

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

# ECE 121



**Child Development**  
**Module 2**

# **ECE 121 (Child Development) Module 2**

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## MODULE 2

### Unit I Language and Speech Development

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#### 1.0 Introduction

Development, one of the complex things in human nature was described in the last unit. We are told that development is maturity and is an essential part of a child. Development takes place in stages, there are different types of development and some factors affect the development of a child. One of the types of Development in a young child is language and Speech Development. This is the focus of this unit.

Language development brings a great change in the life of a child. Language Development opens the child to a new world. The child can now speak out and communicate effectively and efficiently like adults. It is a very important development stage that adult should help the child to achieve well. In this unit the various functions and characteristics of language shall be so explained that you can appreciate the need to help a child have a normal and proper language development. Stages involved in the development of language and speech making will also be described, conditions and circumstances that encourage acquisition of language shall be mentioned. Some factors that can affect the development of language in a developing child, will also be listed.

#### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define language
- outline the characteristics of language
- recognize the various phases and stages of language development in young children
- describe the stages of language development of a child between the age 0 months to 5 years
- appreciate circumstances that can encourage speech and language development
- list factors that can affect language development
- Illustrate that environment and not hereditary has more influence on language development.

## 3.0 Main Content

### 3.1 What is Language?

Language is a means of communication. It is a form of expression. For human being, language is used for the purpose of interaction between two or more persons. Language can be verbal (spoken) or non-verbal. Language involves speech making, verbal language. In this our present discussion (unit) we shall be focusing more on the verbal form of language . This is why the title of the unit is Language and Speech Development.

Let us clarify the terms ‘verbal’ ‘non-verbal’ and ‘speech’ before we move to the next section. “verbal” means ‘speaking” while ‘non-verbal” is communication without speaking out, it usually involves the use of body signs or common diagrammatic signs like the types we see on high ways. A body sign here includes clapping, nodding of head etc.

You sometimes say somebody is making a “speech”, when speaking to a person or group of people. Speech at times is also used to describe the speaking style of a person. You now realize why we call the Unit Language and Speech Development.

- What is Language?
- Differentiate between verbal and non-verbal language.

### 3.2 Functions and Characteristics of Language

In the last section, we defined language as means of communication. This is the primary function of language and it characterizes language as a medium of communication. Language can be used for more things than communication and Language can be characterized based on the function it serves at a specific time. The following are various characteristics of language, and the function it serves:

**Language as specific attribute of human beings:** The kind of language we speak as individuals makes up our characteristics as a person. We can describe a person by referring to the way the person speaks. Yet this is a development from childhood.

**Language as a medium of communication:** Language is an efficient means of communication. There can be verbal and nonverbal language. Children develop language both in verbal and non-verbal form, though in this unit we refer more to the verbal language development.

**Language is a means of Socialization:** The child’s use of language affects his intellectual development and the way he interacts with people. Language is an important instrument for interaction. Language is used to interpret the world around the child. The child (even adult) uses language as a necessary thing for successful social relationship with others around him. Language gives meanings to things; the socialization of a child greatly depends on his language development.

**Language as a means of exploration:** When a baby begins to call “Mummy” or “Daddy” and receives attention as responses, it really excites the baby, so he will begin to be more

interested in words. He wants to know more words and their interpretation and importance. Children talk to objects around them too, in so doing they develop speech making ability. They also use the same medium to test themselves on the use of language. An adult around them can help them to clarify impressions and also stimulate new ideas in them.

**Language as a medium of thoughts:** Language is used in thinking, memory, reason and in school life generally. To be able to understand and speak out to people, you have to think in a language you are used to. It is therefore necessary in the teaching –learning process.

**Language is a medium of hearing:** Just as we mentioned in the last paragraph, a teacher should be very interested in the language development of a child so as to know how to present what he wants to teach and how to teach it. Remember that in unit one, we said that development should be taken alongside the teaching of subject area.

**Language is a medium of expression:** Language development brings a great change in the life of a child. The child who has now developed the language ability can speak out, unlike before when he was only used to crying and making meaningless sound. The child can now express his feeling to others. Language development is therefore a very important stage that adult should help a child to develop well. The child makes less noise when he can express himself meaningfully.

**Language as a means of actualization of intelligence:** Before a child begins to speak out, he will be imitating, storing words in his memory, trying to make meanings out of them. For a child to start to make meaningful statements he is actualizing his intelligence, to a large extent, he must be using his reasoning power. Note that the child's reaction to words is based on the meanings he attaches to words and its relevance to his inner self is based on the meaning he gives to his environment. This is why a teacher needs to be interested in the language development of a child so as to know how to organize his teaching.

**Language as closely linked to and determined by culture:** The syntax (arrangement of words) of a language affects a child's language development differently from one country to another or from one culture to another. This is why it is so easy for children to learn new language before age five (5). By age five the language development process in a child must have reached its highest state.

After age five, it may be difficult especially if the grammatical organization of the new language is different from the language the child is used to. For example, some language requires that an adjective comes before the noun (e.g. English – My big bag) but some other language requires that adjective comes after the noun. (You can think of an example of this yourself.) Language development is closely linked to culture.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise**

List and describe the characteristics of a language.

### 3.3 Stages of Language Development

This is the central part of this unit. Language learning (or development) is one of the complex aspects of human beings. The way it occurs, begins or reaches its climax is not very clear. But people continue to research into it, and they continue to come out with more facts about the process. Regardless of the culture in which a child lives, children begin to understand language by imitating the sound he hears around him. It is necessary to be familiar with stages of language development in children so that the teacher or parent can detect when a child is not developing well at each stage. Language development takes place in children, in two major phases, namely Pre-linguistic speech phase and Linguistic speech phase

The pre-linguistic speech phase has the following stages:

- Undifferentiated crying
- Differentiated crying
- Cooing (making sound like that of a dove)
- Babbling (confused talk or foolish talk)
- Lallation (imperfect imitation of others)
- Echolalic (imitation of others)
- Expressive babbling (making particular sound to mean something nearly irrelevant to the thing).

#### The Linguistic Speech Phase

The one-word sentence

Multiple-word sentence

Grammatical correct utterances.

We won't be taking these stages one after the other, but rather we will take the stages of language development in children as they advance in age.

You should be able to identify the phase (as stated above) that the child is undergoing as he advances in age, as you read along.

#### 0 – 12 months

The child makes language in forms of babbling, crying, cooing. The adult, most of the time the mother, sister or older sibling, who is used to the child usually make meanings out of the overall impression of the child. The phonemes (sounds of language) that make up the vowels and consonants of language formulation come as part of the child in the first year of life.

## **12 months – 18 months**

During this period, the child practices and imitates all kinds of sounds he hears as he listens to grown-ups while they talk. He stores up in his mind, the names of familiar objects and enjoys the words and sentences in songs, and rhymes. As he reaches 18 months (1 1/2 years) he is getting ready to start communicating with 2 people like every other person.

You should note that before age 2, the child is only interested in walking, balance, picking things up and other physical activity without paying attention to how to pronounce words or understand them. He talks to himself by making meaningless sounds or even sentences; sometimes he only makes noise to express himself.

In most cases, during this period, the child uses the same word or set of words to mean different things e.g “Bye-Bye” can mean “Welcome” , Good-bye” “no, I am not going “ Please let us go out” depending on the situation. To the child “Ta-Ta” can mean the name of a person, to the child every person or every woman may be “Ta-Ta”, it can even mean “Thank you”.

## **18 months – 2 years**

The child begins to build up his vocabulary. He can begin to use words and he is greatly interested in people talking. He repeats so many words after the adult. He can name so many things around him. This is when the baby really needs an adult who can constantly name things to him, look at pictures with him and speak short sentences to him. He can now cope with short flow of words.

## **At 2 years old**

The child now wants to make up the “lost period” this is a year of exploration and discovery on two major aspects of life. These aspects are in the physical and speech development. The child is like a talkative in this stage. He wants to know the names of everything he comes across. He wants the adult to continue singing songs and rhymes to him and also enjoys listening to stories.

## **2 – 3 years**

The child is a companion, plays with materials and finds time to be with other children and adult so that he can enjoy conversation with them. He now refers to himself as “I” or “me”.

