordial care of the baby.

(2012) and Bernardino & Mariotto (2010) on the IRDI methodology in the nursery environment.

The IRDI, as an instrument, consists of a set of 31 clinical indicators of reference for assessing problems or disorders in the psychological development of infants aged from zero to 18 months. The instrument is divided into age groups (0-4 months, 4-8 months, 8-12 months, and 12-18 months) and is supported by theoretical axes from psychoanalytical theory (subject supposition, demand establishment, presence-absence alternation, and paternal function).² According to Kupfer and Voltolini (2005), the indicators, individually, have very little to say on the assessed constitution of the infant, they "need to be interconnected in order to be able to point at the logic of the axis around which these indicators articulate" The IRDI instrument was developed for assessing infants and their relation with their primordial carer, while researchers might make use of both the observation of the dyad and the inquiry with the adult carer. The indicators must be checked as Present, Absent, or Not Observed. The presence of indicators demonstrates psychic health and their absence show signs of suffering.

More than an instrument for assessment and monitoring, the IRDI takes on the function of a "guide for watching", and it might provide further guidance for interventions and orientation that helps professionals monitor the birth of a psychic being (Kupfer & Bernardino, 2018). Thus, the IRDI methodology emerges as an intervention proposal based on the instrument. Bernardino and Mariotto (2010) proposed a work of systematic observation at nurseries that would lead to operation in three fronts: The infant, the parents, and the nurseries practitioner. With the infants, most interventions take place in the form of playing. Playtime with a clinical intention - aiming to make room for the psychic subject - might "take place during child education by means of game-like activities with the babies on the soft mat, by means of visits to each cot for an exchange of words and gaze, and a little fun with the rattle, the mobile, or whatever interesting object as a pretext for interaction" (Bernardino & Mariotto, 2010, p. 10).

When it comes to the parents, interventions revolve around the act of listening. In the proposal, it is up to the parents to take on their children's issues, without having to resort to any superior, academic knowledge, and recognizing their own knowledge about their own children. With the nurseries practitioners, Bernardino and Mariotto (2010) understand that the work takes place by two routes, the one of transmission (recognizing the value of their position and their intervention), and

² The theoretical axes are developed in the article by Ferrari et al. (2017).

the one of professional qualification, also providing a listening moment for nurseries practitioners and their demands, a care for carers (Wiles & Ferrari, 2020).

After the work with the IRDI Methodology, the same research group, coordinated by Kupfer, created the “Avaliação Psicanalítica aos 3 anos” (AP3), or Psychoanalytic Assessment at 3, an instrumental validation for the IRDI, which intended to serve the purpose of clinical outcome for the research (Lerner, 2008). In the new assessment, four new categories were added, in addition to the ones mentioned before, which speak of childhood manifestations: Speech and language position (SL); playing and fantasy (PF); The body and its image (BI); manifestation in the face of norms and position regarding the law (NL)³.

METHOD

Based on previous experiences with the IRDI methodology, it was possible to develop the aforementioned project, IRDI at the Nursery, with the proposal for an adaptation for the city of Porto Alegre of the work developed in the cities of São Paulo and Curitiba. 74 infants aged between three and 18 months were assessed. The infants were attending baby-rooms in seven nurseries connected to the City Council of education of Porto Alegre. The observation took place systematically for nine months, from April to December of 2014. Each nursery was visited weekly by two researchers who stayed in the baby-rooms with the infants and the nursery practitioners during their shifts. The researchers observed the infants, their relationship with the nursery practitioners, as well as the everyday routine for each group. The researchers also played with the infants and produced both interventions while interacting with the infants, which the nursery practitioners could use as a model for their everyday practice, as well as by means of conversations with these professionals. Besides that, video footage and reports on field journals were produced. Initially it was done an initial assessment of the babies (at the beginning of the research); then follow-up assessments were carried out every two months (during the whole observation process in order to verify the presence of indicators that were previously absent) and at the end of the nine months, it was done a final assessment. All assessments were made with the IRDI instrument. Assessments were done by the researchers after each visit, outside the baby-room.

