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An Introduction to DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Edited by Alan Slater and Gavin Bremner

The British Psychological Society

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An Introduction to Developmental Psychology

THIRD EDITION

EDITED BY
ALAN SLATER AND GAVIN BREMNER

The British Psychological Society

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An Introduction to Developmental Psychology

Third Edition

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Preface to Third Edition

Our aim in producing the third edition of this textbook is to offer a representative, comprehensive, and completely up-to-date 'state of the art' account of human development from conception to adolescence. We appreciated that this needed to be an edited book rather than one written by the two editors, since one can be an expert in one or two fields of study, but not all! By making it an edited book that fulfilled our aims of a comprehensive textbook we first decided the areas that needed covering, specified in detail the topics for each chapter, and then invited some of the world's leading experts to write the chapters. Our invitations were received with enthusiasm, and we have been extremely gratified at the ways in which our authors have responded to our suggestions. The dangers of uneven writing levels, and possible lack of integration of the chapters was dealt with in two ways. First, we gave clear and extensive instructions to our authors as to content and style, and of course carefully edited the chapters. Second, the editorial and production staff at Wiley reviewed each chapter carefully to ensure that the book reads well and coherently as a whole, and is well and appropriately illustrated.

The book is organised chronologically and also thematically, into five parts, each concerned with different aspects of development and each containing three or more chapters. For the third edition our authors have updated their chapters from the second edition, and we have added new chapters where appropriate. Here are brief comments on each part.

Part I: Introduction

In order to put child development into its modern context the student needs to be aware of the many ways that have been developed to explore development, and the theories that have developed from, and have guided this research. These are described in Chapters 1 and 2. One major topic that pervades almost all areas of development is the nature–nurture issue – to what extent do our genetic inheritance and our experiences across the life span influence and determine our development? This topic is explored in detail in Chapter 3.

Part II: Infancy

The Latin term 'infans' can be literally translated as 'the period without speech'. It is the advancement of the infant during this period, which we know as infancy, that is the starting point of child development, and the four chapters in Part II chart the course of this development. Although birth might seem to be the starting point of infant development, it is becoming increasingly recognised that developments prior to birth have considerable psychological implications. In Chapter 4 we have

an account of biological and psychological development from conception to birth. In order to act upon the world infants have to have functioning sensory systems, have to acquire knowledge of the people and objects in their world, and they have to convert this growing knowledge into action. The story of how this development takes place is given in Chapter 5. Infant development takes place at many levels and in many contexts. Chapter 6 begins the story of the infant's development into a social world and considers the development of emotions, with a particular emphasis on the formation of attachments with others. The theme of social development is continued in Chapter 7 with an account of how the infant's early exchanges with others gradually turn into effective communication.

Part III: Childhood

As the period of infancy draws to a close, around 18 months from birth, the early competencies continue to develop and many new aspects of development begin to make their appearance. These many developments are charted in Part III, which covers social and cognitive development. Chapter 8 continues the themes covered in Chapter 7 and explores the developing child's awareness of self and of gender. According to 'the giant of developmental psychology', Jean Piaget, a new stage of thinking emerges around 7 years of age. The preceding cognitive abilities that lead to these changes, the changes themselves, and alternative accounts of them, are given in Chapter 9. Language development, probably a uniquely human accomplishment, is the focus of Chapter 10, and Chapter 11 describes how it is that children learn that others have thoughts, ideas, feelings and beliefs that are often different from their own – that is, they develop a 'theory of mind'. In Western education it is vital that children learn to read and write and develop an understanding of mathematics. How they do so, and the complexities of the tasks facing the child, is the focus of Chapter 12. A vital cognitive ability, one that underlies all development, is our memory. Memory development is discussed in Chapter 13, along with its social implications – in particular, how reliable is memory, how truthful are children, how suggestible are they, and do they make reliable eye witnesses? Development takes place within the social network that surrounds the child, and as childhood progresses beyond infancy peer groups and peer relations become of great importance. This theme is explored in Chapter 14, which considers the topic of play and how it develops in the context of peer relations. Chapter 15 continues the theme of social interactions and asks how development of prosocial and antisocial behaviour takes place, and how the child's understanding of moral issues and concerns develops.