Note that, by this period of life, the child has now got 20 temporary (milk) teeth, these of course, influence his speech making, having enough number of teeth in the mouth, and he can now pronounce words clearly. During this period the child can now form sentences which may contain a noun or verb, along with his non-verbal expressions, that adult can make meaning from.

## **4 – 5 years**

The child is now speaking freely, he can exchange greetings, ask for information and clarifies new facts that he does not understand. He is always asking questions beginning with “what”, where or who”. He is happy to hear new words.



The development of language through greater vocabulary development, leading to greater knowledge make the word of the child larger, During this period, the child loves to show off his new words and ever wanting to test there effect on people. Before he reaches the age of six he must master the basic grammatical rules of the local language he speaks. It is believed that children's vocabulary increases rapidly between 20 words to 2000 words between the age of 18 months to 5 years.

The period 3 – 6 years, and 10 – 11 years are the period when language development is very high in children. This is actually the period of school, i.e. the period of pre-primary and primary education (early education)s

Note that children are different in nature, some get easily excited, some don't some get easily irritated, and some don't. This may affect their language development. The differences in these developments may be normal to the child. Now try your hand on this exercise.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

Discuss the language development of children between age 2 and 5 in details.

### **3.4 Conditions and Circumstances Required for Acquisition of Language**

As you must have seen in our discussions of stages of language development in children, adults need to create good atmosphere/environment for the child to develop in language. Adults should not take talking to babies as foolish things. We should note that the voice adult is conformity to the baby and he is gradually learning from it. As adults sings to children, he is able to recognize sounds, if he hears them often, he tries to repeat them.

The child should be given opportunity to develop his language or speech ability well. Teachers should know the stages of language development and the conditions necessary for proper language development in children. Children brought up in homes like motherless babies' homes or social welfare centers don't have adequate adult-child individualist interaction such children don't develop their language capability well.

Children should be given opportunities to show signs of babblings, cooling and little crying that will make them develop their language easily . The care-givers and nurses should not be like wood or stiff dolls to the children

By the age of two years, when the child is already walking, adult can help them in language development by asking them to go and bring certain objects from parts of the house, class or school. In this way,, you are helping the child to be familiar with words and thee actions associated with such words, He is also building his vocabulary.

### **3.5 Factors that Affect Language Development of Young Children**

As have been said in the concluding part of 3.3 stages of language development, there are certain factors that affect Language Development, either directly or indirectly. Let us list the factors, but may not discuss them in details, by discussing them in details we may be going

beyond the scope of this course. However, we will talk briefly on the first two which are very relevant to our present course/program in general. Here they are:

- The education situation educational factors
- Educative methods
- Socio-economic status
- Model
- Accomplishment
- Experience
- Physical factors
- Psychological readiness
- Maturation
- Intelligence
- Motivation
- Sex
- Family size
- Birth order
- Multiple births
- Contact with others
- Personality
- Culture.

When you look closely at those factors, you will realize that they can all be categorized into either Hereditary or Environmental Factors (see unit 4) you may try doing this classification as a form of exercise.

Nevertheless, let's briefly consider the first two-the educational aspect and environment in general.

### **3.5.1 Educational Factors**

It is necessary that the teacher of young children have some knowledge of the grammatical components of language like phonetics syntax semantics etc so that the type of language

lessons teacher plans for children at school are relevant to the child language development. This is why as students of early childhood education you should be taking English 101: Introduction to grammar and composition along with this course, child development. The home language of a child is also very important to the child language development and ability to grasp the one they teach him at school.

To test how children are following a story or book, the teacher can ask them to do certain things whenever they hear some words or sentences. They can be asked to jump, clap or shout. It is amazing the way they do this.

In summary, the teacher of young children should note that, the child needs to develop two major language skills, and these are listening skill and spoken skill.

### 3.5.2 Environmental Factors

Children develop speech/language ability through listening and imitating adults. It then follows that children that live in homes where adults speak to them often and have many audio visual gadgets like Radio, Television around will develop in language faster than the one that is not so exposed.

There must be necessary things to stimulate the children.

It is necessary that children are allowed to freely interact with their environment so as to have normal speech and language development. They should not be given unnecessary restriction.. The school environment should also be stimulating; children should know how to listen effectively to stories, rhymes and dramatic plays. They should be allowed to say their own stories too and encouraged to read. It follows then from this explanation and what we learnt in unit 4, under factors affecting development, that in the case of language development? Environment and not Hereditary is more responsible for speech and language development

### Self-Assessment Exercise 4

1. List 3 grammatical components of language:
2. Mention 8 factors that can affect language development. Discuss 2 of the factors.

## 4.0 Conclusion

One of the complexities in Child Development is Language and Speech Development. This type of development is a very important aspect of child development because through it, the child is able to communicate with others around him. When the child understands words representing objects and things around him, his world becomes larger. Language Development goes together with socialization and intellectual development. It is in stages and can be affected by so many factors directly or indirectly.

## 5.0 Summary

Language Development brings a great change in the life of a child. In this unit we have discussed how this can come about in the life of young children. We highlighted functions and characteristics of language. Conditions and circumstances that will make language development take place were explained briefly. Factors that affect Language Development in young children were stated while we elaborated on two of the factors.

In the next unit, we shall be considering another type of Development – Motor do with the development of the system of the body and movement.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the functions of language in young children
2. Discuss how the teacher should provide stimulating environment for pre-primary school children to have language Development.
3. Mention the two basic language skills that a young child should possess.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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## Unit 2 Motor Development

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### 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit, our focus was on speech and language development in young children. There we considered the functions and characteristics of language. Stages of language development in young children were described and we rounded up with factors that may affect the speech and language development in young children directly and indirectly.

This present unit, will also be on another type of development. This is Motor Development in Young Children. we shall briefly describe what we mean by Motor Development. We first consider a general overview of Motor Development before describing and explaining each stage in detail, while describing the stages, we will point out how the teacher can help the children to make sure they have proper and normal motor development.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- explain motor development
- identify stages of motor development in young children
- appreciate stages of motor development in young children
- choose appropriate environment for the different stages of motor development.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 What is Motor Development?

We have been talking about “Development” right from the beginning of this course, so we don’t need to take up the term again. **Motor** is the new term now.

**Motor** from our common usage of the term, is something that brings about, gives or provides movement. It follows then that when we say Motor Development, we are referring to the body systems network that leads to movement. We can even take motor development of children as a form of physical development, since it is something we can see happening i.e. an outward thing.

Please, note that this does not mean that motor development is the same thing as growth. The only link between them is that both are physical in nature.

At times when describing Motor Development, as you may come across in some textbooks; it may be qualified with the word Gross i.e Gross Motor Development. Gross here means total, so Gross Motor Development implies Body Movement in totality.

Before Motor Development can take place in a child, it means some part of the body must have developed for the process. The two major organs of the body that is usually referred to are the bones (skeleton) and the Muscles. Muscles are the fleshy part of the body that covers the skeleton. The actions of these muscles on the different types of bones in our body is very important to motor development.

The muscle around the bones of children continues to grow until they become adult. The muscle is not fully developed when they are still very young. This is why the very young children don't have control over the part of their body. They easily get tired of walking or using part of the body in movement, though they also recover easily.

## Self-Assessment Exercise I

1. What is the meaning of Gross Motor Development
2. List the two major organs of the body.

## 3.2 General Overview of Motor Development in Young Children

Motor Development is usually orderly and generally follows a sequence in children. You will remember that we mentioned cephalocaudal growth (i.e. head to feet) when we were discussing assessment of growth in unit 3. This is very applicable to motor development. A baby lifts his head, holds it erect before he sits, he sits before he stands. Motor growth rate starts from the inner area of the body to the outside area.

At the beginning the baby holds objects without having control over his muscles, so the objects keep falling and he keeps re-picking, but gradually he overcomes this and is able to hold objects tightly.

The child begins to have milk teeth between six to eight months. However, some babies may start as early as four (4) months (though this is not common). By the age of 3 years, a baby has got 20 milk teeth in his mouth. During the period of teeth cutting, the baby experiences some discomfort, pain, disturbed sleep. The mother or caregiver, just have to be patient with the baby, because he will be restless and difficult to pet or pacify.

