

Level: Master 01
Course of Psycho-Pedagogy
Dr. Kebbout H.

Lecture Three: Cognitivism

Cognitivism is a psychological framework that arose as a response to behaviorism in the 1950s. This latter suggests that we learn through conditioning, or through interaction with the environment around us. Cognitive learning theory, on the other hand, suggests that our cognitive processes have a role to play in determining knowledge and behavior. To say it otherwise, it is a learning theory that focuses on how the information is received, organized, stored, and retrieved by the mind.

The cognitive psychologists believe that humans learn from thinking, they assume that we learn from our experiences and we can change our behaviors based on new information. Knowledge is considered as an internal process rather than a product.

Cognitivism Approaches: there are two approaches

- a. **Information processing approach:** it understands the way human mind works by comparing it to a super-computer. The brain receives various types of information and retrieves it when it is needed. This theory was developed by the American psychologists Robert Sternberg and Hermon A. Simon.
- b. **Cognitive Development:** it means how children progressively develop and organize knowledge; it was set by the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. His goal was to observe and explain the process used by infants and children to become individuals capable of reasoning and thinking. He concluded that people use mental frameworks called schemas to build their mental sense of reality.

Schemas: the cognitive frameworks that allow a person to interpret a new situation based on their experience in similar. Without them, one would have to relearn their behavior for each new experience, even if they had been in a similar situation in the past. Piaget framed cognitive processing in terms of assimilation and accommodation.

Abdelhafid Boussouf University Center, Mila
Institute of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
English Section

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When people use an existing schema to make sense of environmental stimuli, they are assimilating that experience, which means how someone interprets their life experiences. Accommodation means the way someone adjusts their internal models after interpreting.

Piaget's stages of cognitive development: There are four stages

- a. **The sensorimotor stage:** It occurs from birth to around 2 years old, during this stage infants learn about the world through their senses and actions, such as gasping and sucking.
- b. **The preoperational stage:** During this stage, children between the ages of 2 and 7 start to develop language and imagination skills. They can engage in pretend play and use symbols to represent objects or ideas.
- c. **The concrete operational stage:** It occurs between the ages of 7 and 11, is when children become more logical and can think more systematically about objects and events. They can understand concepts like conservation, where they realize that the amount of something doesn't change just because its appearance does. They also start to grasp the concept of reversibility, understanding that actions can be undone.
- d. **The formal operational stage:** Stage of human cognitive development, typically beginning around age 11 or 12, characterized by the emergence of logical thinking processes, particularly the ability to understand theories and abstract ideas and predict possible outcomes of hypothetical problems.

The cognitive processes play a crucial role in learning and understanding. By focusing on how individuals process information, cognitivism highlights the importance of mental processes such as attention, memory, and problem-solving. This perspective has greatly contributed to our understanding of human cognition and has shaped various educational approaches and interventions.