



**M1 UE 1.6**  
Child development, language  
acquisition & classroom  
activities:

Par

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S2 TD 4



- Teaching children in the *pre-operational period* (from 2-7 years old)
- Teaching children in the *operational period* (from 7 – 11 years old)

Use the various documents in the brochure to help you to reflect on the links between the stage of development of the child, language acquisition, and the usefulness of different types of classroom activities.

[I]f the development of the native language begins with free, spontaneous use of speech and is culminated in the conscious realization of linguistic forms and their mastery, then development of a foreign language begins with conscious realization of language and arbitrary command of it and culminates in spontaneous, free speech.

Vygotsky (1935)

### **Cycle 1 : le cycle des apprentissages premiers**

- Toute petite section de maternelle (2 - 3 ans)
- Petite section de maternelle (3 - 4 ans)
- Moyenne section de maternelle (4 - 5 ans)
- Grande section de maternelle (5 - 6 ans)

Il est organisé autour de cinq domaines :

- Mobiliser le langage dans toutes ses dimensions
- Agir, s'exprimer, comprendre à travers l'activité physique
- Agir, s'exprimer, comprendre à travers les activités artistiques
- Construire les premiers outils pour structurer sa pensée
- Explorer le monde

### **Cycle 2 : le cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux**

- Cours préparatoire (CP) (6 - 7 ans)
- Cours élémentaire niveau 1 (CE1) (7 - 8 ans)
- Cours élémentaire niveau 2 (CE2) (8 - 9 ans)

Le cycle 2 est organisé autour de sept domaines fondamentaux :

- Français
- Langues vivantes (étrangères ou régionales)
- Enseignements artistiques
- Éducation physique et sportive
- Enseignement moral et civique
- Questionner le monde
- Mathématiques

### **Cycle 3 : le cycle de consolidation**

- Cours moyen niveau 1 (CM1) (9 - 10 ans)
- Cours moyen niveau 2 (CM2) (10 - 11 ans)
- Classe de 6<sup>e</sup> (11 - 12 ans)

Les matières enseignées sont les suivantes :

- Français
- Langues vivantes (étrangères ou régionales)
- Arts plastiques
- Éducation musicale
- Histoire des arts
- Éducation physique et sportive
- Enseignement moral et civique
- Histoire et géographie
- Sciences et technologie
- Mathématiques

## **Sensory-Motor Period**

*This childhood development stage lasts from 0 to 2 years*

According to Piaget's theory, children are born with basic "action schemas," such as sucking and grasping. He described the sensory-motor period (from birth to 2 years) as the time when children use action schemas to "assimilate" information about the world. In his book "The Language and Thought of the Child," Piaget describes two functions of children's language: the "egocentric" and the "socialized." During the sensory-motor period, children's language is "egocentric": they talk either for themselves or "for the pleasure of associating anyone who happens to be there with the activity of the moment." "Children are learning and thinking through their senses and the manipulation of objects in the world around them" (Berk, 2000).

## **Pre-operational Period**

*This Childhood Development Stage lasts from 2 – 7 years.*

Piaget observed that during this period, children's language makes rapid progress. The development of their mental schemas lets them quickly "accommodate" new words and situations. From using single words (for example, "milk"), they begin to construct simple sentences (for example, "mommy go out"). Piaget's theory describes children's language as "symbolic," allowing them to venture beyond the "here and now" and to talk about such things as the past, the future, people, feelings and events. "In this stage children are using symbols to represent the previous stage's findings; Language, memory, and the use of objects in make-believe play are acquired" (Berk, 2000).

Around this time, children learn around 10 new words a day and begin to understand emotions such as love, trust, and fear. Children also begin to learn through pretend play, or "make-believe". However, their view of others and logic isn't well understood, and children have a self-centered view of the world. In this stage, children begin to use their imaginary and memory skills and begin to develop their social interaction skills and play cooperatively with children their own age. They will begin to develop their cognitive abilities.