Later on, the infants who were assessed with the IRDI methodology were assessed again based on the AP3, when they were 3 1/2 years old. In this way, the researchers developed the project “Psychoanalytic

Assessment at 3 for children observed by the IRDI methodology” (Ferrari & Silva, 2016). The aim of the project was to promote a longitudinal assessment of the observed children, with the objective to determine at what constitutive moment the children were at the age of three, as well as whether they were facing problems or disturbances in their psychic constitution. Out of the 74 infants observed by the IRDI research, 46 were assessed with the AP3 instrument.

The assessment with the AP3 was not the same as it is in the IRDI: each nursery was observed by three researchers who made weekly visits. At the first moment, researchers observed the child that would be assessed in the classroom while interacting with peers and nursery practitioners. After this observation, a researcher would start to play with the child to create a bond in order to perform the next part of the assessment. Finally, the child was invited to go with the researchers to a separate room where the last part of the AP3 was conducted. It consisted of playtime for 50 minutes. In order to do so, the child was introduced to a box containing toys and materials defined for such activity (action figures representing family members; a little bathroom; home environments; drawing materials; 2 toy cars; a set of tea toy animals; puppets; play dough, a small ball and a small mirror).

The fourth part of AP3 consisted of an interview with the nursery practitioner in order to get better acquainted with the child’s characteristics in the classroom and to clarify any queries raised during the assessment (Ferrari & Silva, 2016). The visits to the nurseries took place between September 2016 and April 2017, when the children initially observed by the IRDI methodology were reaching the age of 3 1/2 years. One of the authors of the article has observed one of the nurseries connected to the project, while two authors supervised the whole work.

The present work aims to hypothesize/reflect on the interventions carried out by the researchers during their assessment with the IRDI methodology, considering that it might have served as an instrument of mental health promotion in childhood. In order to do that, it was decided to analyze the case of a child whose assessment with the AP3 did not show signals of psychic risk, however at the IRDI assessment, such risk was present. The selected case was of a boy, called Rafael, who, at the age of 3, seemed to be well-positioned in constitutive operations. However, during the assessment with the IRDI, he drew the attention of researchers for his excessive passivity and the incipient nature of his play and of his language. The analysis of the assessment and of the referred interventions with Rafael was conducted by reading the field journals of the researchers, the later observations with the AP3, and watching of the video footages of the third moment of assessment, the 50

³ The childhood manifestations are developed in Jerusalinsky (2008).

minutes of playtime. Aiming to illustrate the movements of the boy during the observation, vignettes from the research materials referenced above will be used.

The research projects that originated the present paper were approved by the Research Ethics Committee. The parents of the children who participated in the interventions with IRDI and the AP3 signed a Free Informed Term of Consent, as well as the involved nursery practitioners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First phase: Assessment with the IRDI Methodology

Based on the initial assessment of Rafael with the IRDI, that took place when he was 11 months old, it was possible to observe the absence of three indicators out of 10 from his age group, 8 to 12 months, 15. During physical care, the infant actively seeks loving play with the nursery practitioner; 18. The infant feels stranger anxiety; e 19a. The infant has favorite objects from home. Indicators 15 and 19a belong to the axis named Demand Establishment.

