

Sensitive period essay



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In the essay I will define the term sensitive period and explain how the teacher's knowledge and understanding of these periods determines his/her preparation and custodianship of the prepared environment. The understanding of the sensitive period plays a vital role to the significant of a child's development at the early age of his environment. Montessori observed two special powers that appear to aid children in their task of development as individual in the first plane: children appear to go through periods of concentrating on specific capacities, and their minds seem to operate differently from ours.

She referred to the time frames involved in the child's development of a definitive ability as sensitive period. (Montessori, 1996, p. 25) Each sensitive period is period of a child special sensibility and psychological attitudes. This period is usually intense and prolonged activity which does not lead to fatigue or boredom, but instead leads to persistent energy and interest. A transitory state once realized,, the sensitive period disappears . Sensitive period are never regained, once they have passed.

The first main period of a child sensitive period is the sensitive period for order. Sensitive period for orders begins from birth at 18 months to 2. 5 years and extend to the age of five. Children usually seek for consistency and repetition. There exists a passionate love for established routines. For example in (Montessori in Angeline 2005) , Dr. Montessori recounted in that Piaget once played a hiding game with one of his children , hiding an object under a pillow , having this child leave the room, moving the object to another pillow, and then asking the child to find it .

When the child did not see the object under the first pillow, the child gave up. Piaget then showed the child how he had moved the object, and repeated the procedure. The child exactly the same way, whereupon Piaget lifted the second pillow and asked, "Did you see I put it here?" (on the prior hiding trial). "Yes", his child replied, "but it should be there" (pointing to the first pillow) (Montessori, 1966, pp. 53-54) Therefore, in this situation we may see that children is sensitive to orders. A child may put things back in the same place of order if given a chance to do so.

And having routines and orders may help a child in this sensitive period to be able feel more secure and happier in their environment. A child will also overcome sensitivity for waking and movement. A child loves to walk and capable of walking long distance which the environment provided to him. Through my observations of having physical activities with children in a circle music and movement time at the kindergarten, a child refuse or get frustrated when I am there to hold his hand and walking with him in a circle. His expression was telling me that "I can do by myself" from then onwards I realize that children likes to be independent and capable to walking confidently without careful assistant adults around him. Where such physical activities are not only conducive to physical health, but they also inspire courage and self confidence. (Montessori, 1972, p. 96) Therefore, this does not mean to leave the child without observation but providing an environment for the young children to learn and develop their physical and mental strength.

Montessori considered the two streams of energy—physical and mental—as a balance. If the child became unbalanced in either direction, his behavior would become abnormal. (Montessori Centre International) The surrounding and social environment plays a sensitive period in the child's life. A child may cry during his first of school when the place and environment is new to him. The child is sensitive to the new people he is not familiar with. A child will naturally be aware of its surroundings and feeling part of the group and plays well with his friends.

The awareness of manners and cooperative behavior grows in a slow pace and it does not appear immediately with constructive policy and rules to adjust oneself. Montessori describes it as the absorbent mind of the child which takes in the characteristics of the race. The child's characteristic, during his life as “the spiritual embryo”, is not discoveries of the intellectual, nor made by human work, but are mental qualities that we find in the cohesion of society. (Montessori, 2007, p. 207). The sensitive period can be divided into different classifications. For acquisition of gross and fine motor skills (walking and the use of the hands) is from 0-2.5 years of age. A child will develop this skill with the material and his environment prepared for them. The environments we prepare for this is the opportunities for the child to crawl, pull up, and encourage walk with or without assistance and not just left to sit by themselves.

A child is also given toys/materials that allow their hands to hook, bat, touch, turn, insert and grasp small items within their abilities. We have to give them toys or materials that improve the movement of the hand, and improve eye/hand coordination. These opportunities given to them need to be

repeated in order for these skills to be refined . Refinement/coordination of movement is from 2. 5 to 4. 5 years of age. This is when the child may start using both hands in coordination of fine movements, being able to hold small items with pincer grip and release voluntary.

Gross motor can be coordination of walking, running, balancing while carrying a jug of water and jumping. The child acquires this coordination through repetition of purposeful motor activity. Regular visits to the park or outdoor environment is likely to help this sensitive period. (<http://www.dailymontessori.com/sensitive-periods/sensitive-period-for-movement/>) As well as school that provides outdoor activities and even starting field trip at the very beginning of school term to get children well prepared with the