

Lingua Inglese e Traduzione

Scienze e tecniche psicologiche (7 CFU)

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English for Educators

From Part I, *Perspectives in Psychology*

S. Freud

- *A Passage from The Interpretation of Dreams (1899)*
- *The concept of “experience”*

J. Piaget

- *A passage from The Child’s Conception of the World (1929-1960)*
- *The Stages of Mental Development*

J. Bruner

- *A passage from Actual Minds, Possible Worlds (1986)*
- *Language Learning/Acquisition*

H. Gardner

- *Frames of Mind (1983-2004)*
- *The concepts of mind/cognitive/cognition*

 **A Biographical section (“All about....”) for each author**

Freud's examination-dreams



Have you ever had an examination-dream?

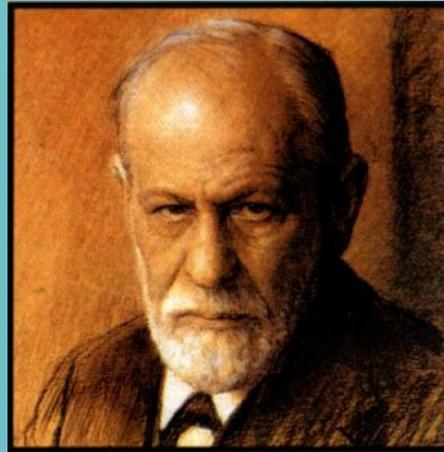
Yes, I have. It often happens to me/ No, I haven't. It has never happened to me.

Is it a recurrent dream?

Yes, it is, I make it any time I'm stressed out/nervous for something.

Can you remember where you are and how old you are in the dream? Are there any other known people in the dream?

No, I really can't!/ Yes, I can remember this very well. It's always the same. In my dream I am in my old high school classroom with my schoolmates and my teacher of maths. I'm about seventeen years old, I'm in my last school year and I have to face my final maturity exam again and in particular my mathematics test.



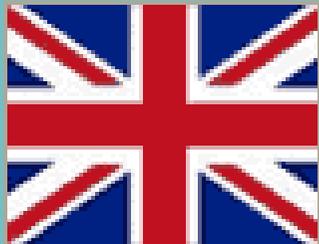
How do you feel when you wake up after having that kind of dream?

I feel stressed out, nervous, agitated, desperate because I know it's something I've already faced and overtaken but at the same time relieved when I realize that it was just a dream!



Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

The father of psychoanalysis
His system of ideas about the Id, Ego and Super-Ego of the mind is still employed by psychologists in one form or another.



DREAM

Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Swiss Psychologist, he has been the first to make a systematic study of the acquisition of understanding in children. He is probably the major figure in 20th century developmental psychology



Jean Piaget's Synthetic Biography



- ✚ He was born on August 9th 1896 in Switzerland.
- ✚ In 1907 he published his first paper on an Albino Sparrow species. He was only 10 years old.
- ✚ In 1918 he obtained a doctorate in zoology and he studied psychoanalysis.
- ✚ In 1920 he started studying children's intelligence and three years later, in 1923, the first of his nearly sixty scholar books was published.
- ✚ In 1929 he was appointed director of the International Bureau of Education. In 1955, he established a Center for genetic epistemology.
- ✚ He died in Geneva in 1980

Piaget's areas of research

Swiss philosopher and psychologist, he spent much of his professional life listening to children, watching children and poring over the reports of researchers around the world who were doing the same.



Methodology of research

He found that children do not think like grownups.

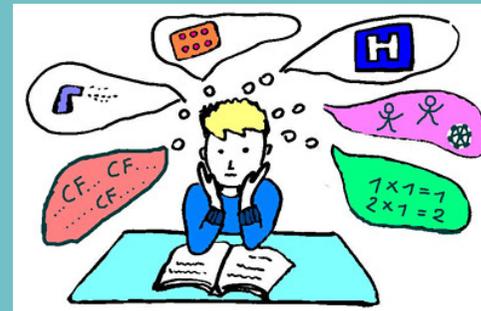
He held thousands of interactions with young people often barely old enough to talk using a methodology based on Q&A (Question/Answer) patterns and sessions with children.



The discovery of children's logic

From his sessions with children Piaget began to suspect that behind children's cute and seemingly illogical utterances were thought processes that had their own kind of order and their own special logic.

Einstein called it a discovery “so simple that only a genius could have thought of it.”



A long career, new fields of science

His insight opened a new window into the inner workings of the mind. By the end of a wide-ranging and remarkably prolific research career that spanned nearly 75 years – from his first scientific publication at age 10 to work still in progress when he died at 84 – Piaget has developed several new fields of science: developmental psychology, cognitive theory and what came to be called genetic epistemology

Pioneer of education reform movements

Although not an educational reformer he championed a way of thinking about children that provided the foundation of today's education reform-movements, a shift that was comparable to the displacement of stories of "noble savages" and "cannibals" by modern anthropology. One might say that Piaget was the first to take children's thinking seriously.



A revolutionary conception of pedagogy

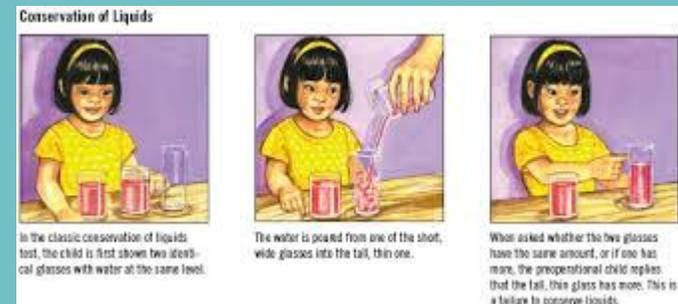
He has been reverey generations of teachers inspired by the belief that children are not empty vessels to be filled with knowledge (as traditional pedagogical theory had it) but active builders of knowledge – little scientists who are constantly creating and testing their own theories of the world



The interest in children's thinking

After WWI, Piaget became interested in psychoanalysis. He moved to Zurich, where he attended Carl Jung's lectures, and then to Paris, where he studied logic and abnormal psychology.

