

COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVES OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**Dr.Poornima Pattanashetti****Chairperson, School of Education****Rani Channamma University, Belagavi.****Smt. B.M.Kadeshnavar****Research Scholar, RCU,Belagavi****Abstract:**

Present paper tries to focus on cognitive perspectives of language development. This will help us to understand children's comprehension, underlying mechanisms and methods to facilitate the development of cognition. Similarly language development of children will acquaint us with the specific nature and characteristics of language, interpersonal communication and implications of language development. Besides, paper focuses on implications of cognitive development for teachers so that they facilitate cognitive development of their students.

Keywords: Assimilation, Cognition, Hueristic, Semantcity, Syntax.

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Cognition means to perceive, comprehend and conceive or simply to know. Cognitive development would then mean the growth and capability of knowing, comprehending, or understanding over time, facilitated both by maturity and interaction with the environment. Cognition involves the ability to construct mental images involving thought, reasoning, memory and language. Mental images are constructed by an individual as the surroundings are observed, understood and internalized as a mental process. Thus every individual has a unique model based on a unique process of observation.

According to Bruner, cognitive development occurs in three phases- enactive (doing), iconic (object models of pictures) and symbolic (signs and symbols). Jean Piaget offers a rich framework for conceptualizing the development of the child's thinking and cognition during the span of his growing to an adult. To him, cognitive development means how knowledge is acquired and developed through successive stages and at various age levels. Hence his theory of cognition is sometimes called genetic epistemology. It focuses attention on the interaction between his biological inheritance and his environment for cognitive development.

In order to progress further into Piaget,s cognitive development processes, we could cognize the fact that all cognition takes place due to two processes:

- Assimilation which means taking in or absorbing stimuli from the environment.

- Accommodation which means making room for or adjusting to incoming stimuli.

These twin processes together facilitate adaptation. Adaptation is an ongoing process which helps the individual internalize or store in all that one comprehends. This then forms schemes or mental representations or maps of the world. All learning is adaptive as an infant learns to cry when hungry, or an adult learns to speak a native language in a foreign land. All these have adaptive value.

It is assumed that every living being has its language. But all of them cannot communicate like human beings. The language of human beings has certain characteristics which give a definite meaning to their communication. We can talk about the past, the present and the future with the help of language.

Language development and its usage both verbal and non-verbal are universal and central to human existence. Language functions as a means of communication, as a means of reflecting on and reorganizing experience, and as a way to receive and transform the accumulated knowledge and values of the community.

Much of language is learnt through socialization. Bernstein (1971) differentiates varying language development and communication systems between children belonging to positional families where communication is closed and children are seen and not heard so much, and those belonging to person centered families who have more open communication and their language develops with ease.

According to Chomsky (1968), language development is the result of the progressive gain of maturity- the unfolding of the child's genetic capability for language. Chomsky's (1976) model of language development attributed an innate understanding of fundamental rules, which get activated by the language the child hears and accounts for the speed and regularity of development.

Weil (1985) presents a universal sequence of developing language. His finding is that infrequent use of certain language items emerge in the sequence in a delayed manner. For example, Mother-Ma-Amma is early in the sequence than Master, etc.

Characteristics of language development: The following are the characteristics of language development:

Semanticity: The quality of language in which words are used as symbols for objects, events or ideas.

Syntax: The rules in a language for placing words in proper order to form meaningful sentences.

Productivity: The capacity to combine words into original sentences.

Displacement: The quality of language that makes one communicates information about objects and events in another time and place. Language makes possible the efficient transmission of large amounts of complex knowledge from one person to another and from one generation to another. Displacement

permits parents to warn children of their own mistakes. Displacement allows children to tell their parents what they did in school.

Functions of language

Language performs a number of functions based on the purpose of its use. Language with a functional purpose is illustrated by Michael Halliday as follows:

Instrumental: Language performs an instrumental function the way an individual satisfies the need by asking for something

Regulatory: It performs a regulatory function controlling another's behavior.

Interactional: It performs an interactional function- used for maintaining interpersonal.

Personal: Language performs a personal function- where one talks about oneself.

Heuristics: It performs a heuristic function to find out about the world in general.

Imaginative: It performs an imaginative function where one talks about one's imagination.

Informational: It also performs an informational function- to seek and give varied types of information.

Problems of Language Development

Children develop language skills through socialization. School is a socializing agency where children learn their language. But all children are not in equal their language ability. Some children face problems in this regard. The main problems of language development faced by children are presented as follows:

- Lack of initial listening and speaking opportunities.
- Inability to express through the spoken or written medium.
- Blocks due to genetic impairment of emotional problems of an impoverished environment.
- Or deep structural ambiguities, etc. Ambiguities in comprehension such as phonological, lexical
- Inadequate cognition of word meanings.
- Poor concept development.
- Over emphasis on writing prematurely.

The effective teacher should be aware of the problems faced by students in the classroom. He should create a homely environment in his class where students feel free to express and share their feelings, opinions and viewpoints with their teacher. Such an environment will facilitate the acquisition of language competency.

- Language is learned and developed in a social context for various purposes.
- For older children, one should provide ample scope to develop listening, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

- One should create settings where language may be used for various purposes.
- One should be cognizant of multilingual interferences, identify them and provide remedies.
- One should encourage students' creative efforts.
- One should de-emphasize excessive writing or rote repetition, provide a relaxed environment for free expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings, provide structural and semi-structural setting to express verbal and non-verbal ideas, organize debates, class discussions and displays, etc.
- One should help students develop early reading habits and enable them to do book reviews.

Language helps children learn habits, traditions, religions and customs of their culture. It is a carrier of one's culture. Every culture defines what to say, when and to whom, just as it dictates pronunciation, syntax and vocabulary. In culture where politeness is valued, for example, children learn polite forms of expression at a very early age. Sometimes children have to cope with the demands of two different cultures at the same time. Children whose sole language has been the mother tongue at a great disadvantage in those public schools which do not recognize the mother tongue as a legitimate dialect and teach classes in the standard language. These children may have difficulties in school. At home their speech is monitored by their parents for the proper expression of respect and familiarity, but at school it is monitored by their teachers for its analytical and problem solving qualities.

To conclude, language is a means of communication and a preserver and transmitter of culture. It serves various functions, such as personal, regulatory, heuristic, imaginative, etc. school is a socializing agency where children learn their language. The teacher should be aware of the problems faced by students in the classroom. He should create such atmosphere which facilitates acquisition of language competency.

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