In the Demand Establishment axis are gathered the first involuntary reactions that the infants present when they are born, such as crying, which are recognized by the primary carer as demands by the child. Indicator 15, frequently absent in the infants assessed by the IRDI at the Nursery research (Puccinelli, 2018), mentions the possible singularization of the bond between nursery practitioner and infant. Mariotto (2009) affirms that the physical care given to the baby, despite being apparently technical and instrumental, possesses a significant dimension of the humanization of the body. Thus, “an adult that is available to play, talk to and interpret the child being taken care of, inserts a symbolic character into the bond regarding what seems to be essentially concrete” (Mariotto, 2009, p. 139), leading to its emergence as a psychic being. On the other hand, Indicator 19a speaks of the possibility of a return by the child towards the other providing primary care, now based on external object that, gradually, will help introduce the baby to a recognition and acceptance of reality. This indicator comes from the notion of the *transitional object* (Winnicott, 1951/2000). In order to start relating with the external world and to cope with separation anxiety when the caretaker is away, The baby needs an “intermediate area” between internal and external reality, named transitional space. This transitional space is where the *transitional objects and phenomena* occur (Winnicott does not make a clear distinction between the terms because what he considers to be important is not object itself, but the way the child uses it). The objective of transitional objects is to represent the primary carer while allowing the child to recognize external reality as it is.

Indicator 18 is part of the paternal function axis.

It is understood that such function occupies, for the carer infant dyad, a third instance position, oriented by the social dimension (Kupfer et al., 2009) and not necessarily by a real father. Fiorini (2014) suggests the denomination “third function”, which can be exercised by others, including the mother with her own symbolic reservations. When it comes to the child discerning who is and who is not familiar to her, indicator 18 shows, through the stranger anxiety felt, the process of differentiation between the “me” and the “other”. The understanding and, beyond that, the incorporation of such differentiation will lead to the emergence of a singular psychic individual, separated from an external other and possessing their own desires. The functions present in the four theoretical axes of the IRDI are performed essentially by the primary carers, and can also be performed by the nursery practitioners; even when it is possible to understand as distinct the ways in which the nursery practitioners and the primary carers perform the function of agent of discourse, being the result of the different places occupied by each one for the child (Ferrari et al., 2017; Rosa & Ferrari, 2018).

To the researchers who visited the nursery, Rafael seems to be a rather passive baby, who did not draw much attention from the nursery practitioners among the others, according to what one researcher points out in an vignette of her field journal:

Today, I dedicated a little more time to Rafael, a boy who does not draw much attention, once he does not cry and is very quiet. He always has a neutral facial expression, a little smile that hardly ever changes. I would call him, go to him, we would play together with some little toy. [...] At some point, Rafael was banging the door with a little toy. I went up to him and held him into my arms so that we could watch the street through the glass. We looked at the trees, the playground, and I kept talking to him about these things: ‘look at that...’ [...] later on, at other moments, Rafael would look at me and point to the door or to the window where we had been before.

Based on this scene, it is possible to notice the attention given to Rafael, as well as how the intervention took place with him at that moment; inviting him, showing and naming things around him. The researcher reads the infant’s act - banging on the door with a toy – as a demand towards her and intervenes after observing the scene. Rafael, apparently remembering the previous contact, looks at the researcher and points at the door where she had taken him previously.

Another response from the boy to the interventions of the researchers can be observed in the following excerpt:

On this day, Jefferson [researcher] drew my attention to Rafael, a boy who had worried me since the beginning. Rafael is very quiet, has a happy expression on his face, and bright eyes (that respond when we interact with him), however he seems shy (that is the word that comes to our mind), as if a little embarrassed. [...] When we touch his little body to play, or interact somehow, he keeps still, responding positively with his eyes and with a shy smile.

This scene, just like the previous one, is representative of the attention given to Rafael, of how the researchers could notice that, behind the face of a “passive” or “shy” infant, there was potential. When the researchers started wondering about this boy who drew attention exactly because he “wasn’t calling for attention” they saw in Rafael the vivacity of a child who relates, interacts and demands. The anticipation of Rafael’s sense of being made it possible to construct engagement with others, manifested by means of positive expressions by the boy during the interventions. According to Kupfer et al. (2009), desire is the trigger for anticipating in the baby the presence of a psychic being, which tends to consolidate because of the very fact that it was previously supposed.

