The language development of the child

6.1 Introduction 125

6.1.1 How language is acquired 125

6.2 Various stages in the child’s linguistic development 126

6.2.1 The first sounds (pre-linguistic control) 126

6.2.2 The babbling stage 127

6.2.3 The concept of language (i.e. of understanding words) 128

6.2.4 The first word 128

6.2.5 The one-word sentence 129

6.2.6 The sentence 130

6.2.7 Expansion of the vocabulary 132

6.3 Factors influencing linguistic development 133

6.3.1 The inborn disposition towards speech 133

6.3.2 Physiological factors 133

6.3.3 Motor development and abilities 133

6.3.4 Social environment 134

6.3.5 Social intercourse 134

6.3.6 The function of language in the child’s life in relation to linguistic development (both egocentric and socialised speech) 135

6.3.7 Sex 137

6.3.8 Intelligence and linguistic development 137

6.3.9 Bilingualism 138

6.3.10 Imitation 138

6.4 Speech defects (a cursory survey) 139

6.4.1 Introduction 139

6.4.2 Articulatory defects 140

6.4.3 The child whose speech is retarded 140

6.4.4 Voice defects 141

6.4.5 Nasal speech 141

6.4.6 An undetached tongue 141

6.4.7 The stammerer 142

6.4.7.1 Emotional state 142

6.4.7.2 Unnecessary anxiety 143
6.4.7.3 Imitation 143
6.4.7.4 Incorrect breathing 143
6.4.7.5 Left-handedness 143
6.4.8 Hearing defects 144
6.4.9 Conclusion 145
6.5 Orientation 145
CHAPTER 6

The language development of the child

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The use of language is the most characteristic function of the human mind. From the earliest years until adulthood the child is constantly engaged in improving his linguistic powers. Everything that he learns is to a certain extent dependent upon his knowledge and control of language: hence the enormous importance of language with regard to education. Linguistic competence is a prerequisite, not only for all school activities but for the whole of the child’s mental development. Indeed, we might say that language is the basic condition for all human development. Our insight into the child’s cognitive, emotional and volitional life depends very largely upon his ability to understand and use language.

For many years past there has been considerable interest in the manner in which a child acquires a mastery of language. The early studies in this field were mainly biographical, consisting of descriptions of a single child’s use of language during the first two or four years of his life. Later, when better methods and techniques had been developed, larger numbers of children were subjected to accurate tests.

6.1.1 How language is acquired

Generally speaking, the child’s linguistic development depends upon and is the product of the inseparable and interactive influences of maturation and learning.

As far as maturation is concerned, it is self-evident that a child who is born deaf, dumb or blind will be seriously, if not permanently, handicapped as far as his linguistic development is concerned. There are certain speech-sounds which a baby is not capable of uttering until he has
reached a certain stage of physiological and intellectual maturity.

When the child has reached this level of maturity, the language he learns to speak can only be that which he hears from his parents and from other adults. Of all the phenomena involved in education, language usage is the clearest manifestation of educational communication between the child and adults with greater powers of significance attribution.

Linguistic development is a long and continuous process of learning which moves from simple and undifferentiated usage to the complex, varied (e.g. by the discontinuance of some sounds and the addition of others, and the acquisition of a vocabulary) and differentiated language which the child understands and uses as a means of communication with others.

The pre-vocal gestures of early infancy are the precursors of language. They occur by way of reaction to various stimuli and are intended to convey certain meanings to parents and other adults.

Language really begins when the child’s general reactions to a number of diverse stimuli include a fixed range of vocalisations. The adult (particularly the mother) soon learns to distinguish these sounds as expressions of pain, hunger, misery, pleasure, etc. These early cries or vocalisations, like the child’s gestures, are mainly emotional and conative in character (i.e. they express desires), but they soon acquire external significance in the sense that they enable the child to commune with or to control adults. (The element of cognition or apprehension does not become the decisive factor in language until somewhat later.)

6.2 VARIOUS STAGES IN THE CHILD’S LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT

6.2.1 The first sounds (pre-linguistic control)

The first sounds uttered by the new-born baby is the birth-cry, a reflex caused by the rapid passage of air over the vocal cords.

