

# Piaget and his theory

Psychology



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

1) Explain Piaget's view of... In understanding the patterns of cognitive development in infants and children, and how families and teachers affect their development, the contributions of Jean Piaget (1896-1980) hold a very significant importance. Piaget's main focus has been on the cognitive organization of the knowledge which includes the effect of physical or mental perceptions on individual's actions. This paper discusses how Piagetian concepts help us explain changes in cognition.

Two year old Gabrielle cries when she does not find her mother in the bed when she wakes up. Three year old Sam hugs his father when he brings him a toy. Five year old Mike learns about animals when his grandmother tells him stories of how his grandfather spent a day in the jungle. This emotional attachment with the caregiver plays a great role in the changes in cognition right from infancy.

#### Adaptation

Adaptation is achieved through:

Assimilation. Six month old Michelle has built the schema of grabbing an object and thrusting it into the mouth. She grabs her favorite toy and puts it into her mouth. Having that schema built, she grabs her mom's spectacles and thrusts them into her mouth. One year old Bob has built the schema of animals as a four legged moving object. Whenever he sees a dog, he knows that it is an animal. This is called assimilation that changes the cognition by applying one schema to different objects.

Accommodation. When Michelle grabs a big rubber ball, she will use her old schema of grab-and-thrust, but this time she will not be successful. So, she will adapt her old schema to, may be squeeze-and-dribble, in order to deal with the new object. Also, when Bob sees a car, he tries to fit it into his old

schema of animals, but he adapts his schema to four wheeled vehicle when he sees that car is not like a dog. This adjustment of old schemas to suit new objects is called accommodation.

Equilibration is the concept which Piaget defined as balance between assimilation and accommodation (Berk & Roberts, 2009). Michelle learnt how to balance between assimilation and accommodation by applying earlier knowledge of grab-and-thrust and altering behavior to adjust new knowledge of squeeze-and-dribble.

### Organization

Children combine existing schemas into fresh, complex informational structures. For example, two year old Bobby has built the scheme of flying objects as objects that fly high up in the sky. He, then, assigns the subordinate classes of birds and airplanes to the super-ordinate class of flying objects. This helps him understand information faster. Three year old has the scheme of buildings as structures made of cement and bricks. He assigns houses and schools to this bigger scheme to organize the information.

### Case study

Seriation is the 7-12 year old child's ability to sort objects according to common properties, such as size, color, or shape. When nine year old Adrienne helps her father build furniture, this experience facilitates her advanced performance on seriation. For example, when her father teaches her how to order wooden sticks according to length; what items belong to the tool box; how many nails are needed to fix two boards together; and, how to order wood slabs with respect to weight, such lessons will help her gain advanced skills to solve seriation problems. For example, when she

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grows up, she will know how to organize her wardrobe; how to arrange books on her bookshelf; how many milk packs are there in a carton her mother usually buys; and, what should belong to her makeup box.

#### References

Berk, L. & Roberts, L. (2009). *Child Development* (3rd Canadian Ed.). Toronto: Pearson Education.