

OBSERVATION:

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

According to Piaget, TC is in the **preoperational stage** (Thompson, 2018). Piaget believed children learn by reflecting on direct experience to form **schemas**, processed by **assimilation** and **accommodation** (Bhattacharya & Han, 2010; Garhart-Mooney, 2013). TC displayed that he had created a schema when noting his association of darkness and bedtime stories.

The concept of **conservation** (Ormond et al., 2020) is also important here. Several tasks exist to determine conservation, such as the liquids task (Siegler et al., 2020). A conservation task was attempted on TC during the observation. As expected, TC showed he lacked conservation. This is contrary to Watanabe (2017), who found a 3-year-old could correctly complete the tasks if they were presented as part of play, showing they understood conservation.

Vygotsky believed development relies on observation and being taught skills (Lourenço, 2012). He proposed the **zone of proximal development**, a theoretical area of skill where children can complete certain tasks, but only with the assistance of a more knowledgeable person through **scaffolding** (Abtahi et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2013; Ormond et al., 2020). This is seen within the observation as TC learns to roll playdoh from observing A2.

Cognitive

At 18 months, children's **rate of learning words** drastically increases, and they begin to combine words (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2002; McMurray, 2007). TC displays the usage of many words in different combinations for different meanings throughout the observation. Contemporary research shows that raising children as bilingual contributes to better cognitive outcomes later in life (Blom et al., 2017), so it may be of benefit to expose TC to multiple languages.

Intelligibility is an important aspect of language acquisition (Hustad et al., 2020). TC sometimes seems unintelligible to strangers, yet familiar people like A1 and A2 understand him. This is supported by Burnett et al. (2022), who found that children without speech issues are usually understood by their caregivers.

Symbolic play is intrinsically linked to language development, partially due to the increased usage of speech to assist in this play (Orr & Geva, 2015; Smith & Jones, 2011). TC symbolically plays with a bowl during the observation, imaging that it is a hat. Notably, TC was speaking more than usual at this time.

Speech & Language

Motor skills are the ability to control motions using muscles (Haibach-Beach et al., 2018; Sutapa et al., 2021) and are divided into **gross motor skills** and **fine motor skills** (Kuther, 2022). TC has met the gross motor skill milestones expected such as running and jumping (Von Tetzchner, 2023a). TC attempted to use his fine motor skills to operate a spoon rather than his use hands. This evolving development of motor skills is supported by Adolph and Tamis-LeMonda (2014) who observed children transition from crawling to walking.

Observational learning is a way children develop new motor skills (Gaskins & Paradise, 2010). TC demonstrates developing new motor skills by observing A2 roll playdoh into a sausage and copying her. This is supported by Han et al. (2022), who suggested observational learning can be used to assist physical educators.

Physical

Ainsworth proposed three types of **attachment**: secure, anxious-avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent. These all relate to a child's anxiety concerning the presence or absence of their primary caregiver (Duschinsky, 2020; Martin et al., 2013). TC's primary caregiver is A4, who was absent until the end of the observation. During the observation, TC showed some distress due to A4's absence but comfort with A1 and A2, suggesting **secure attachment**, created by TC's parents being reactive to his needs (Duschinsky, 2020). Zahra (2022) suggested that attachment style was a predictor for quality of romantic relationships later in life.

Linked to secure attachment is **prosocial behaviour** (Gross et al., 2017). TC displayed prosocial behaviours expected of his age such as by offering to share food (Brownell et al., 2009; Von Tetzchner, 2023b). TC often used smiling to show happiness, another common behaviour (Fabes et al., 2002).

According to Erikson, TC is in the **autonomy vs. shame and doubt** stage. This stage determines the social abilities and personality of the child. If they are supported and inspired by their parents, they will be more confident (Bishop, 2013; Garhart-Mooney, 2013). TC appears confident and willing to explore his surroundings, suggesting that he is completing this stage on the side of autonomy. Cross and Cross (2017) proposed the usage of psychosocial development in educational settings to assist students in reaching their potential.

Social & Emotional

Image Citations
(Muller, 2017; Syrikova, n.d.)

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