M.M. Lewis remarks in this connection: “Even this first cry could well be regarded as the child’s first step in speech, for he has made a sound which others interpret – ‘the child is here among us’. But not to press this too far, we can certainly say that speech begins with the next kind of cry that the child utters: when he cries in a state of discomfort and his cries bring someone hastening to him” (1957, p. 14).
Investigators agree that the child’s first expressions are vocal sounds of one kind or another. The sounds generally occur in response to conditions of comfort or discomfort.

Lewis says that cries resulting from uncomfortable conditions (pain, hunger, cold) are the first to occur. These discomfort sounds are shrill and nasal. Later, the child begins to make comfort sounds: they are more relaxed and deeper in quality than the discomfort sounds, and have few nasal characteristics or none at all. Investigators also agree that the first consonants (or sounds resembling consonants) that can be distinguished are the nasal m and n and the preconsonants p and b. These can be heard “to modify the early vowel sounds into syllables” (Carmichael, 1960, p. 56).

6.2.2 The babbling stage

This is the second stage in the development of a baby’s prelinguistic expressions.

“After the first acquisitions of sounds there seems to be a rather rapid increase in the variety of sounds, so that by the third month most observers of infant behavior report cooing and babbling, which continue until about the end of the first year when the first words are heard” (Carmichael, 1960, p. 506).

At this stage the earlier reflex cries are followed by spontaneous babbling, practice in the production of sounds, and the repetition of sounds. “Die kind speel as’ t ware met en op sy spreeknare en -orgaan” (Coetzee, 1960, p. 130).

The sounds uttered at this stage have an additional function — a social one. The child feels an urge to reinforce the psychic contact between himself and other people — a contact which has existed since the first few weeks after birth — by means of primitive vocal expressions. The sounds he utters are his primitive means of connecting himself with other people: that is why he talks when his mother converses with him. This response forms the basis for speech in a future stage.

The urge to imitate is very strong at this stage, and by the time he is about six months old the child’s vocabulary of expressive sounds or babble-talk has been considerably enlarged and contains a wide variety of sounds. This babble-talk is incomprehensible; nevertheless it enriches the child’s stock of sounds, sound-combinations, rhythms, etc. — elements which will provide the material for subsequent speech.
The early functioning of speech may be seen in terms of:

(a) the active utterance of babbling sounds;
(b) incomprehensible mimicry; and
(c) understanding what is said to him.

These three activities are at first independent of one another. The moment that they converge and begin to function in unison, we have the beginning of true speech.

The child’s vocal expression or babble-talk becomes more comprehensible as he grows older. At the same time there is a reduction in the number of incomprehensible sounds that he makes. The reduction is particularly rapid between the ages of 1\frac{1}{2} and 3\frac{1}{2} years. At 1\frac{1}{2} years, about a quarter of the child’s linguistic expressions are comprehensible. At 2 years, two-thirds of them can be understood, at 3 years nine-tenth and at 4\frac{1}{2} years 99.6%.

6.2.3 The concept of language (i.e. of understanding words)

A subsequent phase of development relates to the child’s understanding of the language used by others. He begins to understand what people say, and his own babble-talk becomes comprehensible. There appears to be a glimmering of awareness, a vague concept of language and speech, accompanied by the will and the desire to master these things. So far the child’s vocal expressions have had no specific meaning; he now learns that everything has a name.

A child understands the language that he hears long before he can use the language himself. Gesell (Brooks, 1939, p. 181) established after carrying out various tests on children of nine months that at least half of them had passive vocabularies, i.e. they were capable of reacting to certain words. For example they would look around them when asked “where is the cat?”. This indicates a certain measure of understanding.

During the second year of life there is a tremendous increase in passive understanding as against active speech. By 18-24 months most children can point out objects in a simple picture. From 2-3 years onwards, children can understand verbal commands, for example to place a ball on or in or behind or in front of a box.

6.2.4 The first word

From the above it will be clear that a considerable amount of linguistic
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

development has taken place before the child speaks his first real word. Very often the fortuitous enunciation of a word by a small child is mistakenly regarded as true speech. Indeed, one can never be quite certain of the meaning of a child’s first word; for example he may say “dadda” to his father or to his mother or to other people, or even to a chair. Usually the first meaningful articulated sounds uttered at this stage, i.e. at the beginning of word language, whether the word is dadda or mamma or some other word, are expressions of the child’s emotional or aspirational life.

