Chapter 1
A Cultural Approach to Child Development
1.4 Apply information about human evolution to how child development takes place today.
1.5 Summarize Freud’s psychosexual theory and Erikson’s psychosocial theory of child development and describe the main limitations of each.

1.6 Describe behaviorism, including the role of conditioning and the variation known as social learning theory.

1.7 Summarize the constructivists theories of Piaget and Vygotsky.
Learning Objectives (3 of 4)

1.8 Describe the elements of the information-processing model of cognitive functioning.

1.9 Define the five systems of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological framework.

1.10 Describe the main components of the ecocultural theory of Weisner and explain how it differs from stage theories.

1.11 Outline the cultural-developmental model that will be the structure of this book and describe the new life stage of emerging adulthood.
Learning Objectives (4 of 4)

1.12 Recall the five steps of the scientific method and the meanings and functions of hypotheses, sampling, and procedure in scientific research.

1.13 Describe some ethical standards for child development research.

1.14 Summarize the main methods used in research on child development.

1.15 Describe the major types of research designs used in child development research.
Psychoanalytic Theory: Erikson

- Focuses on social and cultural environment and not on sexuality
- Continued throughout life span and not limited to first six years, as with Freud
- Eight stages of development characterized by crisis and resolution
Figure 1.5  **Erikson’s Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development**

- **Infancy:** Trust vs. mistrust
  Main developmental challenge is to establish bond with trusted caregiver

- **Adolescence:** Identity vs. identity confusion
  Main developmental challenge is to develop a secure and coherent identity

- **Toddlerhood:** Autonomy vs. shame and doubt
  Main developmental challenge is to develop a healthy sense of self as distinct from others

- **Early Adulthood:** Intimacy vs. isolation
  Main developmental challenge is to establish a committed, long-term love relationship

- **Early Childhood:** Initiative vs. guilt
  Main developmental challenge is to initiate activities in a purposeful way

- **Middle Adulthood:** Generativity vs. stagnation
  Main developmental challenge is to care for others and contribute to well-being of the young

- **Middle Childhood:** Industry vs. inferiority
  Main developmental challenge is to begin to learn knowledge and skills of culture

- **Late Adulthood:** Ego integrity vs. despair
  Main developmental challenge is to evaluate lifetime, accept it as it is
Behaviorism and Learning Theories

• Focus on what a child does, rather than think, feel, or imagine

• Conditioning is the fundamental learning process in behaviorism
  – Classical Conditioning - Neutral relate to meaningful
  – Operant Conditioning - Responding to environmental responses

• Social Learning Theory allows for imitation and modeling
Constructivist Theories: Piaget

• **Piaget focused on different ways that children think as they age**
  – Called cognitive developmental approach

• Maturation—biologically driven

• **Schemes**—cognitive structures
  – Assimilation—altering new information to fit existing scheme
  – Accommodation—changing a scheme to adapt new information
## Table 1.2 Stages of Cognitive Development in Piaget’s Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>Sensorimotor</td>
<td>Capable of coordinating the activities of the senses with motor activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>Preoperational</td>
<td>Capable of symbolic representations, such as in language, but with limited ability to use mental operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>Concrete Operations</td>
<td>Capable of using mental operations, but only in concrete, immediate experience; difficulty thinking hypothetically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 and up</td>
<td>Formal Operations</td>
<td>Capable of thinking logically and abstractly; capable of formulating hypotheses and testing them systematically; thinking is more complex; and can think about thinking (metacognition)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Constructivist Theory: Vygotsky

• Referred to as a sociocultural theory
• Emphasis on society and cultural impact on learning
• Two major ideas
  – Zone of proximal development
  – Scaffolding
Information Processing Theory

• **Information Processing Approach**
  – Views cognitive changes as continuous
  – Historically compared thinking to a computer
  – Focuses on areas of attention, perception and memory
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Framework

• Focuses on multiple influences that shape behavior and is not a stage theory

• Five levels:
  – Microsystem-Immediate environment (Daily life)
  – Mesosystem-Interconnections between microsystems (outside influences and how it affects daily life)
  – Exosystem-institutions that have indirect effects on development (Indirect but potential influence in daily life)
  – Macrosystem-Cultural Beliefs (major values that influence daily life)
  – Chronosystem-Time (changes that occur in the developmental circumstances over time in daily life)
Figure 1.7 The Systems in Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory
Weisner’s Ecocultural Theory

Emphasizes ecological and cultural aspects of the activities and settings of development

Activity settings are important

- Personnel- Who? The people around individual.
- Cultural goals and schemas- When? Day to day living.
- Motives and feelings- What? What motivates the action.
- Tasks- Actions.
- Normative scripts- Why? How we develop within the community.
Weisner’s ecocultural theory of child development proposes that there are ecocultural niche features that affect a child’s development.

**Figure 1.8 Weisner’s Ecocultural Theory**

- **Subsistence work cycle**
  The characteristics of the *subsistence work cycle* and the ecological and technological systems that produce it, including wage work, tending crops or animals, distance from the home, migration, and the like.

