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| Children think differently to adults. Infants use egocentric thinking. Children then develop abstract logical thinking before being able to use simple logic (concrete logical thinking) to solve problems.  Sensorimotor (birth–2 years) – interact with the world using their senses only  Preoperational (2-7 years) – development of language and make believe play. Do not understand mass, volume and number  Concrete operational (7-11 years) – understand simple logical principles  Formal operational (11-18 years) – reason through symbols  Schemas – stages of intellectual development (category of knowledge and way to achieve knowledge)  Tests of conservation – in the operational stage, children understand that something’s appearance may change but its quantity will stay the same. | ***Piaget*** |
| Age stages are more fluid than Piaget makes out  Children are less egocentric, such as understanding each other’s feelings  Bruner – children can be helped to progress to a higher level with adult support  More encouragement can help children learn logically  Some children take longer than 11 years to become skilled at abstract logical thinking | ***Criticisms of Piaget*** |
| The ability to communicate with a signed or spoken language is programmed genetically into individuals. All individuals have the ability to use language, regardless of other abilities, and to become fluent by the age of five or six.  LAD (language acquisition device) – everyone is born with this and it enables children to recognise and develop the languages they experience. Children are preprogrammed to acquire language.  Children cannot learn a new language through imitation alone because language is so irregular.  Babies need to experience other people thinking, but they do not need to be trained in order to speak. | ***Chomsky’s model of language acquisition*** |
| Lack of scientific evidence to support his theory  Bruner argued that social interaction is crucial and has far more influence on children’s ability to use language  Chomsky put too much emphasis on the grammar in sentence structure  Some children experience delayed language development, for example children who have a learning disability or hearing or speech impairment | ***Criticisms of Chomsky*** |
| Infants have an inbuilt need to form an attachment with a carer  Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects a child to their primary caregiver  Children are biologically preprogrammed to form attachments and infancy is a critical period for forming positive attachments  Children experience separation anxiety when separated from their mothers, this does not disappear even when they are cared for by someone else  Caregiver provides safety and security for their infant | ***Bowlby*** |
| Rutter – maternal deprivation in itself may not result in long-term problems and privation is much more damaging  Attachment is a learned behaviour and not the natural, biological process that Bowlby describes. | ***Criticisms of Bowlby*** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Age range | Stage | | Up to 3 months | Most babies respond to any caregiver | | 3 months up to 7 months | Infants can distinguish the difference between their main caregiver and other people but will accept care from anyone | | 7 months up to 9 months | Infants look to particular people for security, comfort and protection. Stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. | | 9 months + | Baby becomes more independent and forms multiple attachments | | ***Schaffer and Emerson*** |
| He researched large groups of children to find skills and abilities that children have in common. He wanted to establish ‘norms’ or milestones for each developmental aspect. He noted that each child moved through their development at their own pace.  He concluded that development is predetermined and environment has little influence.  Milestones are helpful for educators and parents to measure children’s development and recognise delays.  Criticisms: not helpful in explaining individual or cultural difference or for children with learning difficulties. | ***Gesell’s maturation theory*** |
| Young children copy the behaviour of other people that they see. This can be both positive and negative behaviour. Bandura noted four stages of behavioural learning:  Firstly, the child notices the behaviour of another person. This is likely to be someone close to them or who they admire, such as an older sibling. Secondly, the child ‘internalises’ the action by remembering what they have observed. Thirdly, although they may not copy straight away, they will reproduce the behaviour when the opportunity occurs. Lastly, depending on the outcome (**positive** or **negative** **reinforcement**) children will either repeat the behaviour or desist.  Bandura based his theory on a famous experiment using a Bobo doll in which he demonstrated that children learn and copy aggressive behaviour by observing adults behaving aggressively. | ***Bandura’s social learning theory*** |
| The **stress**-**diathesis** psychological model helps to explain how stress caused by life events (nurture) can interact with an individual’s genetic vulnerability (nature) to impact on their mental wellbeing. According to this theory, some individuals are born with certain biological or genetic predispositions to a mental illness, referred to as diathesis. A person who has a genetic predisposition to a psychological disorder might never develop the disorder if they do not experience stress in their life. High levels of stress, such as family conflict, abuse, trauma or problems at school, could trigger the onset for those with a predisposition. | ***Stress-diathesis model*** |
| Holmes and Rahe (1967) developed a questionnaire called the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) which identified major stressful life events. The SRRS identifies 43 life events each with a different score for a stress level. They asked individuals to score how the events they had experienced affected their stress levels. They discovered that the higher the score and the importance of each event identified, the more likely an individual was to become unwell. | ***Holmes-Rahe social readjustment rating scale*** |
| In 1961, psychologists Cumming and Henry proposed that older people naturally withdraw from social involvement as they get older. They concluded that older people have restricted opportunities to interact with others. Cumming (1963) further argued that older people experience reduced social contact and become increasingly ‘individual’ and less concerned with others’ expectations. She concluded that it is appropriate and healthy behaviour and that disengagement is a natural part of ageing. | ***Social disengagement theory*** |
| Activity theory was proposed as an explanation to ageing by Robert Havighurst in the 1960s. His ten year study of older people showed that, rather than an inevitable decline in interest in life and isolation, older people tend to adjust to the ageing process.  He recognised that this may involve adjusting to changes in health and/or mobility but theorised that older people’s needs can be satisfied by taking on new roles following retirement. Research supports his theory. Many older people look forward to retirement, viewing this part of their lifespan as an opportunity to pursue new hobbies and interests and to meet new friends. When people remain physically and socially active, their overall satisfaction and wellbeing is increased. This is important for reducing the risk of illness and increasing longevity. | ***Havighurst’s activity theory*** |