

Developmental Psychology 355

Tuesday/Thursday 1/28-30/14 Lecture

Why Study Child Development?

- ❖ To gain insight into human nature
- ❖ To help raise our children
- ❖ To help choose social policies
- ❖ To gain insight into the origins of individual differences
 - Adult behavior, sex/gender differences, effects of culture on development
- ❖ To gain insight into developmental problems
 - Origins, treatment, prevention
- ❖ To optimize conditions of development

9 Fundamental Questions

1. How do nature and nurture together shape development?
2. How do children shape their own development?
3. In what ways is development continuous, and in what way is it discontinuous?
4. How does change occur?
5. How does the sociocultural context influence development?
6. How do children become so different from each other?
7. How can research promote children's well-being ?
8. How vulnerabilities and resilience contribute to development?
9. The importance of timing

Historical Foundations and Themes

Tuesday, 2/4-6/14 Lecture

Scientific Method

1. choose question to be answered
2. formulate hypothesis
3. develop method for testing the hypothesis
4. use data to draw conclusion

Designs for Examining Development

Cross-Sectional Designs:

- ❖ compare behavior or characteristics of children of different ages

Longitudinal Designs:

- ❖ same children are studied twice or more over a period of time
- ❖ disadvantage: you have to wait a long time for children to grow up/effects of repeated testing; difficult keeping all participants in study
- ❖ advantage: indicates the degree of stability of individual differences over long periods; reveals individual children's patterns of change over long periods

- ❖ Longitudinal Study Source of Memory: 135 children, 4,6,and 8 years ...visited lab 2 times per year for 3 years (3 groups following them for 3 years) → cross-sequential study

Cross-Sequential

- ❖ combines the advantages of longitudinal and cross-sectional
- ❖ different groups are followed over time
 - ex: tracking 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders over 3 years
- ❖ advantages: you are looking at developmental change; acquiring data (longitudinal change) but you don't have to wait so long to do it

Microgenetic Designs

- ❖ provide in-depth depiction of a behavior over time
 - study children on the verge of an important developmental change
 - provide heightened exposure
 - study them intensely while their behavior is in transition
- ❖ motor/perceptual development → development of locomotion (walking and crawling) enrolled babies who are just on the verge of crawling
- ❖ children are observed intensively over a relatively short time period while a change is occurring
- ❖ changes in locomotion over time
- ❖ advantages: intensive observation of changes while they are occurring can reveal process of change; reveals individual change patterns over short periods in considerable detail
- ❖ disadvantages: does not provide information about typical patterns of change over long periods; does not reveal individual change patterns over long periods
- ❖ you want to study children on the verge of a developmental change ***
- ❖ used on counting strategies (Dr.Segler) uses this design to look at childrens counting and reliance on different strategies
- ❖ look at children as they are transferring in and out of these strategies

Contexts for Gathering Data about Children

Interviews & Self-Report

- ❖ subjects provide info about themselves
 - face to face (&computer assisted)
 - structured interview