- **Health status and demographic characteristics**
  The *health status and demographic characteristics* of the community, including mortality risks, availability of health care, birth control, family size, and the like.

- **Community safety**
  Overall *community safety* other than health and mortality, such as dangers from motor vehicles, intra- and inter-community violence and warfare, and the like.

- **Division of labor**
  The *division of labor* by age and sex and perhaps other criteria like caste or race in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, including the relative importance of various activities for subsistence and prestige.

- **Work that children are expected to do**
  The *work that children are expected to do* beginning as a toddler through adolescence.

- **Role of the father and older siblings**
  The *role of the father and older siblings* in child care as a special issue of nonmaternal child care. That is, how much do fathers and older siblings help with child care?

- **Children’s play groups**
  The composition of *children’s play groups* by age, sex, and kinship category (siblings, cousins, relatives, and non-relatives). That is, do children play mostly with relatives or non-relatives?
How We Study Child Development
The Five Steps of the Scientific Method (1 of 3)

• The scientific method
  – The scientific method is composed of 5 steps
    ▪ Identifying a question
    ▪ Forming a hypothesis
    ▪ Choosing a research method or design
    ▪ Collecting data
    ▪ Drawing conclusions
The Five Steps of the Scientific Method (2 of 3)

1. Identify a question of scientific interest
   - Can come from previous research, a theory, or personal observation

2. Form a hypothesis
   - The researcher’s idea about a possible answer to a research question
   - Will dictate research methods, design, and analysis
The Five Steps of the Scientific Method (3 of 3)

3. Choose a research method and design
   – The way hypotheses are investigated

4. Collect data to test the hypothesis
   – Researchers try to collect a sample that represents the population

5. Draw conclusions
   – Data is inferred and peer reviewed
   – Can lead to theory modification or changes
Figure 1.9 The Steps of the Scientific Method

1. **Identify a Research Question**
   - May begin with previous research or theory, or researcher's own experience.

2. **Propose a Hypothesis**
   - A hypothesis is one possible answer to the main research question.

3. **Choose a Research Method/Design**
   - Research methods include questionnaires and interviews; research designs may involve one point in time or many.

4. **Collect Data**
   - The sample should represent well the population of interest.

5. **Draw Conclusions**
   - Data are analyzed and published, leading to new hypotheses and to the development of theories.
Ethics in Child Development Research

• Institutional review boards (IRBs) work to prevent ethical violations

• Ethical guidelines include
  – Protection from physical and psychological harm
  – Informed consent prior to participation
  – Confidentiality
  – Deception and debriefing
Researchers use various methods to investigate human development:

- Questionnaires
  - Closed or open-ended
- Interviews – qualitative (non-numerical)
- Observations - (recording behavior)
- Ethnographic research (Spending time with the group being studied)
- Case studies (detailed examination of someone’s life)
- Biological methods (research of a genetic basis)
Experiments help to establish cause and effect
- Experimental group receives treatment
- Control group receives no treatment

Independent variable – different for the experimental group than control group

Dependent variable – outcome that is measured to calculate results of the experiment
Experiments
  - Advantage is degree of control
  - Disadvantage is applicability to real life

Natural Experiment
  - Exists naturally and provides interesting scientific information
Researchers use multiple methods, but it is important that they have reliability and validity.

- Reliability: consistency of measurement
- Validity: truthfulness of the measure
  - Does it measure what it claims to measure?
Research design allows researchers to examine changes over time

- Cross-sectional
  - Gathers information from wide age range at a single time

- Correlation
  - Positive
  - Negative
Longitudinal design follows same persons over time

Can focus on how people change over time

Can deal with cohort effects to some degree

Cross Sequential design combines cross sectional approach with longitudinal approach
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Large sample, quick data collection</td>
<td>Preset responses, no depth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Individuality and complexity</td>
<td>Time and effort of coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Actual behavior, not self-report</td>
<td>Observation may affect behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnographic research</td>
<td>Entire span of daily life</td>
<td>Researcher must live among participants; possible bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>Rich, detailed data</td>
<td>Difficult to generalize results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological measurements</td>
<td>Precise data</td>
<td>Expensive; relation to behavior may not be clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>Control, identification of cause and effect</td>
<td>May not reflect real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural experiment</td>
<td>Illuminate gene–environment relations</td>
<td>Unusual circumstances; rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.4 Research Designs: Advantages and Limitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectional</td>
<td>Data collected at one time point</td>
<td>Quick and inexpensive</td>
<td>Correlations difficult to interpret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitudinal</td>
<td>Data collected at two or more time points</td>
<td>Monitors change over time</td>
<td>Time, expense, attrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Sequential</td>
<td>Data collected at two or more time points with the same participants, who are different ages at the outset of the study</td>
<td>Can detect differences related to chronological age and distinguish them from those related to cohort effects</td>
<td>Time, expense, attrition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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