

# Child development – piaget's theories essay

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Introduction Method Female; Age: 4yr. 5mo.

; Caucasian Possible Influencing Factors: other preschool children in the general area of the school classroom; minimal attempted interaction, despite my and the teachers explanation that they needed to let us separate and alone for a little while. Female; Age: 5yr. 3mo. ; African American Possible Influencing Factors: other preschool children in the general area of the school classroom; though separated at a table in the corner, she was slightly distracted by the others and their various activities. Procedure The playdough was then formed into two identical balls. We established that they were indeed identical, the same. One ball was rolled into a snake shape. The participant was asked “ Does this one have more (pointing to the snake), does this one have more (pointing to the ball), or are these the same? ” The participant's answer was recorded.

The snake was then formed back into an identical ball. Next, a flat pancake was created by squishing down one of the two balls. Again, the participant was asked “ Does this one have more (pointing to the pancake), does this one have more (pointing to the ball), or are they the same? ” Their answer was recorded. Finally, the pancake was formed back into an identical ball. Once more, participant was asked “ Does this one have more, does this one have more, or are these the same? ” The participant's answer was then recorded. The playdough was put away.

A variety of colored paper circles, squares, and triangles was placed on the table very randomly. The child was asked to sort them into groups of which

ones belonged together. When they were finished, they were asked why they sorted them the way they did.

Their groupings and their reasons were recorded. Then the colored shapes were mixed up again. Once again, they were asked to sort them and give their reasons. This was recorded. For all of this, the two participants did these activities separately and independently, in the order as listed under participants.

The materials that were needed were: playdough; a popsicle or craft stick; six 3in. paper triangles – 2 red, 2 blue, 2 green; six 3in. paper circles – 2 red, 2 blue, 2 yellow; six 3in. paper squares – 2 red, 2 green, 2 yellow; and a pencil and paper to record data. Results For the conservation task, the first participant answered that they were the same with the snake/ball, the pancake was bigger with the pancake/ball, and they were the same with the ball/ball.

I found these particular answers very interesting, and unexpected. What surprised me most was the answer for the snake/ball, especially compared to the others. I thought that if she could understand that the snake and ball were the same, she would have also known that for the pancake and ball. In the classification task, she sorted according to color and gave the reason “ Because they match! ” She did the same sorting for the second time. She could not, therefore, find a different way to classify them. Answering for the conservation task, she said the snake was bigger, the pancake was bigger, and the two balls were the same.

This is the type of answer that I would expect. I did find it very funny and cute when she used the “ eenie, meenie, miney, mo” method to decide with the pancake/ball. With the classification task, she grouped according to shapes. Her reason was “ They’re the triangles. ” (pointing first at the squares and then correcting herself and pointing at the triangles) When she did the task a second time she grouped the same way. However, she did briefly start to put them by colors. She seemed to be getting close to understanding the multiple different ways to group things.

Discussion The symbolic play aspect of the observation was the most entertaining in my opinion, as well as the most insightful. It offers valuable perspective of the children, and their creativity and expression. This definitely showed the semiotic function aspect of Piaget’s preoperational stage of development. They used rough but definitely recognizable representations of the objects or activities they described while playing with the playdough. I was lucky to have very expressive participants. This made it all the easier to gain positive and effective feedback. Both of the participants struggled, as expected, with the conservation tasks.

The first participant did seem to understand somewhat when it came to the snake. This does not seem to follow according to the basic principles of conservation in relation to the preoperational stage of development. The only reasoning I could find was that she was in a transformation or transition period where she was beginning to understand the concept of conservation. It was explored whether there could have been any influencing factor. The

only possibly relevant issue was that the snake was thicker and shorter in this instance.

## **References**