Interview 2: (90 minutes)

Introductory conversation and building of rapport. Discuss correct pronunciation of surname. Consent obtained to start recording

Interviewer: I  
Participant: P

**I**: Okay, so there is just some demographic questions that I need to find out first because obviously I have a demographically diverse sample, you know, I have a black, a white and an Indian participant. Just because obviously our perspectives might differ according to our upbringing, on the WISC and its various elements. So I never assume race, so (laughs) what would you say your race is.

**P**: I am white, yes.

I: And your language group?

**P**: English

I: And if you don’t mind sharing your age?

**P**: not at all, 57, I think (laughs). You know after 50 you lose track.

**I**: My dad also says it’s all a blur

**P**: Exactly, he is right!

**I**: And then, your years of registration? How long have you been registered?

**P**: Only 12 years. So, I took the scenic route. I was much like you, always had this passion for people but only when I had children did I discover which direction I was going.

**I**: The other things here is just to establish your work setting or field of employment. It could be currently or over the past 12 years, the environments in which you’ve worked.

**P**: So, obviously, when I worked in my internship I worked within a school which I really loved and it was an amazing experience but since then I’ve been in private practice. So I work on my own. I have an office at my home in an area that is quite strongly supported by a number of schools. So I see a lot of diverse kids. I see all the way from the (Affluent Private School’s name) to (moderately affluent government school) to the private schools within this area to even some of the kids form more government schools but I’m talking like a Nooitgedacht that is really largely supported by black kids.

**I**: Okay, so you would say that you have quite a diverse clientele group as well. Do you know if you have any children from townships or that type of thing.

**P**: I do. But I will tell you that most of my kids from townships… when you say townships I’m talking like Diepsloot, which I don’t know if its classified as a township anymore or Cosmos city. I do, but most of those kids are pro bono. So, I do quite a lot of pro bono work in those areas. I mean the kids coming from private school, unless there’s and issue, the obviously are paying clients. But I do do quite a bit of pro bono.

CO1.1. cost of services

**I**: Oh okay. So, this interview, it was originally a focus group interview so the questions are of such a nature that it would foster general discussion, so they are not super specific and I found with my first interview, often, a lot of the questions were answered already by answering the earlier questions. So, for example, you’ve already answered one question (laughs). So, you know, it’s just conversational, just giving me your honest experience with the WISC as well as other intelligence tests because it does allow me to see preference, possibly some downfalls that we may have in the WISC that have been overlooked. There are just 8 questions so I don’t think we will take a full hour and then, should this cut out, because zoom keeps warning me that I have 40 minutes, but I don’t think I do, it has never cut me out before.

**P**: You are very lucky, up until a few weeks ago, it was doing nothing to me, it was letting me have my whole hour and a half and then more recently it cut me off beautifully at 40 minutes. So, it may very well cut us off but then you’ll just send me another link.

**I**: I’m just not sure if it may delay me sending another link for a little while because it has to convert the recording but as soon as I can, it might be like 5 minutes, I will send a new link.

**P**: Don’t stress, that’s perfect.

**I**: Okay so the first question here says how frequently do you utilise the WISC in your practice?

CO3.3. Area

**P**: Okay, I use the WISC all the time. I must be honest. So, I do a lot of subject choice assessment, I do a lot of vocational assessments and I do a lot of psychoeducational assessments and I must be honest, almost exclusively now… So in the past, in the early years of my practice I would sometimes use the SSAIS but because of the area I’m in I am 100% using the WISC at least once a week, sometimes a lot more than that

**I**: Okay that’s interesting that the area… but I’m also assuming a lot of the schools in the area are IEB schools

**P**: Ja.

**I**: Okay. Is there a specific reason, other than the IEB schools that you use the WISC. I know you said the area, so what exactly to you mean by the area?

**P**: So what I was finding when I was using the SSAIS, that the scores were actually too high, the scores that the kids were achieving were too high and were not in relation to what they were actually achieving academically. I find that the WISC gives a much more realistic picture of their profile. Especially in this area, the kids are overly exposed and as you said, you know, they have a lot of advantages that kids in other areas wouldn’t have. So, I think it’s quite unique in this area. I think to use the SSAIS would not be as valuable as the WISC.

CO3.3 area

CO 3.4. exposure

**I**: Yes, the exposure, we were talking about it in my previous interview, exposure plays such a big role in general knowledge firstly, which plays into their academic knowledge and academic achievement. My previous participant had all the Pretoria North townships were his clients and he said that he really struggles with the WISC. They just don’t understand what is being asked of them a lot of the time.