Objects, people, events and situations all have meaning for small children in so far as they are in constant contact with them. For him, their significance consists in the manner in which they affect him. He pushes, pulls, hits, tastes, rubs, turns, looks at, listens to, smells, throws, drops and rolls any object that can be treated in these ways. These actions determine the meaning and name of the object concerned. In the course of these experiences with objects he determines their worth or evaluates them. In this way they acquire particular meanings for him and he connects these meanings with their names. From his actions with and reactions to objects he deduces the meanings of their names. Thereafter these names are coloured by their meanings for him. If he is asked the meaning of a car, a chair, a shoe and a spade, he will reply that a car is “what you ride in”, a chair is “what you sit on”, a shoe is “for putting on your foot” and a spade is “for digging with”. Thus the meaning, for him, lies in the action or activity connected with each object and goes no further than this.

Moreover, a small child understands many words which he has never used and will not use for some time to come. If we were to draw two curves representing respectively the vocabulary of words understood by the child and the vocabulary of the words he actually speaks, the curves would diverge more and more as the child’s age increased.

The child’s discovery that words are a means of making his desires known (e.g. the word “water” or “drink”) is an important incentive to speech.

6.2.5 The one-word sentence

The next stage of linguistic development is the word-sentence way of speaking. Very early on, the child uses a single word as a sentence, i.e. to express the meaning normally conveyed by a whole sentence. The meaning that he wants to convey resides in the way in which he enunciates the word, his bearing and intonation, his gestures and facial expression. If for example he wants a ball, he may extend his hand eagerly.
towards it and, with a look of longing in his eyes, say “ball”. His whole bearing and the manner in which he says the word express his desire to possess the ball. The single word “ball” has thus become a sentence – a desire expressed by the child – and if his mother does not react quickly enough to his word-sentence he may become angry and begin to kick and jump about or burst into tears. He expects everyone to understand his word-sentence because his bearing and gestures do much more than the word alone could do; that is why we speak of the word-sentence. For this reason, moreover, a child’s first words are usually more than mere words: they are word-sentences. Thus, if the child says the word “ball” he may mean any of the following things: “Give me the ball”; “Let’s play with the ball”; “I have a pretty ball”; “I like my ball”; “This is my ball”; and so on.

6.2.6 The sentence

Soon the child is able to use more than one word, and he now begins to compose sentences. The one-word sentence is expanded and more words are used. By 1½ - 2 years most children can use two words in correct conjunction. Soon after this the child begins to use three words at a time. Meanwhile his thought processes are developing along with his language. At first, additions to his vocabulary consists exclusively of nouns, for at this stage he is mainly engaged in learning the names of people, animals, places and things. But presently he begins to use verbs as well, and to formulate his first questions. He now realises that everything has a name, and asks succinctly: “Who this?”, etc. It is at this stage that he uses the negative (no) for the first time – yes does not occur until later. The meaning of the word now represents the image of the person or animal or object concerned.

Some two-year-olds and 75% of three-year-olds are capable of using pronouns (I, you, me, etc.) correctly. The language used by the young child relates mainly to himself: hence the high frequency of the first personal pronoun. However there are already faint signs of social purport, since his utterances are usually directed at another person. In these conversational soliloquies or pseudo-conversations the child is ostensibly talking to another child or other children, but actually talking to himself. This egocentric language is later replaced by a more socialised one. The egocentric language reflects the relationships the child is forming with the people and things in his life space.

During the third year there is an increase in the use of words other than names. However it is difficult to place the words used by the young child into grammatical categories, since the same word may be used as
several different parts of speech. Adverbs of time and place are now used for the first time. This is also the phase of innumerable questions, including questions about sex. The word-order of the child's sentences sometimes deviates from normal usage, e.g. "Where Daddy going?" During this period the child forms new words by analogy, e.g. *talken* from *fallen* (or in Afrikaans "gebegin" from "geloop") and - also by analogy - uses familiar words in unfamiliar circumstances, e.g. he may know that his dog has "fur" and therefore speak of the "fur" (feathers) on his mother's chickens. Compound sentences are now formed, and prepositions come into play for the first time. At the same time there is an appreciable increase in verb forms (tenses and auxiliary verbs), pronouns and conjunctions, and a general enlargement of the vocabulary.

*After the third year* new parts of speech are introduced as a result of the child's greater maturity and more developed powers of thought. During this period children are fond of talking aloud when they are alone, and of explaining what they are doing while they are doing it.

