

A child study

Education



I observed a child d Ahmed in the setting to decipher the various s of development that Ahmed was going through. Ahmed comes from a Middle Eastern family and is three years old. Currently Ahmed is old enough to walk independently and can understand spoken English. However, Ahmed's verbal skills are limited since English is not his first language and the use of Arabic at home has limited Ahmed's verbal development of the English language. In order to administer Piaget's test for understanding other's points of view, I observed Ahmed during his play time. At the start of my observations, Ahmed was reclusive and was not open to the idea of sharing with other children. This was evidenced by Ahmed's habit of taking toys and retreating to a corner to play on his own without showing any concern for other children. Over time, as Ahmed was exposed to the other children through his daily interactions with them, Ahmed started becoming more and more open to other children. Initially, Ahmed was only willing to accept his own self and would tend to walk away with his toys if some other child came close by. Over time, Ahmed developed enough tolerance to allow other children to come close by and sit while Ahmed played on his own. Ahmed only allowed other children to play with him when he realised that he would have to consistently interact with these children for a period longer than that in the nursery. Essentially, this signifies that Ahmed began to realise that other children had a point of view of playing with the toys that Ahmed had. It could be surmised that this indicates a development in that the child is more willing to accept other children's points of views as evidenced by Piaget's research (Rogoff, 2003). One of the more important observations in Ahmed's case comes from his use of language at the start of the observation period and now. Initially, Ahmed had to be communicated with using visual cards

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since Ahmed failed to understand intelligible application of English words and phrases. This could be attributed in large part to Vygotsky's model of development that emphasises that socio cultural factors act significantly to affect a child's early development (Van der Veer, 2007). Ahmed was exposed to Arabic alone at home and so was unable to understand or speak English. However, once Ahmed became a regular at the setting, the application of English words and phrases by care givers as well as by children around Ahmed allowed him to improve his vocabulary significantly. It could be related that an enabling environment allowed Ahmed to scaffold into understanding English language (Bransford et al., 2000). In addition to this development, Ahmed also began to converse in English although his vocabulary is limited when compared to his peers of the same age. Again, this development indicates that Ahmed was able to learn to speak English words and phrases based on support provided by his peers and the practitioners in Ahmed's immediate environment (Clay, 2005). Ahmed's behaviour in terms of attachment has also changed significantly over time. In the start, Ahmed was detached from the setting and the primary care givers. Ahmed's attitude reflected his lack of attachment with the care givers. Ahmed would wander around at will and would rarely listen to the care givers in the setting. However, over time a few stressful situations, such as another child taking Ahmed's toys, prompted Ahmed to consult the care givers. This interaction and the improving language skills allowed Ahmed to become more closely associated with the care givers. Ahmed now understands that although the care givers disappear when the nursery's time ends, but they are still present and that Ahmed will have to encounter them continuously. This indicates clearly that Ahmed has formed object

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permanence in terms of the care giver's presence (Waters & Waters, 2006). Moreover, Ahmed would initially react to the care giver's presence each new day as if seeing the care giver for the first time. This behaviour persisted for around two weeks after which Ahmed realised that the care givers are available to help him. In the first two weeks, Ahmed would behave as a stranger to the care givers each morning but now he comes in and greets the care givers in a mixture of Arabic and English. Also, Ahmed now tries to gain the attention of the care giver by providing verbal cues. In case that the care giver does not provide immediate attention to Ahmed, he utilises gestures in order to grasp the attention of the care giver.

References

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