

Perspectives on Children's Development

THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- In psychology the study of human development has traditionally concentrated on the early stages of childhood and adolescence as they are considered to be the most dramatic and influential.

Theories of Development

- Different theorists place different emphasis on genetic, environmental or interactive influences.



Arnold Gesell (1880-1961)

- All children proceed through the same sequence of development, but all vary in rates of development.
- There is an inner timetable which determines the child's rate of development. Trying to teach activities ahead of that timetable will at best result in only minor, temporary growth.
- A favourable environment helps to ensure the realisation of a child's potential.
- Each child is unique in temperament and growth style. The culture should try to adjust to each child's uniqueness.

INFLUENTIAL THEORISTS

□ **SIGMUND FREUD: 1856 - 1939**

□ **JEAN PIAGET: 1896 - 1980**

Both theories focus on childhood up to adolescence and proposed stages of development.

□ **ERIK ERICKSON: (1959)**

Proposed 8 stages of development spread across the life-span.

Summary of Freud's stages of psychosexual development

Stage & Age	Erogenous Zone	Main characteristics	Tasks to achieve
Oral 0-1	Mouth	Main source of pleasure mouth, lips tongue (biting,licking swallowing). Immediate gratification - ID dominates.	Satisfactory feeding (weaning).
Anal 1-2	Anus	Controlling (or not) bladder and bowels. Ego starts to control the ID.	Potty and toilet training.
Phallic 2-6	Phallus	Pleasure gained from playing with genitals – associated with the opposite sex parent (Oedipus and Electra complexes). ID demands, Ego tries to satisfy, & Superego imposes moral choices.	Successful solution to Oedipus & Electra conflicts.
Latency Period 6-11	None	Oedipus and Electra identification with same sex parent, and loss of interest in opposite sex. ID, Ego and Superego continue to compete.	None
Genital 11 onwards	Genital	Increasing concern with adult ways of experiencing sexual pleasure.	Good relationships with both sexes.

Summary of Erikson's psychosocial theory of development

Age	Name and description of stage
1) 0-1	Basic trust versus Basic mistrust: Quality of care baby receives determines how it views mother and world. If needs are met develops a sense of trust , but if care inconsistent develops mistrust .
2) 1-3	Autonomy versus Shame and doubt: As child becomes more mobile, range of experiences and choices change. Want to do everything itself and new power is basis for sense of autonomy . If shown continuous failure and ridicule may lead to shame & doubt .
3) 3-6	Initiative versus Guilt: Child is keen to try new abilities and skills. If encouraged to ask questions and express natural curiosity, a sense of initiative will be reinforced. If parents ignore or find questions silly or embarrassing, child will develop guilt .
4) 7-12	Industry versus inferiority: Industry refers to child's concern with how things work, how they are made, and their own efforts to make things. This is reinforced by adults (parents & teachers), a sense of inferiority may occur if child is not given help and encouragement to make things.
5) 12 –18 Identity versus Role confusion , 6) 20s Intimacy Versus Isolation 7) Late 20s – 50s Generativity versus Stagnation , 8) 50s + Ego Integrity versus Despair	

Jean Piaget

Piaget believed that:

- Development proceeds through maturation and adaptation and stressed the importance of nature and nurture.
- Adaptation occurs because of assimilation, accommodation and equilibration.
- Schemas allow knowledge to be shaped and stored.
- Cognitive development occurred in stages related to maturation of the child.

Jean Piaget

- Each stage involves a qualitative change making it different from the preceding stage.
- The order in which these occurs is fixed and applies to all children.
- It is not possible to skip or leave out a stage.
- Each stage must be in place in order that the next stage can be laid upon.

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| □ Sensory Motor | □ 0 - 2 years |
| □ Pre-operational | □ 2 – 7 years |
| □ Concrete operational | □ 7 - 11 years |
| □ Formal operational | □ 11+ years |

Vygotsky's Social Development Theory

- Our ability to think & reason by ourselves and for ourselves is the result of social processes.
- Social interaction plays a fundamental role in cognitive development.
- Start out as social beings, capable of interacting with others but dependant on others.
- Gradual move towards self efficiency and independence.