*After the age of four* abstract nouns begin to appear. The child is now genuinely interested in language and tries to use correct word forms and structures. By the time that they are four or five years old, most children can define words like *chair, horse, fork, doll, pencil*, etc. The meanings given by way of definition usually reflect the essential use of the object: for example a chair will be defined as "a thing to sit on" and a pencil as "a thing to write with". A group of three-year-olds can use one or more descriptive words, and by the age of five some children can describe a simple picture.

**Length of sentences:** The number of words per sentence increases from an average of 1,2 at 18 months to about 4 at 3½ years and 4,5 at 4½ - 5 years (Carmichael, 1960, p. 546) in accordance with the child's intellectual development, linguistic environment, the particular occasion, and so on.

**Sentence structure:** According to McCarthy (Brooks, 1939, p. 185) sentences which are functionally complete but structurally incomplete are not very common between the ages of 1½ and 4½ years. At first the child uses simple sentences, but in the course of time the proportion of complex, compound and complicated sentences increases. This tendency towards more complicated sentence structures (e.g. inflection, the past and future tenses) persists throughout the primary school years, and the length and construction of sentences usually give a good indication of a child's linguistic development.

In conclusion, we must remember that in the early stages of linguistic development the child does not begin by learning single words and subsequently goes on to put them together in sentences. On the contrary, it is more usual for a child to begin by learning a whole sentence in con-
connection with particular situations, differentiation of the words that make up a sentence is only possible after a good deal of experience. These whole sentences should be regarded as units of meaning. It is in this form that language becomes a meaningful medium of communication for the child and thus makes education possible.

6.2.7 Expansion of the vocabulary

Types: A child’s vocabulary can be divided into the following types, thus highlighting the expansion of significance:
(a) an auditory or passive vocabulary: the number of words the child can understand when they are used in conversation;
(b) an oral or active vocabulary: the number of words the child uses in his own speech;
(c) a written vocabulary: the number of words used in written work; and
(d) a reading vocabulary: the number of written words that the child understands.

Methods of study: The oldest and best-known method of studying children’s vocabularies consists in writing down all the words that a child utters during a certain period of time, sometimes a whole day. Another method consists in writing down all his verbal reactions for brief periods over one or more days. Objects such as toys, books, pictures, etc., are used to induce the child to speak. Sometimes responses are evoked by means of questions. Without assistance, one person cannot possibly write down all the words that crop up: children talk too much for that.

Brandenburg (Brooks, 1939, p. 185) found that a child of 3-4 years is silent for only 19 minutes per day.

Size of vocabulary: After carrying out vocabulary tests, M.E. Smith came to the following conclusions: at 1 year the active oral vocabulary consists of about 3 words; by two years it is just under 300, and at 3 years just under 900. After this the vocabulary expands very rapidly, and at 4 the child knows about 1 500 words, at 5/2 000, and at 6/2 500 (Carmichael, 1960, p. 533).

The proportions of parts of speech in the vocabulary vary considerably in accordance with age. At two years 50-60% of the child’s vocabulary consists of nouns. The percentage of nouns and interjections decreases as the vocabulary expands, and there is a simultaneous increase in the percentage of verbs, adjectives, adverbs and pronouns.

The more his vocabulary expands, the less frequently the child makes use of unrecognisable and incomprehensible expressions. The ability to
pronounce words clearly may lag well behind the development of a reasonably large vocabulary. An increasing control of language is not merely a matter of adding new words; it also involves a deepening understanding of the meanings of old words.

6.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT

6.3.1 The inborn disposition towards speech

Speech, in the sense of articulated sounds formed by means of the lips, the tongue and the vocal cords, is an inborn proclivity – the distinctively human gift granted by the Creator to man alone – which finds expression of its own accord and without any external encouragement.

Experiments in the field of speech development indicate that this capability must develop: it cannot be forced. As we mentioned in our introduction, the child’s linguistic development results from the combined influences of maturation and learning.

Besides age, maturity and education, which we regard as the fundamental developmental norms, linguistic development is influenced by a number of other factors, such as:

6.3.2 Physiological factors

The child who enjoys perfect health and is consequently active and full of life, has more energy and is more in contact with life and a variety of situations than is the sickly child. He is also more lively and active, and takes more interest in his surroundings, than his less healthy contemporary. He will therefore react more full-bloodedly to his environment. All these factors will contribute to a better linguistic development than will be possible in the case of the sickly or physically weak child. Illness, particularly in young children, can make a considerable difference for it is in these early years that growth and development take place most rapidly.