Working with Theodore Simon in Alfred Binet's lab, he noticed that Parisian children of the same age made similar errors on true-false intelligence tests.



Focus on child's reasoning process

Fascinated by their reasoning process he began to suspect that the key to human knowledge might be discovered by observing how the child mind develops.



Observation of children

Back in Switzerland he began watching children play scrupulously recording their words and actions as their mind raced to find reasons for why things are the way they are.



A typical Piaget dialogue

In one of his most famous experiments he asked children “What makes the wind?”.

Here’s a typical Piaget dialogue:

Piaget: What makes the wind?

Julia: The trees.

Piaget: How do you know?

Julia: I saw them waving their arms.

Piaget: How does that make the wind?

Julia: (wavin her hand in front of his face): Like this. Only they are bigger. And there are lots of trees.

Piaget: What makes the wind on the ocean?

Julia: It blows there from the land. No. It’s the waves.



Children's logic



Julia's answers were not incorrect, if not in the perspective of adult logic.

They were entirely sensible and coherent within the framework of the child's way of knowing. Classifying them as true or false missed the point and showed a lack of respect for the child.

An explanatory principle in children's apparently ingenuous and incoherent answers.

Piaget's work strongly suggests that the automatic reaction of putting a child right may be well abusive. Practicing the art of making theories may be more valuable for children than achieving "meteorological orthodoxy".



Children/Adults dynamics

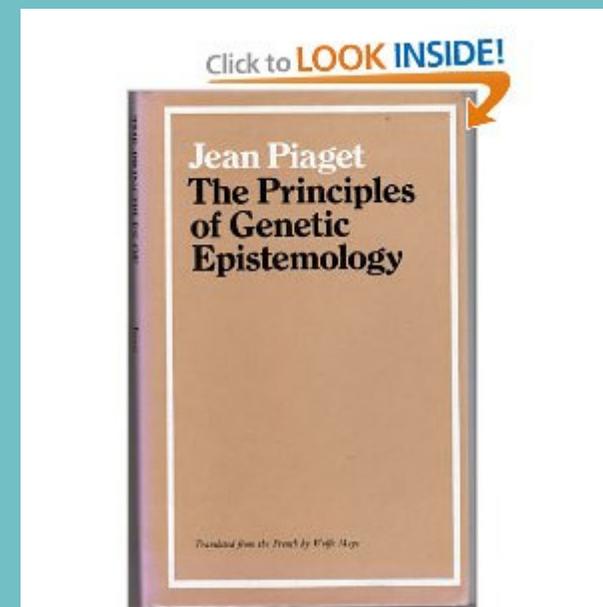
And if their theories are always greeted by “Nice try, but this is how it really works...” they might give up after a while on making theories. As Piaget put it:

“Children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves, and each time that we try to teach them something too quickly, we keep them from reinventing themselves”.



Genetic epistemology

Piaget's real interest was epistemology – the theory of knowledge – which came along like physics, was considered a branch of philosophy until Piaget came along and made it a science.



Epistemological relativism

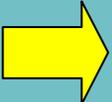
He explored a kind of epistemological relativism in which multiple ways of knowing are acknowledged and examined nonjudgmentally, yet with a philosopher's analytical rigor.

Looking carefully at how knowledge develops in children will elucidate the nature of knowledge in general.



Jean Piaget

The Child's conception of the world

The child is a ***realist***  ***Why?***

Because he has not yet grasped the distinction between subject and object and the internal nature of thought.



therefore

He will be confronted by grave difficulties when he attempts to explain the most subjective of all phenomena: ***dreams***

Inquiring children's perception of dreams

Of great interest...for (because) the explanation of dreams supposes the duality

- First, of the internal and the external
- Secondly, of thought and matter

Questions:

- *You know what a dream is?*
- *Do you dream sometimes at night?*
- *Then tell me where the dreams come from.*

It is of primary importance to understand where the child locates the dream.

“FROM THE HEAD”

- ❖ *The dream is in the head*
- ❖ *The head produces a dream in the room*

3 different stages

- **5-6:** the child believes the dream to come from outside and to take place and to take place within the room and he thus dreams with the eyes
- **7-8:** he supposes the source of the dream to be in the head, in thought, in the voice but the dream is in the room, in front of him.
- **9-10:** the dream is the product of thought, it takes place inside the head and dreaming is by means of thought or else with the eyes used internally.

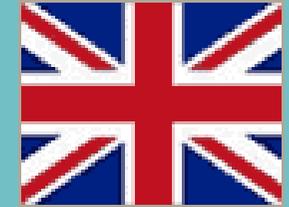
Piaget's stages of mental development

✚ *Emphasis on child's ability **actively** to **make sense of the world.***

✚ *Human beings go through several distinct stages of cognitive development that is **learning to think about themselves and their environment.***

- Sensorimotor stage*
- Pre-operational stage*
- Concrete-operational stage*
- Formal-operational stage (schooling)*

Possible discussion



Piaget was often criticized because his experiments were conducted by giving children complicated and unclear tasks – that is, by asking children to reason like adults. Do you agree with this view?

- *Yes, I do, because in my opinion Piaget's method is not suitable for so young children.*
- *No, I do not agree/I find this criticism absolutely immotivated because....*