

DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIONAL COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

The study is designed to test the hypothesis that representational competence is influenced by the environment in which a child is living. A random sample of 30 students from elementary school was taken. A picture categorization (PCT) and objects categorization test (OCT) were used. It was found that student with backward families labeled pictures and objects correctly but failed to classify them correctly, for example, the picture of cowboy and horse were linked together. Piaget (1973) argues that child acts on the objects, but the knowledge he gains is not derived from the objects but it is derived from the experiences which he has got in his previous life and quality of these experiences is determined by child interaction with significant others. The basic assumption is that representational competence will emerge to the degree to which the environment activates it and the degree to which the quality of activation is acquired through learning. It was concluded that. Poor class children had difficulty to classify similar objects in the same category while children from enriched home environment completed the task correctly. Thus environment influence representational competence, therefore school is requested to create a democratic and friendly atmosphere where each child has an equal chance of participation.

INTRODUCTION

It has probably become evident that Piaget has produced a most extensive theory touching on virtually every aspect of human intelligence. He has given detailed discussion, regarding child development stages in an environment. He has provided new insight, particularly regarding the early development of representational thought. The word representation embodies the notion that a thing or event is capable of being portrayed or depicted in some medium or by some mode, the utility of the concept is that representation generally provide an economical way of conveying complex notions.

When Piaget describes the semiotic function, he is describing the most critical shift in child thought, from sensory motor to representational thinking this enable the child to begin the process of thinking in symbolic terms, to represent previous experiences and to begin to anticipate the future.

The study is designed to help the teacher and child to realize that objects and events can be represented in different modes, and around which, organization of lessons or curriculum units can be created to fulfill educational objectives. Further to test the significance of social factors influencing the course of this transition in Pakistan conditions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

What classes of social behaviours foster the development of representational thought?

Although representational thought is generic to the human, the quality and rate of its development depend upon the individual's life experiences.

OBJECTIVES

Following were the objectives of the study

To explore the representational competence of child from rich families.

To investigate the representational competence of children with poor family background.

To discover the effects of home environment on the representational competence of the children. To find out the father's income and educational qualification. To prepare a valid ground for further researchers in this particular field of cognitive psychology.

SIGNIFICANCE

Representational thinking plays a critical role in thought since it is characterized by the fact that it goes beyond the present, extending the field of adaptation both in space and time. It invokes what lies outside the immediate perceptual and active field.