

Educational psychology revised essay

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Piaget's theory of cognitive development is widely studied in the fields of both education and psychology. It has been utilized to explain the manner by which people of different ages learn.

In educational psychology, Piaget's learning theory is considered the foremost cognitive learning theory. Many educational psychologists have expounded on Piaget's theory and have determined the theory's application in different scenarios. One area of study has been explored is the application of Piaget's theory in the classroom setting. Although many have written on the possible classroom activities that maybe undertaken for various age levels in relation to Piaget's theory; there has been little attempt to determine the use of the theory from the teacher's perspective. This research aims to look into Piaget's theory in relation to the classroom setting. Specifically, this research aims to provide details with regards to how Piaget's theory is applied in the classroom context. More importantly, this research will utilize the experiences and inputs of a teacher since this study looks at the issue from the perspective of the instructor. Various studies have been conducted that attempt to expound on Piaget's theory in relation to the classroom setting.

Researchers from the field of education have explored the said topic as seen from various perspectives. There are likewise those who have provided a general overview of the influence of Jean Piaget's theory on educational instructional strategies. For instance, Marcy Driscoll (1994) discusses the principles of instructions that are the directly results of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Driscoll (1994) states the three primary principles as follows:

- The learning environment must agree and support the activity to

be undertaken • Peer learning is a valuable learning tool • Instructional strategies must make the learner aware of conflicts or inconsistencies in his thinking. One commonly explored principle among those stated is peer learning. Peer learning is an instructional strategy that many researchers have studied.

(De Lisi, R. , & Golbeck, S. L. , 1999; De Lisi, 2002) Such studies investigate the value of peer learning and its use in the classroom. Piaget stated that cognitive development is influenced by social transmission. (Woolfolk & Margetts, 2007) Peer learning is a form of social transmission that occurs inside the classroom or sometimes even out of the classroom.

Other researchers have attempted to provide details with regards to the ways by which Jean Piaget's theory can be applied to the teaching of specific subjects including mathematics. (Kamii, C, 1999; Ginsburg, 1982; Adler, 1963) In the case of other subjects, Piaget's theory has been dealt with as well. For instance, Bower (n. d) discussed in the application of Piaget's theory in music education. In this paper, further detail and analysis will be provided on the said issue.

Research was undertaken to determine the teachers' perspective on the relation of Jean Piaget's theory in the classroom context. Method As Piaget is a leading cognitive theorist, we could assume that teachers use his theory and framework as a basis for creating a structured and successful learning environment. Participant The participant in this research paper is Jane (pseudonym) who has been a teacher for ten years, her area of expertise is Special Education of both gifted and talented and remedial students. Her

qualifications include: Masters of Education (Special Education), 2004 (University of Sydney) Bachelor of Education (Honours), 1998 (University of Technology Sydney) Bachelor of Teaching – Primary, 1997 (University of Technology Sydney) At present Jane is working as a Special Education teacher in a private school in Sydney's Eastern suburbs. She is teaching students ranging from K-12 and her class size can range from individual one-on-one support to whole grade teaching with up to 60 students at any one time.

Jane volunteered in response to my request to be the participant in this research paper, she was verbally assured that her details would be kept confidential. She has provided written consent prior to commencing the study and this is attached in the appendix. Jane's primary role is to identify students in need of intervention across all key learning areas and design individual education programs. She works in partnership with class teachers to ensure seamless integration between support and regular classroom activities so that students receive appropriately differentiated instruction and works closely with parents to construct student's profiles and provide structured home activities to consolidate school based learning.

Jane is also responsible for co-ordinating visits from educational support professionals such as child psychologists or behaviour support team members and must complete both statement reports and AIS funding applications. In addition to this Jane has a two and a half year old daughter and has developed her own differentiated Mathematics program which is used by over two hundred teachers in schools both across Australia and

overseas. This interview was recorded and a copy of the transcript is included in the appendix. Jane was given the questions prior to the interview, to enable her to prepare to for the interview. The main themes of the interview questions were the important aspects of the cognitive learning process and the role that teachers, parents and peers play in assisting a child develop. Results The analysis of the teacher interview revealed their views on cognitive development.

It was evident and included aspects that derive from Piaget's theory and views that represented Piaget's framework. Basically, Jean Piaget's theory as applied in the classroom setting is shown through the interaction that students have with others including their classmates and their teachers. Teachers observe that in certain cases, discussion with others greatly helps understanding a concept or idea.

Secondly, Piaget's theory is seen prior to the introduction of a new topic or idea. Students must be prepared in the sense that they are at the right stage of learning to absorb the information to be presented. In other words, the students must be ready for the new idea in terms of their thinking or their level of thought. Finally, the learning environment should be suitable for learning. A transcription of the interview conducted is found as Appendix A/ Conclusion This study aimed to determine the application of Piaget's theory of cognitive development in the classroom. Specifically, this study aimed to determine what the teachers see as the relation of Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development in the classroom context. By interviewing a teacher,

several areas of the classroom setting were observed to be related or based on Piaget's theory.

One valuable principle is that of assimilation. Teachers build on the knowledge that the students have of a particular issue. They try to relate a new idea to the learning that has previously taken place. In turn, students try to make sense of the new concept based on what they already know. (Woolfolk & Margetts, 2007) Secondly, peer learning and social interaction are valuable tools in learning.

This coincides with Piaget's idea of social transmission as earlier mentioned. As the interview made evident, by conversing and discussing with their fellow students, learners are able to understand better the concepts presented before them. Learning is facilitated by interaction with peers and other people. Lastly, the ideas being taught must coincide with the developmental stage of the student. Teachers believe that no matter how well a subject is taught, if the student is not ready for it, he will not be able to grasp the subject matter.

Teachers believe that children primarily learn by experience. This coincides with Piaget's principle that children must be taught how to learn and, " Education should form not furnish the minds of students. " (Woolfolk & Margetts, 2007) Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development does not clearly state how it is evident in the classroom setting. However, this research has shown how such theory is made evident in the classroom context and how teachers' views are based on the framework of Jean

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