One way in which the adult can help him is to make sure that he has adequate feeding and maintains general cleanliness around the baby, so that the baby is not infected by any disease in this difficult time. It is wrong to believe that the baby must always fall sick in this period except that all those activities he was enjoying before the period will be suspended or reduced. Adults should be understanding. However, some signs of fever, rashes etc., may be shown on him, this can easily be treated.

With the presence of teeth the child can eat solid foods unlike before; he is not able to chew easily. But this can affect his system, so the mother, caregiver or teacher or adult around should be watchful.

### 3.3 Stages of Motor Development in Young Children and Implications for Teachers

Infant bones are soft at early stages of life. The bone becomes harder later, but the rate of doing this depends on the natural make up of individuals. By the age of one year, most children have developed 3 out of the 28 wrist and hand bones that they should have when they are adults.

Muscular development is an essential aspect of child development. This development affects the desire of the child to move around, to enjoy high level of energy activities. The more the muscles are used, the more it becomes stronger and ready for more future use, the bones and muscles become stronger with greater and more regular activity.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

I. Relate cephalocaudal growth in human being to motor development in children.

We will now take the motor development in children as they advance in age.

##### 3.3.1 0 – 12 Months

Before age of 6 months, the child can sit up on his own, and can hold up his head. As he approaches age 1 year, he can hold on to a furniture to stand up. He can try standing alone for a short period. He tries to move forward at times, he often bends down using his knees and hands. The fast ones may even begin to walk staggerly in this period. He can pick up small objects between his thumbs and other fingers. He deliberately throws them back almost immediately, and can continue to pick and throws back as long as he wishes.

The child learns about his environment as he moves around it. He develops his sensory motor, intelligence along as well (**Sensori-motor Intelligence** you will get to know the meaning of this in unit 9). He discovers things, people, squeezing or manipulating the object he comes across. The child believes that everything around him is safe. He is a risk-taker. To the child a piece of broken glass or a soft sponge can equally be tasted like a food item. The adult around him should always be on the lookout for whatever the child comes in contact with.

##### 3.3.2 1-2 Years

The child can walk without assistance; he wants to move around as much as possible. He pulls things out from any corner of the house or room or class as he plays about.

Once a baby begins to walk, he becomes so excited about it that he spends most of his time and energy on it.

##### 3.3.3 2 – 3 Years

This is the age of discovery and exploration. The child is not satisfied with staying in one place. Because he is aware of his ability to move about, he becomes an active explorer. He can climb and jump down from furniture, he can also climb staircase. He is energetic. He

copies the movement of adult around him. The child can turn pages of books, able to hold pencils and crayons, can draw lines. He wants to feed himself since he can hold the spoon and the cup, though he will waste food.

The child wants to continue testing more through walking, running climbing and walking tiptoe.

### 3.3.4 3-4 years

The child can jump, run,, climb and balance himself. He can also stand on one leg for a few seconds and peddles try cycle. He has increase coordination of the parts of his body with 'increased speed and strength'. To show his new strength, he enjoys carrying, lifting, and moving heavy objects. He loves washing hands. Not that he wants the hands clean but only to exercise his newly acquired skill of being able to turn taps or simply to play with water, he enjoys holding slippery soap, make lather with soap and later rinse his hands and dry his fingers.

He is able to balance more blocks on top of each other than he could do before. He can make some little sensible scribbling with crayon on a paper. His motor activity is now becoming specialized and focused.

Hand-eye co-ordination increase. The child can be performing with his hands and still be watching others. The child can compare the way he carries out some activities with the way other children or adults do the activities. The child is proud of his skills and wants to show it off.

### 3.3.5 4-5 years

Motor skills at this stage are well developed in the child. However there can be difference in how active children of this age group are or how much of confidence they can develop. With the help of the adult caring for them and their ability to use all their natural endowment properly, they can control many of the more activities quite easily.

They can arrange things on a table though they may not be able to differentiate accurately between sizes of objects.

### 3.3.6 5 – 6 Years

Children in this group can skip; jump off 3 steps, catch a ball. They concentrate on the motor skill they have mastered eg skipping a rope. You easily observe group of children around this age at break time running, jumping, etc. trying to know who is best among them. They are not really competing but to master their skill.

During this stage, the child is ready to extend his motor development to spatial development i.e. recognizing the difference in distance from one place to another. To do this effectively depends on the stimulating environment the teacher provides.



### 3.3.7 6-8 Years

The body becomes bigger, though the growth rate may not be as fast as before (see unit 2). The muscle of the child becomes stronger. Boys usually become stronger than girls though girls of this age can be fatter. The child can now afford to stress the eye more to do some regular reading. But the adult or teacher should not make the child strain the eyes too much by asking the child to read lengthy passage; this can affect the eye badly. He should be allowed to develop interest and right attitude towards reading-on his own.

During this period, because of their advanced motor development, they enjoy doing more physical activities within their power. They enjoy games, like to dance to music, wanting to do things with style. The child can be restless in this stage.

Now do this exercise.

#### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

Identify 5 children of these age ranges: 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6 and 6–8. Observe them for a period of about 2 hours, make a list of their motor activities, in a tabular form.

### **3.4 Conditions and Cautions to be observed by Teachers**

Right from birth, children have skeleton, muscles and other parts of the body that can be used for movement. The only thing is that this part of the body is tender and soft; they need to be developed before they can be used. If the child is not careful, the bones can easily bend or break. This is why it is not good to make pre-school children do certain things; they can bend or break their bones or even be deformed or have abnormal shape for life. The sitting position of children should not be the type that will give any side of the body too much pressure. They should not be asked to carry heavy load or walk long distance.

The teacher can organize activities like playing with toys, crayons, sand, water, clay pencils for the sake of developing the motor skill in the nursery and lower classes. The teacher will only make sure that the children are not engaged in activities that can harm them.

By the time the children get to age 6-9 years, the bones and muscles are fairly developed for more movement, and the children are always ready to exercise their body. The teacher should also help them to organize reasonable activities like running, jumping, throwing, kicking and catching. These activities however, should be monitored so that they don't over do things.

Note that the child at every stage must be well fed and be given balanced diet. This food must contain necessary vitamins and minerals in the proper proportion. This is because this will influence its muscle capacity and subsequently his motor development. A child that is not well fed can easily be noticed, because when others are trying to get involved in activities that will lead to their motor developments, he is not interested. The teacher should inform the parents about his observation.

## 4.0 Conclusion

Children are born with skeleton (the bony structure of the body), muscles and other parts of the body meant for movement. At birth these parts of the body are soft and tender, but with the right food and appropriate activities, these parts of the body develop for motor activities. These activities include crawling, walking, running, jumping, throwing etc. Motor Development actually involves the developmental stages of the body as it is able to be used for movement.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have considered Motor Development in young children. Motor development, we were told has to do with the movement of all the body and it involves the co-ordination of all parts of the body. At the different stages of child development, he is able to perform certain motor activities; these stages were illustrated with their corresponding activities. The teacher, we are told has an important role to play in making sure that he organizes appropriate activities for the children according to their ages and abilities.

In the next unit we are going to consider another type of child development process which is Social Development. Social Development deals with the way the child is able to interact easily with his mates and adult effectively and for the mutual benefit of all. One of the importance of education is socialization; the child is included. The school environment should be conducive for social interaction.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Explain Motor Development.
2. Suggest 3 activities in each case that can be organized for children in the ages 3 – 5 and 6 – 7 for normal Motor Development.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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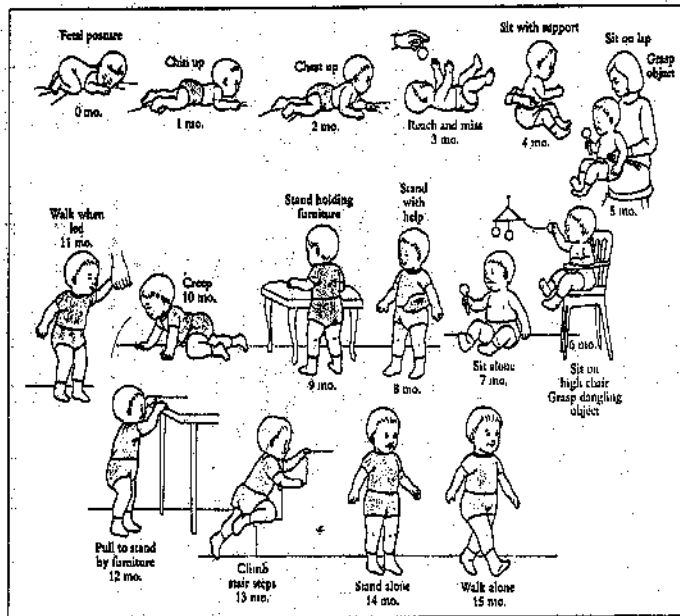
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**Fig. 1: Sequence of Mastery of Locomotor Behaviour.** Source: Mary M Shirley, *The First Two Years*, Institute of Child Welfare Monograph No. 7, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, Copyright 1933, renewed 1961 by the University of Minnesota.