**P**: I agree, agreed. So, I am exactly the antithesis of where he is. So, if I was exclusively working with kids from the townships or more disadvantaged areas I would definitely not use the WISC it is far to advanced and the use of language is much too high, honestly. So ja, you have basically chosen two people on the opposite ends of the scale. Which is very valuable.

CO3.3 Area

CO3.2. Language

I: Yes, it is very helpful. So, what other elements of the WISC do you think play better to your environment, other than the language?

**P**: I mean, I think language is everything in this situation because of the way you approach it. I think the children feel engaged and they feel challenged. I just think that the way the test has been formulated is appropriate for the educational setting that I am dealing with. I mean, there are definitely some issues, there’s no question but those issues are more to do with diversity and exposure than anything else. I just think it suits the environment in which I’m working but definitely not perfect for all environments.

CO3.2 language

CO7.2 engaging

CO3.3. Area

CO3.4. Exposure

**I**: Yes, the previous participant was like “what is a locker even to these kids?” (laughs)

**P**: No, I’m serious. There are so many things. Like, some of the pictures that are used are just like completely inappropriate for a South African context. A snowman, I mean kids will know, but a lot of them will never have seen a snowman or a sleigh. I mean, repeated quite a few times. There’s a postage stamp, kids have no idea what a postage stamp is, have never seen one, will never see one and that’s right across the line. I mean, that’s not just… I mean one of the questions is ‘why do we put a postage stamp on a letter?”. And I promise you, they have no clue at all. And that’s prejudicial because no one is going to get that right, its not really an intelligence questions, its and exposure question.

CO5.3. Inappropriate to SA

CO3.4 exposure

**I**: so all of these questions kind of follow on each other, so we’ve done the demographics question already. So, this says, what are some of the experiences you’ve had with the WISC, both positive and negative.

CO4.2. clinical tool

**P**: okay, so I think the most positive about the WISC, I think about any IQ assessment, not only is an intelligence test but it is a clinical tool. You know how you were talking yesterday about observing. So in the process of doing an assessment you get to look at so much more than just intelligence. Its almost like being a sleuth or some kind of private detective because you are not only watching what are they able to respond to, you’re looking at all kinds of other things. You’re looking, I mean, crazy enough, you’re looking at emotional intelligence; what happens when they are frustrated and how to the deal with something when they can’t manage and they feel like they should be getting it. You’re looking at they style of learning, so do they read things out loud, do they talk to themselves while working, how are they sitting, what’s their fine motor dexterity, do they say pardon a lot, do they hear first time, do they respond immediately. There’s just like… what is their perseverance. So its almost like, at some points, IQ is obviously the objective of that particular assessment but there’s so much other stuff that you get out. Doing that assessment really gives you such a wealth of information, some of it good, some of it not so good. So, that’s all the good stuff.

CO7.4. wealth of info

I think the bad stuff, for instance, is like when you are doing the processing speed assessment. It relies very heavily on your visual-motor skills and visual-motor dexterity. So if you are dealing with a child that has a grapho-motor problem or a fine motor problem, they are going to score very low but you are not actually checking their processing speed because processing speed is also visual and auditory. So if I give you an instruction, how quickly are you able to process it and respond to it. The fact that you have a visual-motor issue is going to give me a skewed score. Or sometimes, I recently had a child that recently, for most of the IQ assessment looked like a deer in headlights. When I posed a questions she was just like “I don’t know what that means, what are you asking me?” and yet when we did the processing speed, she was like… because it was repetitive and their was a direct instruction, she did absolutely amazingly because it was repetitive, routine instruction that she just had to do again and again and again. Or when you need to look at the first symbol or the first two symbols and identify whether its in the next 5, because it’s a direct instruction, you don’t have to deviate. You do a=b=c. So the problem is then that you get a really high score for processing speed but in the classroom they are unbelievably slow because when a teacher says “open your book, and write your name and then write three sentences about what you did this weekend”, because of the motor-dexterity she cant do that. So you get a processing speed score that looks really elevated and then the teacher says “but she’s never finishing, she doesn’t listen, she doesn’t respond, she’s not reacting”. So ja, I think that that’s the thing, there is no perfect test. And then the interesting part comes, when you are doing your report it requires saying, even though this score scored really high it’s not an accurate reflection of her processing speed in the classroom unless it is a repetitive test with clear boundaries. So there is no perfect test, so I think that’s the thing, being aware all the time that you cant rely on numbers. And I think that’s the biggest thing with psychometrics, the numbers only tell half the story. Any IQ assessment is going to give you a number but there’s so many things that can affect that number. So even for instance, a crazy thing, when I have a kid come to me and he is completely demotivated and there under duress and doesn’t want to do the test, then the scores I get are actually going to be an indication of motivation and not really of aptitude. If I said to him, listen, if you do really well in this test we can play an hour of PlayStation I might get a completely different score. So that’s the thing, so I think that’s the thing, there is not perfect test and you go to go into the assessment having that mindset of “I’m looking at a much bigger picture. The outcome I’m looking for is and IQ score but the much bigger picture is to see this person holistically. This is not the solution, its part of a solution. An IQ assessment is just part of a puzzle that you’re looking at. Like you saw in that CHRIB, there are so many layers that you go to try to constantly look at all of those layers