Children learn to read, develop routines and display an increased attention span. At the beginning of this stage, children develop their attention, long-term and short-term memory. As children get older, they learn to control their attention and use their cognitive abilities to help them solve problems and achieve their goals. Also during this stage of development, auditory processing is further refined. This is highly important in

improving reading skills. During this time, children's language often shows instances of what Piaget termed "animism" and "egocentrism."

### **Animism and Egocentrism**

"Animism" refers to young children's tendency to consider everything, including inanimate objects, to be alive. Since they see things purely from their own perspective, children's language also reflects their "egocentrism," whereby they attribute phenomena with the same feelings and intentions as their own. Piaget's theory also describes "moral realism" as a characteristic of children's language development at this stage, since young children tend to focus on the extent of any damage caused by a person's actions, without taking into account whether that person had good or bad intentions.

### **Concrete operational stage**

*This Childhood Development Stage is from 7-11 years.*

According to Piaget, children's language development at this stage reveals the movement of their thinking from immature to mature and from illogical to logical. Children's language also reflects their ability to "de-centre," or view things from a perspective other than their own. It is at this point that children's language starts to become "socialized," showing characteristics such as questions, answers, criticisms and commands.

During this childhood development stage, children learn to be less egocentric and self-centered. They begin to think about the thoughts and feelings of others, and they are more aware of their own thoughts and feelings and the rules around sharing them with others. Children are also able to think in a more logical manner and see the world from the view of others.

However, at this stage, a child's thought is often rigid, therefore they tend to struggle with abstract concepts. Here children learn that things, such as volume and weight, can stay the same despite changes in the appearance of objects. For example, two different glasses can hold the same volume of water. Also, at this stage, children's attention span begins to increase with age. At the age of six, the child may be able to focus on a task for around 15 minutes. At the age of nine, children can focus on a task for around an hour. "In this stage reasoning is in the process of becoming

logical. There is organisation of collected information, but adult abstract reasoning is not apparent” (Berk, 2000).

### **The formal operation Period**

*This Childhood Development Stage is from 11 years onwards.*

“Using logical thinking adolescents in this stage associate symbols with abstract concepts. Adolescents can now solve scientific problems with numerous potential conclusions” (Berk 2000).

**Be careful – this document outlines some central ideas but all researchers do not agree ...**

Some experts, such as Margaret Donaldson, Professor of Developmental Psychology, have argued that the clear-cut ages and stages forming the basis of Piaget's theory are actually quite blurred and blend into each other. In her book, "Children's Minds," Donaldson suggests that Piaget may have underestimated children's language and thinking abilities by not giving enough consideration to the contexts he provided for children when conducting his research.

#### REFERENCES

PIAGET (2005) THE LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT OF THE CHILD  
DONALDSON (1979) CHILDREN’S MINDS

Source: Julie Vickers at :

<https://www.theclassroom.com/jean-theory-child-language-development-6587239.html>

Teaching the Preoperational Child (Toddler and Early Childhood)	
Use concrete props and visual aids to illustrate lessons and help children understand what is being presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use physical illustrations.</li> <li>• Use drawings and illustrations.</li> </ul>
Make instructions relatively short, using actions as well as words, to lessen likelihood that the students will get confused.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After giving instructions, ask a student to demonstrate them as a model for the rest of the class.</li> <li>• Explain a game by acting out the part of a participant.</li> </ul>
Do not expect the students to find it easy to see the world from someone else's perspective since they are likely to be very egocentric at this point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid lessons about worlds too far removed from the child's experience.</li> <li>• Discuss sharing from the child's own experience.</li> </ul>
Give children a great deal of physical practice with the facts and skills that will serve as building blocks for later development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use cut-out letters to build words.</li> <li>• Avoid overuse of workbooks and other paper-and-pencil tasks.</li> </ul>
Encourage the manipulation of physical objects that can change in shape while retaining a constant mass, giving the students a chance to move toward the understanding of conservation and two-way logic needed in the next stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to play with clay, water, or sand.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations about the changes the students are experiencing when manipulating objects.</li> </ul>
Provide many opportunities to experience the world in order to build a foundation for concept learning and language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take field trips.</li> <li>• Use and teach words to describe what they are seeing, doing, touching, tasting, etc.</li> <li>• Discuss what they are seeing on TV.</li> </ul>