## Unit 3 Social Development In Young Children

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### 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit, you learnt about Motor Development in young children. Motor Development you were told involves the movement of parts of the body, it has to do with how well the child can co-ordinate parts of the body to make regular type of movement. Stages at which children acquire necessary skills to be able to make some definite and specific movements like walking, drawing were also highlighted.

This unit, will focus on another type of development in young children. This is social development. The child as a member of the society he lives in must learn and develop the acceptable pattern of behaviour in the society. The child needs social development as he grows to an adult so that he can live well and be happy in the society.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- describe what is meant by social development
- identify certain behavioural patterns expected of a growing child in the society
- identify stages of social development in young children
- list causes of improper social development in young children.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Meaning of Social Development

Socialization is the process by which individual acquires some behavioural patterns, beliefs and standards that the type of people or cultural group he lives will value and appreciate.

Socialization also means being able to live like others around you and be accepted by the society. In child development, it is a process of bringing the young ones up into the behavioural regulations of the society.

The child is born to a wide range of behavioural patterns like aggressiveness (hostile activity), selfishness, generosity, honesty, dishonest, timidity, (i.e. easily frightened or not having self - confidence) etc. The child, as he lives in the society develops the urge to adopt any of these behavioural patterns that is acceptable to the society.

The culture in which the child is growing usually have its own standard of behaviour, but the development or the socialization method that the child is exposed to through the agents of socialization available to the child determines what he develops to. The possible agents of socialization are the home, the peer group, the community, the school, and the religious organizations. It may even be difficult for the school to change some behaviour in a child if

the home and/or his peer group (the type of friends he moves with) have solidly built a kind of behaviour in him. This is why it may be necessary to move some children from one place to another if they are found to be developing negatively to the way of life acceptable by the society.

One of the problems people face in their life is how to manage their feeling. Socialization process and development provide ways of doing this. In early childhood education, the child is taught how to cope with some constraints (not always having his way) at the same time he is allowed to express his feelings of anger, hostility or jealousy.

The child becomes socialized when he learns to behave in the ways expected of him by the people who look after him. He has to behave in a way typical of other children of his age and of the general culture. The society teaches us, through our interaction with others, how to behave. These others, for a child may be the child's parent, sisters/brothers, teacher's etc. The child is taught how and when to feel guilty, be ashamed, be angry, be happy, be proud etc.

The child therefore needs sufficient care of the adult. In most cases it is the mother or the teacher. The child gets used to eating the kind of the food they eat around him and is also given toilet training. While interacting with the child the adult should be careful not to react to the child based on his frustration or any unpleasant state of mind. The child is helpless.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

1. What is socialization?
2. List and explain the agents of socialization
3. Explain some behavioural pattern that a child will have to adopt from the Society.

## **3.2 Stages of Social Development in Young Children**

From Birth to the age of three (3) years, children want their parent to play with them. They want attention, time active co-operation and encouragement. They prefer these to any number of expensive toys. They cannot understand why their mother should leave them alone. They want to socialize with their mother. However at another stage of their life they are able to play and interact with other member of the society, as they like. Some stages can be identifying in the social development activity of the child, as he grows in age, here are some of such stages:

### **3.2.1 0-2 Years**

At the beginning the child is self-centered although he responds to others when they play with him. But gradually as the child reaches the sensory-motor stage (see unit 6 and unit 9), he begins to socialize (enjoy playing) with people especially with other children like him. The child co-operates to be dressed but would not like dressing to last long.

### 3.2.2 2-3 Years

The child has got little experience in his interaction with people, because of this he easily gets annoyed in this stage. The child cries for every minor unpleasant thing like just saying you are not playing with him, when he wishes to play with you. Though children at this stage, easily get over such feelings.

In this stage, the child can now differentiate between members of his family and others. He wants to do so many things and learn to do what he cannot do, but it appears adults are always saying 'No' to him, so he himself wants to say "No" to adults, he wants to be allowed to do what he likes to do.

The child is interested in the effect of his behaviour on others. He also wants to assert himself to say, "This is me" he attracts people to himself if he is rejected by adult it can cause anxiety or even rebellion from him. Though the child may be selfish in this stage, he still plays with his mates. He can be indifferent or be submissive to others.

Children at this stage are not cruel or aggressive; they remain lovable if they are loved.

### 3.2.3 3-6 Years

The child is ripe enough to enjoy the companion of others. He likes to make good relationship with other children of his age. He also plays with his brothers and sisters. The child is still after satisfying himself but also believes in sharing. He tells a great deal of stories about himself.

He prefers to play in a group instead of playing alone or with anyone person. He is co-operative and friendly. He shows protection towards younger brothers or sisters and playmates. He defends the right of his brothers and sisters if there is need for it.

The child desires to win approval from others. His conversation changes from protest to wishes and description of events and actions, he seeks mutual interest from other children and adults.

He identifies his own sex, and loves to play with other children of his own sex. Girls go with girls, boys go with boys. He also loves being with his parents.

Children in this age show self-reliance, trustworthiness and friendly co-operation with adults

### 3.2.4 7-12 Years

The child can now understand and obey rules and regulations. In addition, children of this age group, exhibits the following:

- Watches television with rapt attention.
- Read a lot, enjoy stories about themselves.
- Depend less on adult except for specific help.

- Enjoy acting dramatic play
- Enjoy doing group work while adult is supervising and acting as neutral person.
- Can be violent or rebellious when excited by irresponsible adults.
- Enjoy team game.
- Mix well with opposite sex, but very much aware of own sex; can sometimes choose to go to own sex.
- As they get near 11 or 12 can be friendly and co-operative with adults.

Teachers can help these children by making sure that they are provided with rich academic environment; provide books, music and creative materials for them. They should be made to trust and be independent of adults around them. They should be provided with opportunity to learn about the real world and opportunity for games as well.

### **3.3 Causes of Improper Social Development in Young Children**

Children can show evidence of improper social development in different forms at school. In most cases these improper behaviour can be traced to the environment at home. It has been shown from the study of child development that a child may not be sharing proper social development if

- His parents are illiterate
- His parents are poor
- His parents are backward looking
- The child is not given adequate food.
- The child is given little or no medical attention at home
- There is no provision of learning facilities etc.

Such children, apart from not doing well in school subjects, they also become unruly i.e. difficult to control.

A sympathetic and patient teacher can help the child by giving a child like that, special and additional attention. There is nothing a child can do about his background, but a good teacher can make the child feel like other children at school. If one of the problems is negative attitude from parents, a good teacher can speak to the parents to create a form of encouragement to the child at home

The best way, by which the teacher can also help, is to see himself as a teacher, a parent, a detective and a friend to the child.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Suggest 2 activities each that you believe children of ages 2-3, 3-6 and 7-12 will enjoy doing.
2. Identify a child around you that is showing improper social development considering his age. State the improper behaviour and find out the cause of the behaviour.

## 4.0 Conclusion

Socialization is one of the reasons for sending children to school. The child needs to behave in such a way that he will be acceptable by the society. Children going by their nature, develop socially into the system gradually. There are some specific behavioural patterns they show as they advance in age. Teachers however need to monitor them so that they behave according to the norms (i.e. normal expectation) of the society.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have learnt about the social development in young children. Socialization you are told is being able to live like others around you and be accepted by them. Different behavioural patterns expected of young growing children were listed and you are told what may make a child not to grow according to the expectations of the society.

