

Chapter 5

Methodological Aspects Regarding the Assessment of Development at an Early Age

Sofia Loredana Tudor

*The National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA, Bucharest,
Romania & Pitești University Centre, Romania*

Adriana Nicoleta Lazăr

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5206-6437>

*The National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA, Bucharest,
Romania & Pitești University Centre, Romania*

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the assumed directions are conceptual, but also methodological. It is imperative for early childhood educators to make appropriate use of the concepts specific to early childhood assessment and to adapt the assessment process to the developmental profile of early childhood. For the didactic approach to the evaluation process, the chapter contributes to the clarification of some aspects regarding the development of some tools for the evaluation of the child's behaviours, some tools for monitoring the progress in the level of development of the child's behaviours of an early age.

INTRODUCTION

The assessment of development at an early age represents a theoretical approach from the perspective of the specifics of the evaluation, of the highlights /evaluation criteria, of the ways of capitalizing on the evaluation results; equally challenging

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is the field's practical approach to methods and tools for assessing and monitoring early childhood progress.

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The subject addressed in this chapter is defined starting from the dimensions of the assessment and the specific aspects of the child's development in the early period, as follows:

- school assessment (initial, formative-continuous, summative/final, assessment methods and tools, adjustment /improvement functions of assessment in the educational process);
- the specifics of the evaluation of the development of the early age child (the evaluation of the behaviours in areas of development, the evaluation of the progress in the child's development);
- the methodology of evaluating the child's development (tests /evaluation tools, capitalizing on the evaluation result).

Child Assessment as a Component of the Educational Process

A synthesis of evaluation conceptual benchmarks highlights its evolutionary character, on the one hand, as well as the key elements of the evaluation process, as a complex, dynamic, permanent activity and with the role of feedback on the educational approach, as a whole.

Studies of the last decade highlight the change of the object of evaluation from those "observable and measurable behaviours" of children/students to "competencies formed through learning", this fact demonstrating the conceptual reorganizations of evaluation (What is evaluation?) and of the object of evaluation (What are we evaluating? The visible products of the assessment are replaced by the acquisitions or results of the formative assessment, which are expressed in the form of cognitive, motor, social, emotional, etc. tools used by the child when they relate to a concrete school situation, or not. (Perrenoud, 1998)

The conceptual approaches are varied, focusing either on the object of evaluation (what is evaluated), or on the targets of the evaluation action (the objectives of the evaluation action), or on the specific tools of this process (evaluation methods and

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