

Response for vygotsky

Philosophy



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Vygotsky puts forth the theory of a zone of proximal development. In children, the zone of proximal development is the potential of actual development. This means if a child is taught through imitation or through collaboration, the capability of development is the zone of proximal development. Animals like primates do not have the zone of proximal development because imitation in animals cannot turn into actual development. Learning is related to child development, but does not come in equal portions. One will always outweigh the other. In contrast, Piaget only judges child development through actual development. Vygotsky suggests that Piaget is using adult thinking to solve a child's actual thought process. Both views have merit to a degree, but Vygotsky's view can help expand a child's education from what is to what can be.

The zone of proximal development is the ability of the child to mimic or learn through group intervention. The zone of proximal development is the abilities the child can be taught. Vygotsky feels that the child should be judged on the level of zone proximal development. Vygotsky gave an example about two children being on the same level in actual development, but having a different zone of proximal development. Vygotsky asserts that children having a different zone of proximal development will not experience the same level of actual development.

Piaget does not agree with the zone of proximal development, but rather asserts that the test of actual development is the level a child should be judged by. Piaget feels current tests of actual development are the true measure of the child's ability. Vygotsky's method contends that the zone of proximal development is not just potential. For example, a child might mimic a simple behavior that they can grasp like a simple math problem. However,

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if an advanced mathematics was introduced, no matter how many times demonstrated, the child would not pick up the skill. The zone of proximal development is what a child can achieve with help, not impossible tasks beyond their level of development.

The zone of proximal development leads to actual development according to Vygotsky. His point of view is tests like Piaget uses only test the actual development, not the actual ability to develop or the rate of development. Learning and development are never on an equal basis. The development is either before or after learning. The two are not parallel in relation to each other.

Vygotsky also pointed out that animals do not have a zone of proximal development. Since primates can only mimic behaviors, not actually learn on an intellectual level, they do not have a zone of proximal development. A level of understanding will never occur to the animal. Animals only have actual development to their limit. Humans on the other hand have the ability to learn. This is the difference between humans and animals. Humans can mimic behavior, but can also learn from the demonstration. Animals can only mimic the behavior. Thus only humans possess a zone of proximal development.

The method Vygotsky uses makes sense. Instead of using just actual development, the measurement of the zone of proximal development can give educators an insight into their students. If the zone of proximal development is utilized instead of just actual development, gifted and non-gifted children could be recognized more easily. Instead of grouping children into actual development levels, their ability to learn could also be a factor in their education. However, this is a hard area to test. The zone of proximal

development cannot exactly be measured like actual development can be measured.

Vygotsky's theory of a zone of proximal development is interesting option. The zone of proximal development is how quickly a child picks up with help abilities. This is measured on a child's ability to learn and their actual development. Piaget in contrast uses only actual developmental tests. The impact on the education system has been Piaget's over Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. The education system might see a difference if both methods could be reconciled.

Work Cited

Vygotsky, Lev S. "Interaction Between Learning and Development." *Mind in Society: The development of higher psychological processes*. 1978. pp. 71-91.