Teaching the Concrete Operational Child (Middle Childhood)	
Continue to use concrete props and visual aids, especially when dealing with sophisticated material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide time-lines for history lessons.</li> <li>• Provide three-dimensional models in science.</li> </ul>
Continue to give students a chance to manipulate objects and test out their ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate simple scientific experiments in which the students can participate.</li> <li>• Show craftwork to illustrate daily occupations of people of an earlier period.</li> </ul>
Make sure that lectures and readings are brief and well organized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use materials that present a progression of ideas from step to step.</li> <li>• Have students read short stories or books with short, logical chapters, moving to longer reading assignments only when the students are ready.</li> </ul>
Ask students to deal with no more than three or four variables at a time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require readings with a limited number of characters.</li> <li>• Demonstrate experiments with a limited number of steps.</li> </ul>
Use familiar examples to help explain more complex ideas so students will have a beginning point for assimilating new information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare students' own lives with those of the characters in a story.</li> <li>• Use story problems in mathematics.</li> </ul>
Give opportunities to classify and group objects and ideas on increasingly complex levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give students separate sentences on slips of paper to be grouped into paragraphs.</li> <li>• Use outlines, hierarchies, and analogies to show the relationship of unknown new material to already acquired knowledge.</li> </ul>
Present problems which require logical, analytical thinking to solve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide materials such as Mind Twisters, Brain Teasers, and riddles.</li> <li>• Focus discussions on open-ended questions which stimulate thinking (e.g., are the mind and the brain the same thing?)</li> </ul>

	<b>Piaget</b>	<b>Vygotsky</b>
<b><i>Defining Characteristics</i></b>	Stages, development drives learning, learner centered	Social interactions, Zone of Proximal Development, learning drives development
<b><i>Mechanisms of Change</i></b>	Innate development, stages, assimilation, accommodation, equilibration	Scaffolding, social interactions, cultural development, internalization
<b><i>Readiness</i></b>	Genetic development growth, biological stages, has to be developmentally appropriate	ZPD has to contain the capabilities that are being taught, scaffolding
<b><i>Role of Student</i></b>	Actively manipulates objects/ideas, continually invents/reinvents knowledge through interaction with the world	Interact with instructor, peers, and socio-cultural environment to solve problems.
<b><i>Role of Teacher and Classroom</i></b>	Provide environment that encourages students to interact and ask probing questions.	Engage learners in socially-organized activities, provide scaffolding for learner.
<b><i>Endpoints</i></b>	Hypothetically everyone can reach the endpoint.	Learning how to think.

### **Est-ce vrai qu'il est plus facile d'apprendre une langue étrangère quand on est un enfant ?**

Tout dépend de quoi on parle et tout dépend de la situation. Les sciences cognitives nous apprennent que l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère repose sur les mêmes processus que ceux de la langue maternelle, en revanche c'est le contexte qui fait toute la différence. En situation d'immigration, l'enfant ou l'adulte apprenant bénéficie d'un bain linguistique important et ses compétences se développent donc rapidement. Chez l'adulte, les capacités cognitives, qui permettent l'analyse explicite de certains phénomènes, favorisent un apprentissage analytique. Le jeune âge est plus favorable à l'acquisition d'une bonne prononciation (Asher & Garcia), mais un âge plus avancé favorise l'apprentissage des aspects morphologiques et syntaxiques (Gaonac'h). En situation d'apprentissage institutionnel, les conditions sont différentes. Les élèves utilisent une langue de communication qui leur est commune et les temps d'exposition à la langue étrangère sont circonscrits. Le rôle du professeur dans ces moments dédiés à la langue est de mettre en place des stratégies et une progressivité qui garantissent des apprentissages.