Part IV: Adolescence

The two chapters in Part IV give an account and overview of the major cognitive and social changes that take place in adolescence. In Chapter 16 the authors describe developments in perception and attention, memory, intelligence and reasoning. Piaget presented evidence that a major change in thinking develops in adolescence, known as *formal operational reasoning*. The authors describe and evaluate Piaget's account, and go beyond his theory to give alternative accounts of adolescent reasoning

and thinking. Adolescence is often thought of as a period of turmoil as the individual copes with raging hormones and the changes that accompany the transition from child to adult. The many aspects of social development that accompany adolescence are considered in Chapter 17, including such themes as storm and stress, the role of the family and of peer groups, developing independence, and romantic relationships.

Part V: Practical issues

There are, of course, many practical issues that accompany child development, and three of these important issues are considered here. Chapter 18 discusses the educational implications of what we have learned about children's development. Two major theoreticians whose work has had a major impact on educational thinking – Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky – are discussed in detail, and many other issues which include peers, educational practice and the role of the parents. Although it is our hope that children will grow up in a happy, supportive environment, this is not always the case. Chapter 19 demonstrates how vital it is to develop an understanding of the effects different adverse experiences may have on children's development, but also to understand the other side of the coin, children's resilience in the face of these adverse events. One of the major social problems that can dramatically affect children's school experiences is that of bullying. It is, sadly, all too common for children who are bullied to experience great misery, and we have long been aware that programmes are necessary in order to reduce the effects of bullying. Chapter 20 describes bullies and their victims, and outlines effective school-based intervention programmess that can help to overcome some of the problems. Many of the chapters in this book focus exclusively on 'normally developing' children, that is, those who are following a typical pattern of development. However, much can be learned by studying the development of children whose development is atypical. Chapter 21 considers different senses in which development can be thought of as being atypical, contrasting cases of delayed or accelerated development with cases in which development is qualitatively different or deficient in specific areas. It then goes on to review evidence regarding development of individuals with Williams syndrome, Down's syndrome, autism and ADHD, and also children with sensory deficits. Such studies are particularly important on two counts – their outcomes impact on practice and intervention with children with disabilities, and have implications for our understanding of development in general.

Pedagogical features and dedicated website

The book comes with a range of pedagogical features that contribute to the students' learning experience. Each chapter begins with an overview and the key concepts that are highlighted in the text. The chapters end with discussion points that focus on the important issues that have been raised, and with suggestions for further reading for those who wish to expand and develop their knowledge of the area. The book has a dedicated website that contains among other things: brief details of **all authors and co-authors**; all **figures and tables,** which can be downloaded for PowerPoint presentations. For **instructors** who adopt the text there is password-protected access

to 420 **multiple-choice questions** – 20 for each chapter – and for **students** a sample of 10 multiple-choice questions for each chapter is given in the website.

Overview

In summary, *Introduction to Developmental Psychology, Third Edition* has been written by a group of internationally known and respected authors who are at the forefront of research, and they give an unrivalled high level of expertise and insight across all topics. The result is an outstanding and authoritative 'state of the art' chronicle of human development from conception to adolescence, which gives a stimulating account of theories, findings, and issues in this fascinating area. The text is designed for a broad range of readers, and in particular those with little prior exposure to psychology. The comprehensive coverage and emphasis on core topics in human development make it an excellent text for introductory students. We owe enormous thanks to our authors, and to Wiley.

