

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

TOPIC 2: MODERN THEORIES OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 THE SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE: VYGOTSKY'S THEORY

- Sociocultural theories emphasize that cultures influence cognitive development by the tools that are available to support children's thinking, such as an abacus.
- For Vygotsky and other sociocultural theorists, the social nature of cognitive development is captured in the concept of intersubjectivity, which refers to mutual, shared understanding among participants in an activity.

THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

- The zone refers to the difference between the level of performance a child can achieve when working independently and the higher level of performance that is possible when working under the guidance of more skilled adults or peers (Daniels, 2011; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992).

SCAFFOLDING

- Scaffolding refers to a teaching style that matches the amount of assistance to the learner's needs.

PRIVATE SPEECH

- This behavior demonstrates private speech, comments not directed to others but intended to help children regulate their own behavior.

2.2 INFORMATION PROCESSING

- In the information-processing approach, cognition relies upon mental hardware and mental software.
- Just as computers consist of both hardware and software that the computer runs, information-processing theory proposes that human cognition consists of mental hardware and mental software.
- The mental hardware has three components: sensory memory, working memory, and long-term memory.

SENSORY MEMORY is where information is held in raw, unanalyzed form very briefly (no longer than a few seconds).

WORKING MEMORY is the site of ongoing cognitive activity.

LONG-TERM MEMORY is a limitless, permanent storehouse of knowledge of the world.