

How Does Our Thinking Change With Age?

Chapter 6:
Cognitive Developmental Approaches



Modern Theories of Cognitive Development

The Sociocultural Perspective:
Vygotsky's Theory

What other cognitive theories explain how our thoughts develop

Sociocultural theories of cognitive
development

Vygotsky's Approach

- In contrast to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, Vygotsky believed that children are the products of their culture. Children are not boldly exploring alone, _____
- Vygotsky saw development as an apprenticeship in which children advance when _____
- Children are shaped by and are shaping their cultural contexts
 - They are intertwined with other people who are eager to help them gain skills and understanding

Sociocultural theorists believe the social nature of cognitive development is captured in the concept of *intersubjectivity*

Guided Participation

- _____

- Often occurs in situations in which the explicit purpose is to achieve a practical goal – such as assembling a toy – but in which learning also occurs as by-product of the activity

Vygotsky's ideas of so influential because

Vygotsky three most important contributions are the concepts:

Zone of Proximal Development

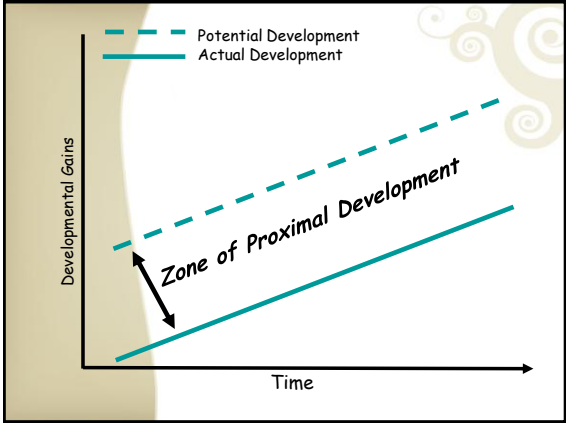
- _____

- when working under the guidance of more skilled adults or peers.
- Range of tasks too difficult for children to master alone but which can be learned _____

Think of a preschool child who is asked to clean her bedroom. She doesn't know where to begin.

Think on your own...
How do you guide her?

- By structuring the task for the child – “start by putting away your books, then your toys, then your clothes” – an adult can help the child accomplish what she cannot do by herself.
- Just as training wheels help children learn to ride a bike by allowing them to concentrate on other aspects of bicycling



Scaffolding

- Scaffolding is giving help _____
- Providing instruction that matches the learner’s needs exactly – neither too much nor too little
 - Early in learning a new task (when the child knows little), the _____
 - When the child begins to catch on to the task, the teacher _____

Scaffolding provides a temporary

on their own



Vygotsky and Language

- Children must use language to communicate with others before they can focus inward on their own thoughts
- Children must communicate externally and use language for a long period of time before

Private Speech

- Speech that is not directed at _____
- At first, children's behavior is regulated by speech from other people that is directed toward them
 - When children first try to control their own behavior and thoughts, without others present, _____
- As children gain ever-greater skill, private speech becomes inner speech (thoughts)

Example...

- A child working on a puzzle says to herself (out loud), “Start with the edges, look for pieces with straight sides.”



	Vygotsky	Piaget
Sociocultural context	Strong emphasis	Little emphasis
Stages	No general stages of development proposed	Strong emphasis on stages (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational)
Key processes	Zone of proximal development, scaffolding, private speech, tools of the culture	Assimilation, accommodation, circular reactions (primary, secondary, tertiary), hypothetical-deductive reasoning
Role of language	Major role, language plays important role in shaping thought	Minimal role, cognition primarily directs language
View of education	Education plays a central role, helping children learn the tools of the culture	Education merely refines the child's cognitive skills that already have emerged

Next Class...

How do we develop language and process information