In the next unit, we are going to consider another similar developmental process in young children. This is emotional and psychological development. This has to do with feelings of the child, like social character's it also goes in stages and certain factors may prevent proper development of it also in children.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss in details, the type of social behaviour pattern expected of children between primary 3 to primary 6 in a primary school.

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## Unit 4 Emotional and Psychological Development in Young Children

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### 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit you learnt about the Social Development in young children. There we talked about the need for the young child to adapt to the behavioural pattern in the society he lives in so that his behaviour can be acceptable in the society. Stages of Social Development and causes of improper development were explained.

In this unit we will be discussing a similar kind of development. This is called Emotional and Psychological Development. Emotions have to do with our state of inner feeling, like feeling of joy or feeling of fear. We shall also describe the various stages children get to in this regard. We shall also mention some causes of improper emotional development and the implication for the teachers or adults who are bringing up the world.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- explain what is meant by emotional and psychological development
- identify stages of emotional or psychological development in young children
- list causes of improper emotional development.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Meaning of Emotional and Psychological Development

Before we go into our discussion proper, let me simply clarify what we mean by Emotion or Psychology. In simple language emotion is the excited inner feelings of a person; it can be feeling of joy, feeling of fear etc. Psychology is simply a person's mental make-up. At times we even use the terms as if they mean the same thing. However the two usually go together.

You will get to know more of the term psychology in a course you will be doing later in this programme. Psychology is study as a Social Sciences course just like Economics and Geography that you are used to. You will enjoy studying the Psychology of education and there you will understand the meaning of emotional or psychological feelings the more, it can be very interesting to study.

In our normal discussion we sometimes say at somebody is mature or not mature enough for certain activities. What we mean here is that the person is or not developed enough for such task. Here we may not be referring to the physical appearance alone, but the in-built feeling of the person is not ripe enough for such a thing. For example, there is a limit to and degree of how people can accept failure. Some after experiencing failure in a certain thing;

can easily adjust and continue with life, some may not be able to recover quickly. The same thing too with success, the way people show it may overdo thing that the success may be followed by a bad thing again. In academic knowledge we call things like this emotional or Psychological Readiness of developments

Stone, a psychologist has called the type of development described above a process or organic growth towards maturity. Organic here means something of internal actions of a living body. Vatsa, another psychologist, said maturation in this regard is a complex of biological process that guide development.

It is generally accepted that both the maturation of certain part of the body (hereditary or natural in-built of a person) and environment affect how a child develops or acquire the skill to perform certain task. It is believed that naturally the parts of the body that will perform certain task must be developed before environment then selectively dictates the direction and the timing of the development. For example if the brain is not developed, how can a child understand the feeling he is receiving or expressing?

The kind of emotional development that takes place in young children continues to affect their lives in later childhood days in the area of intellectual and social development and even in their development of personality.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

1. Emotional feelings is
2. By psychology we mean
3. Why do we need to monitor a child's emotional development?

### **3.2 Stages of Emotional and Psychological Development in Young Children**

Emotional or psychological development unlike other developmental process cannot easily be divided into stages, it is continuous and can be very fast in some periods and slow in some other periods and different in the way children show it. For example a five year old, may be so developed intellectually, language wise, but still be crying for minor things like a two year old baby. Similarly we can have a girl of about 5 years as well who calmly act as mother to others in her age group.

There may be another case of a ten year old girl who has got to puberty (i.e. develop characteristics like adolescent-having breast or menstruating), among other ten-year old girl who had not got to this stage. Emotionally she may be behaving differently from these other girls; she will be more moody and restless.

Some children will grow up to be taller or shorter than their mates while others may grow cleverer or be better tempered or more optimistic than their mates. However we shall still describe some landmarks which those who are studying child development had brought to our attention as follows:

## **0-12 Months**

At this stage, the baby is happy, confident, friendly, no longer suspect strangers, eager to co-operate with anyone ready to play with him. He is curious and is easily distracted by new things.

He can play happily alone if he is sure the mother is nearby.

## **1-2 Years**

At about one year old or shortly before it the child cries more when the mother leaves him.

He will even cry harder if he is comforted by a stranger.

The baby does not like being frustrated or denied of what he wants, he screams then, but it is easy to distract his attention with new things.

He becomes suspicious of people in this stage even those that he was tolerating before.

When the child begins to make his first reasonable movement, i.e. being able to crawl, walk, and talk (see sensori-motor stage in unit 6 and unit 9) he is able to establish a kind of attachment to his mother or any adult that is usually around him.

As the child reaches age two he has developed motor and language skill to some extent.

Given by his body make up, he is socially and emotionally ready for early childhood education, at least the pre-primary level where he can mix with his kind of people and learn to control his feeling among his age group.

Some schools don't want to accept children of this age; they believe that they are too young to cope with; they can be put in the preparatory or play group.

## **2-3 Years**

The child is loving and responsive, but always wanting to have his own way. He can wake up from sleep and just be screaming with fear, he needs to be reassured and comforted. The child in this stage is afraid of the dark, even domestic pets that he has known before can frighten him. Note that the child in this stage, does not know the difference between dream and reality.

## **3-6 Years**

There is a decrease in the number of times he uses physical emotional expressions. For instance, he can now use language to show his anger, he doesn't have to cry or shout. Children in this stage can fairly control their emotions but as he reaches age of six, he can be unstable with his emotion. The child at this stage may hate what he has liked before, but gradually changes again.

The child does not fear strange situations and persons but develops relative increase in the fear of imaginary creatures in the dark and serious bodily harm.

As they approach age five or shortly after five, they can be boastful and wanting to show off. Teachers need experience to understand them in this stage, the teacher should use the time to give them more challenging task to do. The teachers then give them only genuine praise and encouragement so that he can render their boastfulness useless.

At six, the child tends to be self-centered, irritable and aggressive. However, they can still be loving, friendly and co-operative all the same. The child at this stage is very curious and finds it difficult to accept failure and frustrations.

## **7-11 Years**

The following emotional development can be observed in the children of this age bracket:

- Self-critical, (wanting to know how good he is)
- More stable with emotion. (can control their feelings)
- Can be moody and dissatisfied at times though they gradually gets over this kind of feeling.
- Knows the difference between fact and fantasy (cannot be fooled easily).
- Cannot control his own energy (i.e. always wanting to do things beyond their energy).
- Can become overtired and irritable (since they sometime overwork themselves).
- Emotionally not dependent on adult.
- Is satisfied with intellectual activities (i.e. what can task his brain/thinking)
- Enjoys physical activities
- Can be anxious against ineffective adults.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 2**

Observe a group of 4 children; make record of their actions to situations. You can tabulate your findings based on their ages. State the period of time that you make your observation.

## **3.3 Causes and Possible Solution to Improper Emotional and Psychological Development**

Some children at times may be noticed not to be able to control their emotions. At times one would expect that they should have outgrown certain emotional problems. They are expected to have shed the effect of some problem they go through in their very early life. Some children when they grow to an adult you still notice such emotional problem in them. A ten year old child for example is not expected to continue to show signs of dissatisfaction to a thing for too long. You don't expect a five year girl to always get angry over a minor thing or shed tears so easily.

A psychologist, Deniss Child, while reporting on the work of a committee that studied human behaviour, categorised emotional disorders into:

Nervous disorder- fears, anxiety, timidity.

Habit disorder -speech defect, day dreaming, bed-wetting

Behavioural disorder- speech defect, stealing, lying

Organic disorder -head injuries, brain tumors, epilepsy.

Psychotic disorder -delusions (deceiving oneself, bizarre behaviours (unusual or weird behaviours)

Educational and vocational difficulties -inability to concentrate, slow learning etc.

Sine emotional problems are many and different; their causes are also many and different, in nature. When a teacher notices any of this behaviour in children, he should find out what may be the cause. it could be from home; from the child's peers (i.e. his playmates at school) or even the teacher himself may be the cause. If the child is not getting enough affection from the people he believes they love him, or he is having feeling of insecurity, he may be having emotional problems.