Alan Slater and Gavin Bremner

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Brief Contents

List of Contributors xxi
Preface to Third Edition xxiii

PART I INTRODUCTION 1

1 The Scope and Methods of Developmental Psychology 3
Alan Slater, Scott P. Johnson and Darwin Muir

2 Theories and Issues in Child Development 41
Scott P. Johnson, Alan Slater and Ian Hocking

3 The Nature–Nurture Debate 79
Alan Slater

PART II INFANCY 107

4 Prenatal Development 109
Christine Moon and William P. Fifer

5 Perception, Knowledge and Action in Infancy 143
J. Gavin Bremner, Kirsty Dunn and Diana S.Y. Tham

6 Emotional Development and Attachment Relationships 183
Elizabeth Meins

7 Early Social Interactions with People and Objects 213
Cintia Rodríguez, Julia Benassi, Luisa Estrada, and Nicolás Alessandroni

8 The Development of Self and Gender 259
Wendy Lawrenson

PART III CHILDHOOD 303

9 Cognitive Development 305
Margaret Anne Defeyter

10 The Development of Language 341
Heather M. Hill and Stan A. Kuczaj II

11 Acquiring a Theory of Mind 381
Peter Mitchell

12 Reading and Mathematics in Developmental Psychology 407
Peter Bryant

13 Memory Development and Eyewitness Testimony 439
Stephen J. Ceci, Stanka A. Fitneva, Cagla Aydin and Nadia Chernyak

14 Play and the Beginnings of Peer Relationships 477
Peter K. Smith

15 Prosocial Tendencies, Antisocial Behaviour and Moral Development in Childhood 511
Daniel Hart, Neeta Goel and Robert Atkins

PART IV ADOLESCENCE 541

16 Cognitive Development in Adolescence 543
Kang Lee, Gizelle Anzures and Alejo Freire

17 Social Development 577
Tirza H.J. Van Noorden and William M. Bukowski

PART V PRACTICAL ISSUES 611

18 Educational Implications 613
Alyson Davis and Naomi Winstone

19 Risk and Resilience in Development 645
Leslie Morrison Gutman and Eirini Flouri

20 Social Problems in Schools 683
Peter K. Smith and Julian Elliott

21 Atypical Development 715
Sarah Norgate

Glossary 751
Names Index 785
Subject Index 805

Contents

List of Contributors xxi
Preface to Third Edition xxiii

PART I INTRODUCTION 1

1 The Scope and Methods of Developmental Psychology 3
Alan Slater, Scott P. Johnson and Darwin Muir
Introduction 5
Studying Changes with Age 6
Concepts of Human Development 6
'Folk' theories of development: Punishment or praise? 6
Defining development according to world views 8
Ways of Studying Development 10
Designs for studying age-related changes 10
Research methods 15
Beyond Common Sense: The Importance of Research Evidence 29
Social policy implications of child development research 31
Developmental Functions: Growing and Changing 32
Continuous function (a) – increasing ability 32
Continuous function (b) – decreasing ability 33
Discontinuous (step) function 34
U-shaped functions 35
Comparing developmental functions 36
Summary and Conclusions 37
Discussion Points 38
Suggestions for Further Reading 38
References 39

2 Theories and Issues in Child Development 41
Scott P. Johnson, Alan Slater and Ian Hocking
Introduction 44
Motor Development 44
Maturational theories 45
Dynamic systems theory 47
Cognitive Development 50
Piaget's theory of development 50
Developmental psychology before Piaget 51
Fundamental aspects of human development, according to Piaget 51
The four stages of cognitive development 52

Information Processing Approaches 54
Cognitive development in infancy 55
Cognitive development in childhood 56
Connectionism and brain development 57
Summary 58
Comparing information-processing approaches with Piaget's approach 58
Social-Cognitive Development 59
Vygotsky 59
Behaviourism and social learning theory 59
Ethology and Evolution 62
Evolution 62
The ethological approach 63
Emotional Development 64
Attachment theory – John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth 64
Psychoanalytic Theories 66
Sigmund Freud – The founder of psychoanalysis 66
The five psychosexual stages 66
Problems with Freudian theory 67
Psychoanalysis, then and now: An overview 68
Modern psychoanalysts – Anna Freud and Erik Erikson 69
Humanistic Theory – Abraham Maslow 69
Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs 69
Putting It all Together – Different Theories for Different Needs 70
Gender development 71
Issues in Child Development 73
The nature–nurture issue 73
Stability versus change 73
Continuity versus discontinuity 74
Summary and Conclusions 74
Discussion Points 74
Suggestions for Further Reading 75
References 75