CO10 Reliability

CO4. Clinical judgement

CO10 reliability

**I**: I think that is definitely something that we still struggle with in our initial training is making observations. We are so focused on needing to time, looking where the child is pointing, did I start the timer, we forget to just observe, to look at the client and what they are doing. I think once we are in practice, we will realise that we set the pace and no just power through. Its not necessary, we can just do it at our pace, we can look down to read but we are so focused we forget to observe.

**P**: Its like when you first learned to drive. You will see, after a few of them you will develop the skills of timing and looking and chatting. It happens, its very normal. You are now just doing something very mechanical that in a short time will become natural.

**I**: I think it is because we know it is standardised and we know that we cannot deviate at all. So, for example we were talking about it yesterday and we were saying can we say to the child “You’re okay, keep going” because the instructions don’t say that we can. So, we are very like “is this going to motivate the child incorrectly” but I’ve seen in my tutoring, often motivation is all they need.

**P**: So, you are thinking, am I unrealistically motivating this child? Okay, but I may be completely in conflict with what you’ve been taught. But my feeling is to give the best possible representation of that child, to give him a chance to really reflect his abilities. I want you to imagine going into an interview, can you imagine your performance? To get the best out of anybody we are going to provide reassurance. So, you can’t physically help them but you can say “you’re doing well, just keep going” or “there’s only ten left”. I mean I do say that. So, while there are rules, we are dealing with a living human being, a little guy who maybe didn’t sleep the night before or hasn’t had his breakfast or had a big fight with his mom in the car. I mean, you have to factor that in, because otherwise your assessment is going to be an indication of that not what he is actually capable of.

CO4. Clinical judgement

CO4. Clinical judgement

**I**: I think in our training we have such a short time to learn everything we need to, that we learn it right. In my other interview, my participant shared that he had done the full demographic research on the clients, was English home language and in quiet an affluent school, previously model C and she couldn’t do the WISC, she just was not achieving and had he continued she wouldn’t have achieved so he switched over to the SSAIS and she was able to achieve on the SSAIS. And he told me you have to be ethical, you cannot disadvantage the child. So I agree that ethical mindedness is also really important.

**P**: agreed agreed. Especially with children.

**I**: Something else that came up in my other interviews, the WISC has quite a lot to work with, I mean it is cleared away from the client’s view, but to negatives and I don’t know if you’ve possibly experienced them. One was, if a child is already experiencing anxiety with school things, the number of things in rotation the whole time causes greater anxiety. I don’t know if you’ve experienced that?

**P**: So, I’m never in a situation where a child walks in and we sit down and we do the WISC, I’m never like that. So, the way I structure my assessments is literally the first 45 minutes to an hour we sit in my office, and we have a chit-chat, or to the client it will feel like chit-chatting. So, I have a whole document that I fill out while we’re chatting and while we’re chatting, I have a number of things they can play with and fiddle with and talk about. So, by the time we sit down for the WISC we are not in such an anxious state, I also downplay things. Ill say “I’m not sure why this is called a test because its not actually really a test, you’re not going to feel like it’s a test. We are going to do some patterns and pictures and I ask you some really random questions” so I just say to them, its like a real story about nothing. So by the time we sit down at the desk I’m hoping to have cleared all that anxiety. So, whatever I’ve got I keep behind me and I only put what I need in front of me so when they get into the room, they will have the block and the book but that’s all that on the table. Then we will start from there and then I will move things off and put them on as we go. I literally keep it incredibly light because its crazy to put that pressure on the child. But I know that people don’t always have that option. I do a much more holistic assessment.