During a third episode, about two months after the beginning of the observations, it was possible to notice the presence of an indicator that until then had been absent: *“Today, Rafael felt anxious when we arrived and cried for a little while. The teacher said to him: ‘oh Rafael, you felt a bit anxious’. Jefferson [researcher] held Rafael up on his arms and the anxiety was soon overcome. I comment: It’s good that he felt anxious around a stranger person.”*

Based on the fact that Rafael felt stranger anxiety by the presence of the researchers, it is possible to notice that indicator 18 (the infant feels stranger anxiety) was present, which was different from the result obtained in the initial assessment of Rafael with the IRDI. In an analysis of the well-known Melanie Klein’s case of child psychosis, the Dick Case, Lacan (1953-54/2009) states that the boy was “entirely in the undifferentiated” (p. 95). In Dick, the most primordial, specular identification did not happen. Lacan refers to the boy as living in a “non-human world” because he is unable to distinguish objects and symbolize reality. In her report, Klein says: “the boy let the babysitter leave without manifesting the least emotion and followed me into my office with total indifference” (Klein, 1930/1996, p. 254). In fact, Dick does not conceive the difference between the “me” and the other, there is no difference to him between Klein and the furniture of the room. There is no recognition of the other as an individual.

Therefore, it is possible to understand the researcher’s comment on Rafael’s feeling stranger anxiety

(“It’s good that he felt anxious around strangers”). If, until then, he presented little reaction to the arrival of the researchers, at that moment, something changed in Rafael’s relation with the world outside. According to Pesaro (2010), the fact that the child felt anxious with the presence of strangers reflects the symbolization of the mother figure, which leads to the advent, to Rafael, of the real mother/carer. Rafael, during his assessment with the IRDI, started behaving more like an infant, who became not only responsive to the researchers’ interactions, but also demanding them. This is due to the fact that careful attention was paid to the boy, who initially presented greater passivity. Frequently, these children do not draw as much attention as the other ones in the school context, once they do not cause “much trouble”. Based on the attention proposed by the IRDI methodology, it is possible to take each child in their singularity, while paying attention to their characteristics and, in Rafael’s case, constructing interventions capable of bringing out his potential.

Second Phase: Psychoanalytic Assessment at 3 (AP3)

At the age of 3 years and 8 months, Rafael went through an assessment with the AP3 (Psychoanalytic Assessment at 3). At this moment, the boy’s school had gone through a change in administration, and the coordinators were not the same as the ones who hosted the researchers during the IRDI observation. According to the report of one researcher, who participated in the assessment that took place in 2014 and 2015, the school team seemed, at the time, quite welcoming and got really engaged with the proposal of the IRDI at The Nursery project. In 2016, the situation was unfortunately not the same during the AP3 visits.

Since the first visit, the Head-Teacher expressed the need of the school to refer several children to psychological treatment, inquiring the researchers about the work of the psychological clinic linked to the university. The complaint – similar in all cases with a few exceptions – was excessive restlessness and aggressiveness of the children. After discussing the best time for the visits and learning the school day-to-day routine, for example, they proceeded to visit the classrooms where the children would be assessed, while producing videos and field journals and observations. From the beginning, the children got interested in the presence of the researchers and invited them to play, while asking questions and touching the researcher without feeling anxious by the presence of strangers.

The nursery practitioners, during the time when the researchers were in the classroom, seemed unavailable, took a little distance from the group and would only address the children to tell them off or make general announcements in a drier tone of voice. There were hardly any situations of playtime between the children

and the nursery practitioners, and the teachers hardly ever talked to one of the children specifically, except for telling the child off. According to what one of the researchers reported in her field journal: *"I took all the noise and the proximity of the children as a means to communicate something of what is happening - or not - in their contact with the teachers"*.