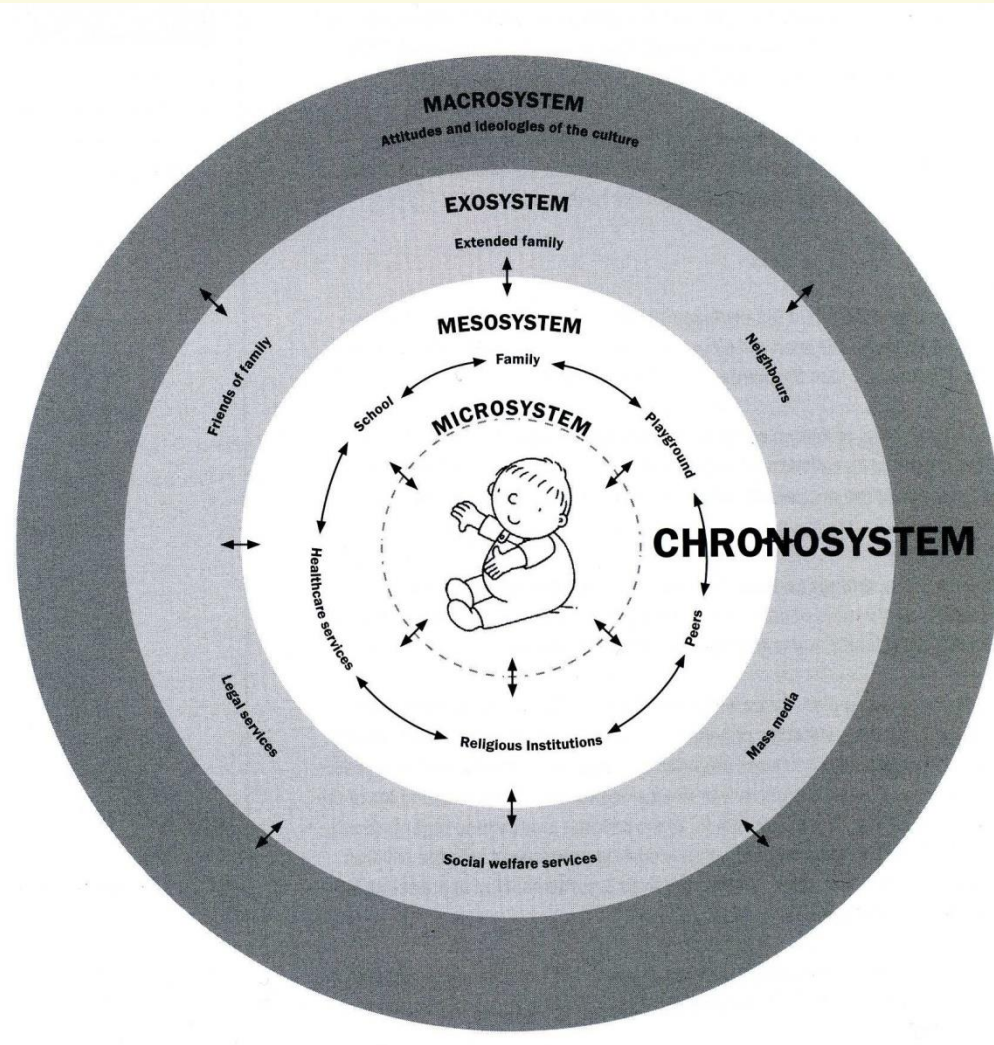
Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

- Integral to Vygotsky's work.
- Describes the intellectual distance between the learner and the teacher.
- Actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development through problem solving under adult guidance.
- Therefore development during the ZPD depends on social interaction with the more competent person supporting the other in the endeavour to reach a new level of development.

Bronfenbrenner (1998:996)

“Child development takes place through processes of progressively more complex interaction between an active child and the persons, objects and symbols in its immediate environment. To be effective the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time”

Bronfenbrenner's Chronosystem (Pound, 2008:10)



Children in the Context of Different Settings.

□ **Microsystem—**

Home, Religious setting,
Neighbourhood, School.

□ **Exosystem—**

School governors, Local
government, Parent's workplace,
Mass media, Local industry

□ **Macrosystem.**

Dominant beliefs and values of
culture



Determinant of Language

Language acquisition is determined by the complex interaction of biological, cognitive and social aspects of maturation (*Slobin*)

- Children construct language making use of innate-language specific capacities and other conceptual developments that interact with specific experiences in the physical and social environment.
- When there is disruption to one of these parts language development is affected.

Language Acquisition

Biological approach (*Chomsky*)

All humans are predisposed to acquire language - L.A.D. which allows children to grasp rules of grammar and use them unintentionally.

Once a child has mastered the basics, this allows for limitless combinations.

Lenninberg believed in a “predisposition” to language with the brain sensitive to acquiring language in a defined period - the critical period from birth to the onset of puberty.

Language Acquisition

Learning theory (*Skinner*)

Children learn to speak through observation, imitation and reinforcement, and are rewarded for producing sounds because they gain attention from their parents.

Observation & Modelling (*Bandura*)

Children “pick up” what they hear spoken around them and repeat it - accents confirm this. Can also be embarrassing.

Bilingualism/Multilingualism

- ❑ 1960's considered learning 2 or more languages hindered language and cognitive development.
- ❑ Found to be flawed - Children exposed to 2 languages before 3 years have little difficulty in learning both without adversely affecting cognitive development.
- ❑ Children sometimes mix phonology and grammar, but by 3 years develop awareness of independent systems and use them in different contexts.

Bilingualism/Multilingualism

- A positive asset.
- Advantages include: increased self-esteem, positive identity, positive attitudes towards language learning, increased problem solving abilities and flexibility in thinking and greater awareness of the power of language.
- Children's home languages should be valued not explicitly or implicitly undermined.

(Whitehead, 2004; Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke 2000, cited in Pound, 2008)

Summary

- Development is a life-long process.
- 280 days-the ball of cells, fertilized from a single ovum grows and develops into a unique human being.
- Humans all share a biological pattern of conception, infancy and growth into adulthood.
- Series of periods of rapid growth, accompanied by disequilibrium, and periods of consolidation.

Summary

- Development occurs in different areas of our being.
- Development occurs in different domains - physical (biological), cognitive (intellectual and language), psychosocial (emotional & spiritual).
- Development is a result of various forms of interaction between internal and external factors.

Finally

“In the midst of all the ‘crises’ & ‘transitions’ & ‘vulnerabilities’, development has a joyous quality. When a child masters a new skill, she is not just pleased-she is delighted & will repeat that new skill at length, quite obviously getting vast satisfaction from it...the same joyous quality can be part of family development as well” (Bee & Boyd, 2004:470)



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