

Patrick Springer  
CEP 800  
November 10, 2010

In today's ever changing world, I would argue that technology plays a larger role in a child's development today than at any other time period in history. To validate this argument, all one has to do is take a stroll through any toy store and observe the number of toys that now incorporate a number of technologies in their design. There are countless number and designs of toys that all aim at educating the young learner. They make use of buttons, flashing lights, music, moving parts, touch screens, and more. As recent history continues to prove to us, each generation is more and more technologically advanced than the previous one. For this reason, I believe that any Piagetian would encourage the use of technology with children at each of the four stages, sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational, and formal operational.

During the sensorimotor stage, young children are very impressionable. As a parent, I have witnessed that it doesn't take long for my son to start imitating my behaviors that he observes. Some comical moments have been observed when he has tried to mimic 'working on the computer' among other behaviors. While comical for us, it does show how each generation becomes more advanced than the previous: their exposure to technology starts at an earlier age, and progresses at a faster rate. This early exposure to technology enables the new generation to become comfortable with technology at an early age. The Piagetian will certainly argue that at this early stage, the child needs to go through these initial learning developmental stages to "set the stage" for learning to take place in latter stages. Much of this type of learning and development have very little to do with technology and it is therefore of no value, or at least minimal influence.

As the child moves from the sensorimotor stage into the pre-operational stage, the learner would now have more of a knowledge base in which to build upon with the use of technology. While the learner is still too young to make use of critical thinking skills, technology could be used as a tool in the continuing development of perception, memory, and possibly object permanence. This would help push the learner towards the concrete operational stage at a slightly faster pace than Piaget would have envisioned.

One key point that cannot be overlooked as a learner progresses through the latter stages of development is social interactions, a Piagetian might argue. A child who relies too much on technology and forfeits the importance of daily social interactions with others belonging to various age groups may have significant impacts on the learner's ability to effectively communicate their knowledge