When they arrived in the nursery room, the researchers got surrounded by groups of children at the entrance. The children made a lot of noise and asked for hugs, while asking questions and asking the researchers to play with them. Generally speaking, almost all of the children in the group were part of this mob, very few children were not interested in the presence of the researchers. Rafael was one of them. Since the very first day, it was possible to notice that he, despite perceiving our arrival, did not feel the same enthusiasm for the researchers and preferred to play with his peers. Rafael and two of his peers made up a trio of friends who were very close and "self-sufficient", as one of the researchers reported in her journal. They would keep running around the room using available materials to imagine stories with monsters, superheroes, and battles. Despite his friends' interest in the trio of researchers and the fact that they played with the researchers a couple of times, Rafael hadn't demonstrated the same enthusiasm yet. He seemed smart and full of energy, but he was shyer and quieter than his friends, who call for the researchers in order to share discoveries and toys.

On the day of the assessment, his acceptance was questioned because there was no connection with him yet. Surprisingly, after one of the researchers got close to him and started to play, Rafael accepted the invitation to go into another room to play. The boy was expected to take some time in order to warm up before the moment of the assessment because he was not really familiar with the researchers, but he proved earnest and receptive, playing at ease and including everyone in the games. Creative and lively, Rafael demonstrated very quickly that he was at ease and it was possible to explore the box of toys and the new room, playing and talking for over 40 minutes.

Through the assessment, it was possible to observe that the boy was well positioned both in the constitutive operations and in the childhood manifestations, which evidenced whether the child is in a constitutive path suitable or whether there was any kind of issue in his constitution (Jerusalinsky, 2008). Besides that, no clinical symptom was detected. During the assessment, Rafael became quite interested in the objects in the room and his potency of going from "make believe" to reality during his playtime. Such episodes might be better illustrated by the following scene.

The boy, during the assessment, took a toy lampshade from the box and said: "a tree". After

that, he corrected himself: "no, it's an umbrella", and positioned the toy over his head. He said that the rain was coming down. The researcher suggested then that he should stand under the umbrella. The boy said to her: "you are getting wet", and then he also invited the 3 researchers to protect themselves against the rain. As soon as the four people were under the protection of the toy umbrella, Rafael said "done", meaning that the rain was gone. The researcher asked: "has the sun come out?" Rafael said yes, pointed at the window in the room where they could see a sunny day, and said "look" (sic).

Regarding the language, Rafael was able to sustain a dialogue rich in vocabulary. He employed the "I" pronoun in order to refer to himself, recognizing therefore his own self and taking the other as an individual. Such standing in language consists of a register of the possibility to place oneself in relation to established significations; to sustain relations with the other; to recognize the demand and the desire of the other, and of perception and a production of new significations (Jerusalinsky, 2008). The boy also seemed to observe the limits of the proposed framework, and proved attentive to the speeches of the nursery practitioners and responded to their requests. Such characteristics, in general, speak of the internalization of an instance of interdiction, sustaining the diverse forms that the law can adopt.

It was possible to observe, in Rafael, great body care and physical development. The boy demonstrated that he knew how to name positions (up, down, inside, outside), and he also presented autonomy to realize school activities, such as eating or going to the bathroom by himself or taking a nap without the help of the nursery practitioners. According to Françoise Dolto (1984), the body scheme is a reality in fact, and somehow it is our "carnal life in contact with the physical world" (p. 10). It is, in a nutshell, the functional body of an individual. The body scheme relates intimately with the notion of unconscious body image (Dolto, 1984). Such body image refers to the unconscious memories of relational experiences and is a testimony of affection relations with the other. It is a construction that seems to be the result of the actions of the primordial carer over the child's body, turning it into a system of significations that will allow the child to consolidate into a unified, psychic image, under which self-recognition will be possible (Kupfer et al., 2009).

