# Child Development

As I walked down the passageways of the grocery store searching for the ingredients for a new recipe I had planned on trying, I heard screams from a child, the whole store heard it. It was a temper outburst from a four year old boy who was in the company of his mother who seemed to be in her late 20s.

It was not easy for the mother and this young man. I finally came across them in the fruits walkway. She had a pushcart full of foodstuff, and the kid was walking beside her. The boy was not really walking so much as he seemed angry about something and from what I gathered, it was about a particular lucky fruit he wanted to acquire, but the mother refused to purchase. The mother tried to bribe his little champ into silence, but she stick to her guns. The kid continued crying and screaming, and I could tell the mother was really feeling the pain. She did not purchase the lucky fruit, and as she billed her groceries at the counter, the boy was silent and already whispering something to his mother.

This scenario could be well explained through the preoperational stage of Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development. This is a stage that starts around age two until about seven years where children learn how to use symbols and language. During this stage, a child's thought processes are still developing, but they are considered to be far from logical thought in the sense of adulthood.

Egocentrism is among the many features of this stage, where a child's communication and ideas are typically egocentric (Beilin and Pufall 2-5). Children in this juncture focus only on themselves. They have difficulties seeing a situation from other people's perspectives. Egocentric children assume that feel, hear and see exactly the same way as the child does. Centration occurs during this stage, where a child focuses on only one feature of a situation at one time and when they focus on more than one facet of a situation at the same time, they decenter. From the narration of the interaction between a mother and her four-year-old son above, it is clear that this child is in preoperational stage of cognitive development. The young man is egocentric and does not care if the mother buys other important groceries or not, he just wants his lucky fruit, He does not understand why his mother does not understand him because he thinks that his thinking and that of his mother are exactly the same. In addition, the young man is only focusing on getting his fruit without caring about the noise he is making or the people around him.

This situation can also be explained through Vygotsky's explanation of language. According to him, language and thoughts are initially separate systems since the beginning of life. Vygotsky believed language stems from social interactions for the purposes of communication. He differentiated between three types of language (Lantolf et al. 198-199. One is the social speech which s external communication used for communicating with others. This typical begins at the age of two. Second is private speech, which typically begins at the age of three. The purpose of private speech is intellectual and is directed to self. Lastly is silent speech which begins at the age of seven. Silent speech involves self-regulatory function. In this case, there is both the aspect of social speech, as the kid communicates with the mother so that she can purchase his lucky fruit (Keenan et al. 43). The aspect of private speech is also evident when the kid finally silences himself and decides to be friends with the mother again.

## Works Cited

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