If the teacher traces the cause of improper emotional development to the home of the child, he can discuss the issue with the parents. In this way both the teacher and the parent can think of solution to the problem together.

To sum up what the teacher can do to help the child put in his care, is that the teacher should see himself as a parent, a doctor, a detective and above all a friend to the child.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

1. List the 6 categories of emotional disorders in human beings.
2. Suggest one way by which a teacher can help a child to overcome a named improper emotional or psychological development.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

Emotional or psychological development is one of the dimensions of development in children. Emotional development is concerned with the process of feelings and reactions of children to. situations around them. Like other types of development in children, the child has to learn to control his feeling to others. It also goes in stages though the stage is not so easy to mark out. There can however be cases of improper development in children.

## **5.0 Summary**

In this unit, we have discussed emotional psychological development in young children. Emotion you are told is the expression of the inner feeling of a person and that psychology is the mental make-up of a person. Emotional development is a process, which advances as

the child increases in age. A child that has always been fearful and considers loneliness a nightmare, gradually grow to be independent and able to manage his feelings without bursting into crying all the time.

Emotional development causes in stages. You are also told that there can be improper or disordered development at times.

In the next chapter, we shall be taking another interesting developmental process in children. This is intellectual or cognitive development. Intelligence has to do with the reasoning, thinking and judging pattern of individual. In young children the intellectual development takes place in a sequential manner. This means that the changes in every stage are a continuation of the changes that have taken place in the stage before it. We will also discuss how the type of academic task to be given to children at each stage must be selected so that they are relevant to the child intellectual stage.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss the emotional changes that can be observed in children of primary 1 to primary 3 in a primary school.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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# Unit 5 Intellectual Development in Young Children

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## 1.0 Introduction

In the past four units, we have been discussing different and specific types of development in young children. We have had Motor Developments, Language and speech Development, Social and finally Emotional and Psychological Development. You would have realized that these development processes are not totally unique or separate they are all related to one another. In the last unit we talk about emotional and psychological development as the process a child goes through whereby he learns and grows to control his feelings. The process is a continuous one though we described them in stages just for clarity as the child grows in age.

In this unit, we shall take another form of development in young children for discussion. This is intellectual development in young children, since intellectual development implies the growth of the child level of intelligence. Definite stages involved shall be discussed one after the other.

## 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the term intelligence
- mention environmental factors that affect intelligence
- explain intellectual development
- identify the four stages of intellectual development as illustrated by Piaget
- recognise the intellectual characteristics of a child in each stage of intellectual development
- suggest ways of helping the child to have adequate intellectual development.

## 3.0 Main Content

### 3.1 Meaning of Intellectual Development

Like it is always said at the beginning of every unit, in the past four units, 'Development' is a term you are used to already. The new word here is Intellectual, which comes from the word Intelligence. It will be appropriate then to define the word intelligence.



### 3.1.1 What is Intelligence?

Intelligence is a mental power. We say a person is intelligent, if the person shows sign of smartness, wisdom, and quick for understanding things etc. However in an academic setting of this nature, we need to give the definitions that have been given by scholars or experts in the educational matters. Here we go: Wechsler: Intelligence is the aggregate of the global capacity of the individual to act purposefully.

Guilford and Piaget: It is the ability to profit from experience, the ease with which a child learns a new idea on a new set of behaviours and the limit to which a person might profit from experience.

Whatever definition we give to intelligence, it is determined by both Hereditary and Environment. A child may be born with all necessary ingredients as a very intelligent person, but if the kind of environment he is exposed to does not suit his development, he may not be able to develop this intelligent capability in him.

There are some environmental factors that will determine how much of the in-built intelligence in a person (a child) will develop, some of these are:

- The diet of the mother during pregnancy
- The diet of the child in his first few months of life.
- Cultural rearing practices
- Socio-economic status of the parent

### Self-Assessment Exercise I

1. Define the term intelligence
2. State the two major factors that can affect intelligence
3. Mention 3 environmental factors that influence intelligence.

### 3.1.2 Some Works on Intelligence

Alfred Binet (a French Psychologist) Benjamin Bloom (an American Psychologist) and Jean Piaget (a Swiss Psychologist) are the world most prominent social scientist who have done so much study on intelligence that there is not how we talk about intelligence that we will not refer to their studies. Binet was known most for his famous Binet Intelligence test and Piaget for the work he did on stages of intelligence development, he called it mental operations. Bloom showed with evidences that 80% of a person's intelligence at age 17 had developed as at age 8.

Binet Intelligence test was first used in France to identify how much children can gain from a learning instruction. He did this then because of the over-crowded public schools that was in France. He gave the test to identify the duller i.e. the mentally retarded who could not gain anything from what the teacher was teaching them. The main reason for the test then

was to find a way of reducing the number of children in public schools, those who could not cope, were then taken out of school and were placed somewhere else.

Intelligence test does not suggest how a teacher can teach but only to tell the teacher those who cannot learn well. But teachers can use it to plan the method of teaching, by knowing the highly intelligent students, the teacher gives them more tasking (challenging) things or exercise to do, and to the low intelligent he tries to come down to their level most of the time so that they can also gain something from the teaching.

After Binet intelligence test, there has been so many other, countless number of intelligence tests that people develop and use for different purpose. We will not bother you with these in this course, you will come to them in the course on Psychology of Education.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Piaget worked on and he called it
2. What was the primary purpose of Binet intelligence test?
3. How much of a person's intelligence is developed by the age of 8?

### 3.1.3 Intellectual Development in Young Children

Before we talk about this, let us draw your attention to one word **Cognitive**. Sometimes we find some books saying cognitive development instead of intellectual development. Sometimes, you hear about cognitive domain or cognitive level. Cognitive has to do with knowing (or quality of thinking). The term is sometimes used like intelligence. When we want to describe the level of knowledge of a person, the rate of understanding new things, if somebody is so good at all, we refer to such person as having a high cognitive level. Now coming back to what we want to discuss- Intellectual Development.

Piaget's work (study) on intelligence was more popular than that of Binet. Piaget wrote many books on various aspects of his findings. His general submission is that there are four separate stages in the intellectual or cognitive development. The period never varies in arrangement except that the age at which we start noticing the different/stages may be different in children. Some may be early, while others may be late. Each stage is a continuation of the changes in the last stage before it.

Piaget's work is more relevant to us especially with the kind of categories or divisions he found out in his study. They are most relevant to the primary school setting. But the stages are not so distinct (stand out) there is a wide range in the ages.

Piaget's work tells us about the various stages of intellectual development in children, from which we can know how to plan our teaching methods and what we should expect from the children at every stage.

According to Piaget there are 4 stages of intellectual development in children, and these are:

- The sensori motor (0-2 years)

- Pre-operational (2-6 or 2- 7 years)
- Concrete operation (6-11 or 7-12 years)
- Formal operation (11 onwards or 12 onwards).

Piaget believed that there must have been some biological development of the body before the 9 stages can set in. To him, we human beings are biological organisms (living things, who must find ways of sitting into the environment so that we can survive.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

Intellectual Development is the same thing as cognitive development. Yes or No? List the stages of Intellectual Development in Young children.

## **3.2 Stages of Intellectual Development**

### **3.2.1 Sensori-Motor Stage (0-2 year)**

You will recall that we mentioned this term in Unit 6 under motor development. This is the stage when the child can now begin to sense his action (sensori) and his movement is no longer unconscious -sensori-motor. Before this stage the child was moving parts of his body unconsciously.

By the age of one, the child has established a clear idea of the part of his body, he can locate his eyes, nose, ears etc. He can recognize familiar things and he expect those things to be there even when he is not looking. He can also recognize familiar face of people and to him they continue to exist around him even when they are not there. He can shake his playing rattle to produce familiar sounds.

The child tends to be experimenting with each new ability as it appears to him. Gradually in this stage, the child can co-ordinate his hand and eye. He learns to crawl, walk and talk (motor activities). He is able to solve the problem of having to stay in one place wherever they put him) unlike before, since he cannot move. .

As the child uses language to communicate and label objects, people or experiences around him (see unit 6), it is easy for him to understand and remember the things happening around him.