3 The Nature–Nurture Debate 79
Alan Slater
Introduction 81
Precocial and altricial species 82
Nativism and empiricism 83
Cognitive Development 83
The start of it all: The first intelligence test 84
What is intelligence – one ability or several? 85
Intelligence test items 86
Controversies and issues in intelligence 87
Heritability 88
Heritability estimates 88
Genetic Contributions to Cognitive Growth 89
Familial resemblance 89
Missing heritability 91
Gene × environment interaction (G×E) 91

Environmental Influences on Cognitive Development 92
Adoption studies 92
The Flynn effect 98
Compensatory Education 98
Poverty and malnutrition 98
Head Start and Sure Start 99
Summary and Conclusions 101
Discussion Points 102
Suggestions for Further Reading 102
References 103

PART II INFANCY **107**

4 Prenatal Development 109
Christine Moon and William P. Fifer
Introduction 112
The Brain, the Spinal Cord and the Emergence of Mind 113
Processes and sequencing of brain development 113
Development of the cerebral cortex 114
Behavioural organisation 115
Sensations 118
Touch 118
The chemosensory system 118
The vestibular system 120
The visual system 121
The auditory system 124
Prenatal and Transnatal Auditory Learning 127
Learning about mother's voice and language 128
Summary 129
Risks to Foetal Development 129
Effects of exposure to psychoactive substances 130
Nutrition and foetal development 131
Effects of maternal stress 132
Prenatal Development of Postnatal Functions: The Bridge to Infancy 133
Summary and Conclusions 133
Discussion Points 134
Suggestions for Further Reading 135
References 135

5 Perception, Knowledge and Action in Infancy 143
J. Gavin Bremner, Kirsty Dunn and Diana S.Y. Tham
Introduction 145
Visual Perception from Birth to Six Months 146
Early limitations of vision: Are they really a problem? 146
How can we investigate infant perception? 147
Shape perception in newborns 148
Newborns perceive a three-dimensional world 150
Perceptual development in the first six months 150
Summary 153

Infants' Perception of People 153
Face perception 154
Discriminating between faces 155
Preference for attractive faces 156
Perceptual narrowing and face processing specialisation 157
Imitation 158
Voice perception 159
Voice and speech discrimination 160
Summary 161
Infants' Knowledge of the World 161
Jean Piaget and the development of object permanence 162
Later Work on Infant Cognition 163
The violation of expectation technique 163
Evidence of object knowledge: The 'drawbridge study' and others 163
Young infants reason about the number of objects in an event 166
Young infants discriminate different numbers of items 167
Summary 169
Object Search Revisited 169
Search failure is not due to lack of motor skill 169
Seeking an explanation of the A not B error 170
Summary and Conclusions 174
Early knowledge 174
Early knowledge does not guide action 174
Remodelling Piaget's account 175
Discussion Points 175
Suggestions for Further Reading 176
References 176

6 Emotional Development and Attachment Relationships 183
Elizabeth Meins

Introduction 185
Emotional Development 186
Expressing and recognising emotional expressions 186
Infant discrimination of facial expressions 188
Emotion understanding 191
Emotion understanding tasks 192
Emotion regulation 196
Attachment Relationships 197
Bowlby's theory of attachment 197
Mary Ainsworth and the strange situation procedure 199
Internal working models and the Adult Attachment Interview 204
Longitudinal stability in attachment security 205
Summary and Conclusions 206
Emotional competence in infancy 206
Later emotional competence 207
Attachment theory 207
Discussion Points 207
Suggestions for Further Reading 208
References 208

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