Assimilative Practice and Developmental Intervention

Abstract

It is proposed that developmental learning is integrally tied to children engaging in massive practice of their existing skills and concepts. This is based upon observations that: children’s spontaneous play is characterized by their producing behaviors typical for their developmental age; children repeat these behaviors thousands of times before transitioning to higher developmental levels; and children’s rate of practicing behaviors associated with their current functioning is correlated with their development. Massive practice corresponds to the concept of assimilation which Piaget identified as one of the two processes involved in developmental learning. Results from intervention research studies that accelerated children’s development by increasing their rate of practice are presented. Although the concept of assimilative practice is overlooked as an essential learning activity in early intervention, the difficulties of promoting maintenance and generalization which are often encountered in early intervention may be addressed by integrating a focus on assimilation into contemporary practice.

Keywords: Young Children with Disabilities, Developmental Learning: Early Intervention.

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