CO6 anxiety

**I**: Yes, and I can see how that would be far more beneficial for a client.

**P**: Another concern that was brough up, I think because of the environment in which my participant worked and also that he is new, only a 2 year registered psychologist now. He found that because there is so much to work with, especially the ADHD kids, it often disorganises him because he’s still trying to move the book and then they’ve got it in their hands, or they try take it or move the blocks. He says that if you aren’t organised then it can completely throw you.

**I**: I think it has all got to do with experience and I think that he will find over time it will get easier. I sometimes see kids that are literally bounce and when that happens you just need to slow the process down and explain to them that this is how it works and we have to do it in this way and we’re going to turn one page at a time and when we are finished this one, we are going to take a break.

CO4. Clinical judgement

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_disconnected, needed to reconnect\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I**: Okay, we are back, sorry about that! So, we were just talking about ADHD and the child being very busy and how you normally control that situation.

**P**: Can I also just say, sorry to interrupt you, the other thing I also do, is if I see that the child is really struggling to focus, and they want to touch everything then I give them something to play with while I’m giving instructions and I then write that in the report. Theoretically what I’m wanting is to see how smart you are and what I’m actually working with and if that means I need to give you something to keep your hands busy then I do it. As long as it doesn’t interfere with the process. I think that all comes with experience.

CO4. Clinical judgement

**I**: The next two questions basically build on that, so I don’t know if you have anything else to add. So, it just says, in your experience what are some of the advantages as well as the disadvantages but I think we’ve covered quite a bit of those.

**P**: I think the advantages are enormous as long as the test is appropriate to the person you’re actually testing. I think the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages but as I said, no test is perfect, and you have to write in your reports “even though this score is elevated/ depressed, this is the situation.” The test scores are for diagnostic purposes only in other words they are not going to follow this child around for the rest of their life all they’re doing is establishing a baseline for us to check against in two years. Its unfair to say these scores completely represent this child because very often it represents the difficulties that they are experiencing more than anything else.

CO4. Clinical judgement

CO7- Positives

**I**: Baring these advantages and disadvantages in mind, to what extent/ degree to you feel the WISC is appropriate for use in the South African context?

**P**: Its extremely appropriate depending on the demographics and the exposure, it is completely inappropriate to be used on children whose first language is not English, it is inappropriate, there is absolutely no question. The problem is, I don’t thing the SSAIS is necessarily appropriate either, so its like we are to be very weary and state upfront what test we are using.

CO3 demographics

CO3.4 exposure

CO3.2 language

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Disconnected\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I**: Apologies for disconnection again. We were just talking about whether you think its appropriate and we said that it is appropriate according to exposure and language and education and its inappropriate if there are certain aspects related to that.

**P**: to be honest, if you’re looking at the South African demographics its probably not appropriate on the large scale. It is appropriate in the Northern suburbs of Joburg, Cape Town, Pretoria but definitely not appropriate to the broad spectrum of our population, truth be known.

CO3. Demographics (larger SA)

**I**: on that, in what ways do you feel it could be better adapted to the South African context.

**P**: I think the biggest thing is obviously language, the way the test is presented, the way that the questions are asked. I definitely think in the pictures there is not enough diversity, it is not reflective of our population. For instance, in the arithmetic section all the names, there is one name maybe, that is an indication of diversity. The other names are all John, Sue, David and I know that’s not the point, but when you’re doing a test, you actually want respondent to feel like they are part of the test, that they don’t feel it is something that does not belong to them. It doesn’t have to be every name. Our problem is that is an English normed test so the chances of there being a Thabo or anything like that is unlikely. But I think if you recognise something like that in a test, it feels like it belongs to you and it feels so much easier to respond to. Kids do come in and feel it’s a testing situation and they should be able to recognise themselves in the test.

CO8 Improvements (CO3.2 language, CO3 demographics)

**I**: In my research I speak about how, often, race and socio-economic status is synonymous and how socio-economic status affects exposure, language, educational attainment levels those types of things, and even though we are so far into democracy the greater bulk of certain racial groupings are still struggling to get support.

**P**: yes, that is a fact!

I**:** But that concludes all the questions I require answers from you for, is there anything you would like to add?

**P**: no, I think we covered all the bases.

**I**: Thank you so much for you’re very valuable input and for taking the time to have this interview, I really did learn form you and appreciate you responses.

**P**: pleasure!

Interview ended with discussion about internship and supervising (not related to the research topic)