

Course Description

Developmental Psychology 1.

Aim of the course

This course is an introduction to developmental psychology focusing on cognitive development in the period between conception and puberty. The course – that consists of lectures and seminars requiring regular attendance – aims:

- 1) to help to understand the fundamental approaches and theories in developmental psychology and their significance in practice
- 2) to give an introduction to the specific issues of research on cognitive development and measuring the individual achievement in cognitive functioning – understanding illustrative examples from classical and contemporary research and gaining experience in testing young children
- 3) to review the most important milestones of cognitive development both in thematic and chronological approach

Learning outcome, competences

knowledge:

- theoretical approaches and fundamental theories in cognitive developmental psychology
- research designs, techniques in data collection in developmental psychology
- specific techniques in research on infancy
- developmental milestones in different domains and different ages: neural-, motor-, language-, social-, executive functions and memory development

attitude:

- is ethical and human behaviour with children and their parents
- is emphatic and flexible in using professional knowledge
- is open and sensitive to multiple interpretations
- is aware of interrelations between theoretical knowledge and practice
- is aware of being professional at work requires lifelong learning and continuing education

skills:

- is capable of giving presentation
- is able to work in team with individual responsibility
- is able to work with children: to create tasks and ask questions
- can conduct, administer, and evaluate tasks and tests for children
- can interview with parents
- can review and understand individual cognitive development
- is aware of the limits of her/his competence

Content of the course

Topics of the course

- Historical, ethical, and methodological issues in developmental psychology
- Fundamental theoretical approaches and theories in cognitive developmental psychology
- Piaget's model
- Milestones in neural development
- Motor development
- Naive physics in infancy

- Social development: naive psychology and teleological stance
- Language acquisition
- Memory development
- Executive function in infancy and childhood
- Development in visual representation

Learning activities, learning methods

- lectures on the main relevant topics – most of the above mentioned topics in thematic approach
- seminars on the main relevant topics – most of the above mentioned topics in chronological approach:
 - watching and discussing movies on important developmental phenomena
 - processing specific topics in team and discussion together
 - individual presentation and tasks
 - essay writing (at home)

Evaluation of outcomes

Learning requirements, mode of evaluation, criteria of evaluation:

requirements

- written exam (lectures and compulsory reading list)
- active participation in seminars (including individual and team work)
- essay writing (at home): a summary of the compulsory tasks (interview and anamnesis with parents, administration and interpretation of the required tasks and tests with children) and self-reflections

mode of evaluation: grade 1-5

criteria of evaluation:

- 65% written exam, 35% seminar grade

Reading list

Compulsory reading list

- Cynthia Lightfoot, Michael Cole,& Sheila R. Cole (2009): *The Development of Children*, Worth Publishers:
 - Chapter 1: The Study of Human Development - full
 - Chapter 3: Prenatal Development and Birth - full
 - Chapter 4: The First Three months - full
 - Chapter 5: Physical and Cognitive Development in Infancy - full
 - Chapter 6: Social and Emotional Development in Infancy p 201-210, 222-225
 - Chapter 7: Language Acquisition – full
 - Chapter 8: Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood - full
 - Chapter 11: Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood – full
 - Chapter 14: Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence - full
- Karmiloff-Smith, A. (1994): *Precis of Beyond modularity: A developmental perspective on cognitive science*. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 17 (4): 693-745.
- Gergely, G. and Csibra, G. (2003): *Teleological reasoning in infancy: The naive theory of rational action*. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7 287-292.

- Shonkoff, J. P. and PhilFrom, D. A. (2000): Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. NATIONAL ACADEMY PRESS, Washington, D.C. Chapter 8: The Developing Brain. 182-219. (available pdf Meet Street)

Recommended reading list

- Cynthia Lightfoot, Michael Cole,& Sheila R. Cole (2009): The Development of Children, Worth Publishers:
 - Chapter 2: Biocultural Foundations
 - Chapter 12 School as a Context for Development