### **3.2.2 Pre-Operational Stage (2-6 or 2-7 years)**

The child is still self-centered and much like before initiates actions of others especially adult. He can now talk with considerate sense in what he says. The child in this stage, can think of idea in relation to words, but he cannot understand relationship. He cannot still think rationally. He treats objects as symbols of another, e.g. he can take a stick as a car or a gun.

He passes judgments based on how an object looks alone; a taller thing is also the bigger one. It is difficult for him to relate two properties, he can only sort objects according to shape or colour or size or part of the whole. For example, if the child in this stage is asked to pick from two cups containing food drinks, he picks the taller cup, believing that it must contain more than the other.

As far as he is concerned the tallest person is the oldest person, and the biggest thing is the best. You will hear such a child referring to a taller mate in the school as being older. Because of the child's lack of rational thinking, he cannot adapt to another person's point of view.

Children in this stage also talk through problems, when counting for example, he counts loud while calculating even when he is alone. He can concentrate on a particular task that he is interested and not allowing any distractions.

By the age of 4, he should be able to differentiate between right and left, count few numbers and name familiar objects.

By the age of 5, he should be able to move according to music, draw or copy shapes, wash part of his body or comb his hair. Like we mentioned in unit 6, on motor development, this is the period when they have relative control over their muscles, can write and draw simple objects. This is their pre-primary school age, preparing for primary school proper.

The child ask questions a lot, they want to gather information and get to know the reasons for many things. They want to know the answers to many things that is like a puzzle to them.

### 3.2.3 Concrete Operations (6-11 or 7-12 years)

This is the primary school stage proper, though some children nowadays start primary school earlier. The children can think sensibly though not of abstract things. They can now understand relationship to some extent. They can understand and obey rules and regulations. They argue a lot with each other, probably trying to test their understanding of things. They however accept the authority of adult.

They can reason on part of the whole and the whole of something at the same time in this stage. For example, they can understand sharing things equally, or according to age or other parameter. There is a lot of difference in their understanding of now than before. The school can introduce them to different school subjects and games; they have the energy and intellectual development to cope with them. The child's intellectual development at this age is very high, they are very sensitive to the environment and as such many activities can be prescribed for them. They learn best by participating in skill development rather than being told about them.

Children in this stage need different activities to help them to be able to classify objects people, and events around them. If you will recollect (see 3.1.2) Bloom said 80% of the individual development of a problem of a person as he attained the age of 17, had occurred between age 0 and 8 years. It follows then that the intelligence of cognitive character of a child by the time he becomes an adult, is going to have its foundation strongly built in this

stage of intellectual development. What the child learns in this period is therefore very important.

### 3.2.4 Formal Operations (11 or 12 onwards)

At this stage, children can now be seen as big boys or big girls. They can now think about abstract things. They can think of ways of solving problems. They can understand subject like mathematics now and be able to think of solving complex problem. They try to explore ideas. They think systematically and rationally now. They, also think about future, they plan for the future.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 4

1. Which of these stages do you count as most significant in the intellectual development of the child? Give reasons for your answer.
2. In what ways can the knowledge of child's intellectual development relate to what we ask them to do in schools?

## 4.0 Conclusion

Intellectual Development of young children involves understanding the skills and concept needed for reasoning, problem solving, spatial development etc. Adults and Teachers in particular can help develop this skill even by engaging the children in games from where they can be familiar with meanings of terms.

The duty rests on the teacher to use his/her discretion to know the children his/her care, their age and the kind of activity they can learn effectively from, he should plan for what can give them maximum development. We should also note that a good intellectual development also allows for healthy serial development.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have treated another major aspect of child development, that is intellectual development. You are given some simple definitions of intelligence as given by some famous psychologists. The works of three out of the numerous people who had studied intellectual development in human beings were mentioned as it relates to our topic. The various stages of intellectual Development in young children were also described, so that as teachers will know what type of activities to plan for the children of each stage.

In the next chapter which is the last chapter of this module, we shall focus on the spiritual development in young children. There we will talk about the religious and moral development of the child. The criteria for suitable spiritual study for children will be mentioned and how the children can be taught to pray.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do we mean by "lack of rational thinking"?
2. Intellectual development of a child is strongly affected by both hereditary and environment. Yes or No? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Outline 4 characteristics behaviour of a child in the pre-primary school that or evidences of the child's level of intellectual development.

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## Unit 6 Spiritual Development in Young Children

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### 1.0 Introduction

This is the last unit in this module. The module focuses on the various types of Development in Young Children. The last unit before this was on Intellectual Development in Young Children.

There you learnt about what the term 'Intelligence' means. Some great people who had done a lot of work in intellectual or cognitive development were mentioned. The various stages of intellectual development were discussed in four divisions.

In this chapter, you are going to learn about the spiritual development of young children. The spiritual development of young children like the social and emotional development is a thing of the mind, it is not something that can easily be explained, it has to do with behaviour and feeling of the child which must be in agreement with the culture of his People. You will be given the description and some criterion that you can choose for suitable material to help the child have an acceptable spiritual development

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of the unit, you should be able to

- appreciate the need to help the child to develop spiritually
- describe the religious development of a young child
- list four criteria for choosing suitable spiritual study materials for the young child
- describe the prayer life of a young child.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 The Need for Religion

People practice religion so as to be able to understand the meaning of life. Religion is therefore used as a means of making sense of the reality and concerns of human life. People clearly have a natural need for religions and they find it easy to accept religion because to them it gives them the meaning of life.

The practice of religion may however be in different forms. We can have the Christian religion, Islamic religion (the worship of Ogun, Ifa, Oshun etc. and some other forms of the religion which can best be described by those who practice the particular form of religion.

Christians (followers of Christ) for example believe in a spiritual destiny, i.e. they believe that their life has a specific spiritual purpose and that there is a Heavenly Father (God) who guards over and guides their actions, i.e. acting like a guardian and a protector.

The Muslims (those who practice the Islamic religion) also have a similar belief of Allah, the one and the only indivisible Supreme Being who created everything, they believe he sees them everywhere, guards and protects them. Likewise the Traditionalist believes in one special spiritual being or another as a god that they can lay their wishes and desires to and expect the good to help them out.

The people take religion as a special spiritual way of getting a sense of purpose and peace of mind which they would like to share with their children as part of their cultural heritage (sense of being a member of community who share the same values and beliefs) in order to ensure the same religious certainty for them.

Young children are always looking and waiting for answer to questions because they have a questioning attitude to life. They want to know and find out about things and are ready to receive answers because they are open to the world, and they are ready to start a relationship with the things and the people in their life, and also with God /Allah a god.

As human beings the children are naturally ready to accept religion and can understand the idea that adults have the Deity or a deity (i.e. a divine special being). The way in which religion and its meaning are presented to children therefore has considerable influence on the development and what they think of this idea in their minds. It also influences their general development to proper maturity .As the children continue to grow socially, emotionally and cognitively they form their own image or conception of God/Allah/ a god.

Adults should note that as young children grow and develop in different aspect of development, they are exposed to many possibilities, so they need help to have spiritual development. They need adult guidance in the form of spiritual teaching or education.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

1. What is Religion? Name the forms of religion
2. Give 3 reasons why children, like adults need religion.

## **3.2 Spiritual Development in Young Children**

It is generally believed that children's relationship with world around them is mainly emotional. Young children still have very little experience of the word and learn mainly through their body (remember sensori-motor in unit 6 and unit 9), and through their emotional life. Young children learn mainly from what they can feel within their body system. Their emotional life (emotions) still dominates their thinking.

Take note that children begins to enjoy stories from age 2, though with little or no meaning to them. Parents and teachers can begin to read short happy stories for them from this age onward from the Holy Books (The Bible or the Holy Quarans etc). The three year old, for example have a particular need for security and safety .With this emotional feelings



therefore the Biblical or other spiritual stories teachers and parents tell children should have happy ending. You should not tell them stories that will make them feel more unsafe.

The three year old children again are very much self-centered, (i.e concerned with themselves only) have just discovered themselves as persons in their own right with a separate existence apart from being members of their family. They are just starting to see things as separate from other things and want to consider each thing in its respective looks. The three year old child sees God/ Allah /a god as a figure that is like his father. To such a person if you want him to understand God refer to him as 'God' and not 'Father' because this can be confusing to the child.