During the assessment, the boy demonstrated interest in sharing his discoveries, with the researchers as well as with the nursery practitioners. When he opened the box of toys and materials in order to explore its contents, Rafael took a mirror and showed it to the researcher, and responded that she was the one who was appearing there. Right after that, he looked at himself and also pointed the mirror at the other

researchers, while requiring them to look at themselves and participate in that moment. He also shared the action figures that he kept finding during his exploration while naming them such as bad wolf, Santa Claus, teddy bear... It was also possible to observe, in an interview with the nursery practitioner, that sphincter control had already happened and moreover, the boy himself asked to stop using diapers. In addition, Rafael demonstrated autonomy to feed himself and was able to eat well by himself. Such attributions are part, in the AA3, of the demand establishment axis. The same axis where it was possible to detect, in the IRDI interventions at the age of 11 months, the absence of two indicators (15 e 19a).

In Rafael's assessment at 3, it was possible to observe that the boy shared his actions and discoveries, and addressed the teachers and researchers to do so. In an excerpt of his assessment, one of the researchers reported:

During the assessment, Didi [nursery practitioner] needed to enter the room once and Rafael addressed her and showed her what he was playing with. It also happened with the researchers during the interview when he found new toys in the box or when he saw something interesting in the room.

With these situations, it is possible to illustrate the demands of Rafael, considering the statement on his interest for the toys and games.

It was possible to perceive, through the AP3, that Rafael was in the expected constitutive path, and did not present clinical symptoms or signs of psychic suffering. According to what was previously said, he demonstrated that he was well situated in the constitutive operations considered in the instrument. The outcome of this assessment in combination with the data found in the IRDI research made it possible to produce conjectures concerning the psychic constitution of Rafael, longitudinally thinking the way in which the interventions with the IRDI methodology might have reverberated and contributed to the results found later, with the AP3.

Third Phase: Later thinking over the movements of Rafael...

The early years of a child are extremely important for subjective constitution and development. Hence, it is important to pay attention to signs of suffering that might appear at this time, while psychic structures are still under construction, which makes it possible to recognize and prevent problems in time. According to Kupfer and Bernardino (2018), the indicators, in the IRDI research, serve the purpose of operators of a reading that allows us to suppose the presence and the singularity of the individual. Besides that, the IRDI as a device gives subsidy for the observation of initial

signs of psychic suffering and provides opportunities for actions that promote mental health and the retaking of the constitutive path that is expected for these infants.

The attention and the care given to Rafael led to interventions targeting an investment in potential at this initial moment of his life. The excerpts taken from the field journals of the researchers are a testimony of the assessment of the boy with the IRDI methodology, which demonstrates the researchers' concern with the lack of initiative and the passivity of Rafael. Such preoccupation happened after the attention paid to the indicators and to what they represented, which allowed the intervention in all the constitutive disorders. From that, it was possible to think about the interventions carried out by the researchers, while supposing that there was an individual under construction and interpreting his scarce requests as demands. The researchers recognized that, in the bright eyes of Rafael, that was great potential for the establishment of affection bonds. His vitality, hidden under apparent passivity, could be placed in evidence - both for the researchers and for the nursery practitioners. Such recognition allowed a work that, possibly, mitigated constitutive problems anticipated by the absence of some indicators. The possible reverberations of this investment can be noticed at the moment when Rafael "responds" to the researchers by asking to look out the window once again, or feeling anxious around strangers and crying at their arrival.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Psychoanalysis, in its preoccupation with the desiring subject, and with the unconscious dimension that rules them, does not work with direct causal statements. In this sense, it is not our intention to say that the outcome of Rafael's assessment with the AP3 was due to the interventions of the researchers in their assessment with the IRDI methodology. Rather, we could be able to suggest that they might have made a difference somehow in the constitution of this child, while providing the necessary attention for development or consolidating constitutive gains that were already in place but were still incipient.

The IRDI has proven to be a powerful device for intervention in several contexts. Some papers approach the use of such an instrument at child education institutions (Wiles & Ferrari, 2020), as well as at sheltering institutions (Omizzollo, 2017) and with the program named "Primeira Infância Melhor" (PIM), or Better Early Childhood (Dornelles, 2018). Just like in these other papers, it was possible to illustrate, by means of Rafael's case, the possibility for interventions based on observations and assessment based on the IRDI.

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