*Guide pour l'enseignement des langues vivantes à l'école (2019 :6)*

### **La progressivité de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage**

Lev Vygotsky parle de la zone proximale de développement, c'est à dire qu'il s'agit de proposer à l'élève un objet d'étude qui est à un niveau immédiatement supérieur à celui qu'il maîtrise déjà et qui permet une progression. Ce développement est facilité par l'interaction avec un adulte ou avec un pair qui propose ce que Jérôme Bruner nomme un étayage. Ainsi quand on demande à l'élève : What's your favourite ice-cream flavour?, on peut accompagner son développement en proposant un étayage sous la forme de propositions : Do you prefer strawberry, chocolate or vanilla?. L'apprentissage se construit alors progressivement avec, en premier lieu, la possibilité pour l'élève de choisir parmi une liste de propositions puis, après cette phase d'entraînement, la capacité à répondre directement à la question initiale et, enfin, à exprimer ses goûts de manière spontanée : I like strawberry ice-cream. L'enfant apprend ainsi avec l'aide d'une intervention tutoriale, celle-ci pouvant venir du professeur ou d'un autre élève.

*Guide pour l'enseignement des langues vivantes à l'école (2019 :7)*

## L'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue

On estime le bain linguistique d'un locuteur natif à 70 heures par semaine. Un bébé qui apprend à parler traite la langue de manière statistique sans s'en rendre compte, c'est-à-dire qu'il repère les régularités puis les irrégularités. Ce traitement est rendu visible lorsque l'enfant sur-généralise une règle : le petit enfant qui dit « ils sontaient » pour « ils étaient » applique à un verbe irrégulier une règle qu'il a élaborée sur la base de régularités observées. C'est ce que l'on appelle l'apprentissage incident, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'y pas d'objectif d'apprentissage de la part de l'enfant (il peut en revanche y avoir ce type d'objectif de la part de l'adulte qui reprend ce que dit l'enfant et le corrige). Mais, dans le cas de l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère à l'école, l'exposition est trop faible pour permettre à l'élève de mettre au point ses propres règles et comprendre seul le fonctionnement de la langue. En revanche, la maturité cognitive de l'enfant à l'école élémentaire est supérieure à celle du bébé et son réseau langagier dans sa langue maternelle est déjà très élaboré. Certaines données linguistiques vont faciliter l'acquisition de la langue étrangère, tandis que d'autres vont la parasiter.

*Guide pour l'enseignement des langues vivantes à l'école (2019 :8)*

### Questions ...

- 1) En quoi le processus d'apprentissage d'une L2 en contexte scolaire diffère-t-il de l'apprentissage d'une Langue maternelle ?
- 2) Après ces lectures, que pensez-vous de la manière d'enseigner les langues vivantes à l'école primaire que nous avons vue en TD1 ?
- 3) Après ces lectures, quelles différences fondamentales faut-il avoir entre l'enseignement des LVE en cycle 2 et en cycle 3 ?
- 4) En quoi le stade de développement de l'enfant peut-t-il avoir un effet sur la manière à donner des consignes ?
- 5) Faut-il enseigner la culture différemment en cycle 2 et en cycle 3 ?

- 1) **Read** *Guide pour l'enseignement de langues vivantes à l'école p8 -13*  
3 sections du chapitre « L'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue »
- ✓ Comment étudier la grammaire ?
  - ✓ Quelle place à donner à la phonologie ?
  - ✓ Comment fixer et enrichir le lexique ?

- 2) Mettre ces informations en lien avec le contenu de notre cours aujourd'hui (TD2) afin de répondre à la question suivante :

- Etant donné les différences de maturité cognitive des enfants d'âge différent, d'après vous, quels types d'activités pouvez-vous utiliser avec des différents niveaux de classe ?