Still a child of about three year old; before you can tell such a child about the love of God/Allah/a god. You must first make him experience love within the family or class. The concept of love should therefore be made clear to them first as part of the requirement of living in this world.

The young child should also be made to experience trust and belief in their parents or any adult they are used to (i.e. learn that they can believe and trust them); before one can talk of trust and believing in God/ Allah/a god. Therefore by making sure that they experience trust and belief in their parent or adult that they cherish, one can then tell them they are given a sense of God,/ Allah or a god which is better than merely telling them about God/ Allah or a god.

The children's world must be one of trust and safety. A good step ahead is for their parent to make them have the feeling that they are safe and secure in the love of God/ Allah or a god.

The father-mother-child relationship must be healthy (i.e. they must all get on well together) so that the children can believe in God/ Allah or a god. The children feel the presence of God/ Allah/a god in their parents whom they see around them all the time and they know that their parents realize that they depend on them, just as they the parents depend on God/ Allah or a god.

As much as possible, children should not be made to feel guilty of sins because this can create a bad influence on their spiritual development, so it should be avoided at all costs. Instead of making them feel guilty, stress the love and forgiveness nature of God/ Allah or a god and not the condemnation.

Children love to copy the actions of adults, even before the age of three, they should be involved in religions activities as much as possible. They should be called to join adults during activities like family devotions, bible reading or reading from the Holy Quran, performing ablutions, or saying of incantations. They can also be involved in activities like saying the Lord's prayer, reciting the surat-u-fatia or saying the grace. They should also be visiting the church, Mosque or shrine. They copy all these external forms of behaviour, so parents should make sure that such activities take place in a serious way that shows respect for and real faith in God/Allah, a god.

As it has been pointed out, children's relationship with the world is mainly emotional (i.e. affective type), The sense of serious respect and faith created by such activities has a deep

and lasting impression in their minds and this form the basis of their future spiritual development. Although one might say that young children are still unable to understand the true meaning of prayer and other religious customs and practices, yet they have an important formative influence on their spiritual development.

You may then be wondering, when then do one really begin full and true spiritual development? The answer is simply that the time cannot be determined exactly. Spiritual development is like love in this regard. Love should be awakened so also religion. But unlike love, children should acquire religion by themselves. Adults can only show the children, way to religion he cannot give it to them. As teachers, we have duty to perform, we can still influence the preparation of the children so that proper spiritual development can take place. Remember, however that spiritual development takes place more easily in one child than another.

As a child advances from age four to five, he gradually becomes more objective, that is, he starts forming an opinion about things based on norms or principles (i.e. what should normally happen). Their thought are still global -concrete, but, are rather over simplified. They now ask why? Questions and try to find out the purpose of and the relationship between things. For example, they can ask 'why does the sun hang in the air?', they want to know what its purpose is, they don't consider how it could be possible for the sun to hang in the air

In these years, fantasy plays important roles in their life. At first they don't see a difference between living and life less, objects. A plastic dog can as well bark.

Children's world-view at the age of four to five is still extremely not rationalized (not thinking logically). They fantasize while playing, dropping down "dead" and coming back to "life" as many times as possible. With this they don't see anything strange in the Bible recording that the dead came back to life, or that water was turned to wine.

After all in their own plays, water is taken as tea or soft drinks in their "playhouse". They do all these without thinking of religion. It will therefore be out of place to tell them of the miracles Jesus performed or how Mohammed could expect the mountain to come to him. It would be better not to include tales about miracles in their religious education at this stage of their life, such stories will just sound like make-believe to them.

The children between the age of six and eight are in their prime age to be absorbed into the culture around them. The basic values of such children are built on what he is taught or experience from his parents, sisters and brothers and others who transmits cultural views, habits, patterns and norms of the society.

He accepts what he believes in this stage of life as part of him just like his body is part of him.

A child's spirituality is not the same as that of an adult. Up to the age of eight (8) children do not think of things as right or wrong, good or bad, they accept everything they find in good faith.

However, these children's questioning attitude towards reality, that is eagerness to find out about things and their natural readiness as human beings to develop spiritually; makes them ready to receive religious education. By listening to stories in the Holy book they learn to accept their God/ Allah/a god as the most powerful being of all, and they come to know what they do not know before -for example, that God/Allah/ a god created heaven and earth and all the animals, and so forth. This knowledge gives the children emotional security and self-confidence, because they have learnt to trust someone, just as their parents do.

Since children don't have sense of time yet. To a child three or four years, even five years at times, "yesterday" may be any day in the past, while "Tomorrow" may mean any day in future. You don't have to tell them stories, from the Holy Books in any right chronological order. Mind you, they hardly know the difference between "now" and "then". Whatever story you are telling them should be related to their world of experience, so that they become aware of those people in the Holy Books like members of their family. Tell them stories that will strengthen their conception of good so that they avoid doing bad things.

Religious teaching should point at stressing the forgiveness nature of God who still show us love inspite of our wrong doings. Children think of God in their own conception, they imagine, how he looks like. They think that God /Allah a god also feels tired, sleep, happy, etc.

When young children ask the question, where is God", don't tell them that "He is in heaven" or In your heart " it can be very confusing to them, they think that this God may be many, it is better to answer simply that" He is always with us, even if we cannot see Him ". Such answer is more reassuring. They need more reassuring answers than logical answers. Don't bother to give logical explanations for your answers to their questions

Now answer these questions without looking back at the note.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 2**

1. From experience, at what age do you think a child can be ready to begin to appreciate religious stories.

### **3.3 Spiritual Stories for Young Children**

While selecting stories that can awaken the spiritual development of a child, take note of the following:

- Chronological order or time frame doesn't have to be right.
- Stories must be emotionally stable, stories with happy ending, don't tell stories that can even bring fear into the children for the Christian faith, the stories of the New Testament are closer to their world.
- Stories on miracles are not appropriate to children below age 6. The younger ones are in the feeling stage, but the older children can think. choose stories that focus on people and not on events especially for those of age below 5 years.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

- I. Outline four criteria that can be used as guide as you select materials for spiritual development in children.

### **3.4 The Young Child's Prayer**

Children learn to pray at early stage, first by copying adults. A child's prayer is as simple as his world.

They learn to pray further by listening attentively to adult's prayer, though at first they only feel these prayers, it makes little or no meaning to them.

The routines of saying common prayers like the grace, the Lord's prayer, the faith are alright by the children because to them it increasingly assures them of security and stabilizes their emotions.

Children form the image of God/Allah/a god according to the kind of picture presented to them through their spiritual teaching and general education. They are able to fulfill their natural curiosity about how they are created. It is necessary to give children the opportunity, because if not, the child can be made to become an unbeliever. Unbelief can be seen as an improper spiritual development.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 4**

- I. What is the major importance of prayer to children?

## **4.0 Conclusion**

Children are exposed to the world of many possibilities, where they can also develop spiritually. They need adult guidance in the form of spiritual teaching or education for this spiritual development to take place appropriately. Children's spiritual development takes place naturally through realizing that:

Love of the parents leads to love of God/Allah/a god.  
Belief in parents leads to belief in God/Allah/a god.

Religious teaching should not be seen as an aspect of mere teaching, instead as an attitude, outlook upon life that sheds light on all other things.

God/Allah/a god should form part of one's daily life through worship, thanksgiving praise, prayer and reverence. Religion should be a way of life. Take it that the young children are sowing and not reaping.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt how young children can be led to develop spiritually.

Religious teaching and education are ways by which children can get to have many of the questions they ask that has to do with the relationship between in their life and with God/Allah/a god. We talk about the progress that can be observed and followed if children gain spiritual knowledge for their development. The child we were told should be able to experience trust and belief before he can trust and belief God. Criteria to consider while selecting spiritual training materials were outlined and the child's prayer life also described briefly.

In the next unit, which is the first unit of the other module, we shall talk about Acquisition of identity by the child. Recall where we said". The three year olds are very much self-centered, have just discovered themselves as persons in their own right with a separate existence apart from being members of their family" This is the theme of the next units.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Describe the religious development of a child in one page.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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