6.3.3 Motor development and abilities

The growth and development of the child’s motor control and skill also
influence linguistic development. While one or another of his motor powers is in the process of developing, linguistic development is retarded until the motor skill concerned has been mastered.

6.3.4 Social environment

The child's social environment has a tremendous influence on his linguistic development.

Linguistic ability and vocabulary are closely related to the socio-economic status of the family. The children of well-educated parents, or whose parents are professional people, have larger vocabularies and use purer language than do children from less privileged households. This difference occurs even among children belonging to the same intelligence groups. A privileged home stimulates the child's linguistic development.

Descoeudres (Carmichael, 1960, p. 586) studied the vocabularies of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years, some of them from the more developed and well-to-do classes, and others from the less privileged working classes. He found that the upper-class children were on the average eight months ahead of their less privileged contemporaries at every stage. The retarded linguistic competence of the latter group was clearly due to the poverty of their cultural circumstances and opportunities and not to intellectual inferiority. Social circumstances exert an influence upon pronunciation as well as vocabulary. The pronunciation of slum children is distinctly inferior to that of children from well-to-do neighbourhoods.

6.3.5 Social intercourse

The nature of the child's social intercourse is another strong influence upon his linguistic development. For example, children who are often in adult company advance more rapidly from the linguistic point of view than other children do. Investigators (M.E. Smith among others) have found that association with adults has a stronger influence on a child's language than does his association with other children.

William and Mattson (Carmichael, 1960, p. 595) found that preschool children are more talkative, and use a greater number of words per sentence, when they form part of a social group consisting of two children and an interested adult who is prepared to answer questions. This brings us to our next topic.
6.3.6 The function of language in the child's life in relation to linguistic development (both egocentric and socialised speech)

Here there are several questions of interest to the child psychologist and the educationist: Why does the child speak? What motivates him towards the use of language in certain situations? What needs does he satisfy by using language? What functions does language fulfil in the child's life?

The earliest biographical studies approached the problem by classifying reactions in terms of the old linguistic categorisation of linguistic units – i.e. sentences – as indicative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory, etc. These categories were originally intended to apply mainly to written language. Consequently the system is inadequate for psychological analyses of the language of young children, and is a most unsatisfactory method of classifying the language spoken by adults, let alone children.

Snyder (1914) was one of the first investigators to point out the inadequacy of the conventional grammatical classifications. In her 1926 studies and elsewhere, M.E. Smith made provision for various subdivisions and variations of the ordinary categories. She pointed out that at all ages – even the so-called question phase, which occurs between the ages of two and four – indicative sentences outnumber imperative ones.

The publication of Jean Piaget's book, *The Language and Thought of the Child* (1926), inaugurated a totally new approach to the study of the functions of children's language and stimulated further investigations in this connection. Piaget was particularly interested in language as an expression of the child's thought processes. He distinguished two types of speech: egocentric and socialised. He was the first investigator to emphasise the role of egocentricity in the child's life, and claimed to have discovered its importance through adopting a functional approach to children's language.

When he uses egocentric language the child is really speaking to himself, and not to anyone else: he is holding an egocentric conversation. A group of children may play side by side with their toys, or build sand castles at the same time and in the same place, each talking to himself and paying no attention to the others. They are together whilst they are thus talking and playing, but they do not play together or speak to one another. In egocentric speech, says Piaget, "the child does not bother to know to whom he is speaking nor whether he is being listened to. He talks either for himself or for the pleasure of associating anyone who happens to be there with the activity of the moment . . . He does not attempt to place himself at the point of view of his hearer."

Piaget distinguishes three types of egocentric speech: (a) pure repeti-
tion, (b) the monologue (soliloquy) and (c) the collective monologue.

In contrast to this, socialised speech is a more advanced or adult form of speech among children. In this case the children really do converse with one another. Their speech is predominantly self-assertive, but it does include questions and answers, arguments, complaints about what others are doing, expressions of agreement with the actions of others, and commands concerning what others should or should not do.

Here he distinguishes five categories:
(a) Information – “adopted information, which occurs when the child really exchanges his thoughts with others” (Carmichael, 1960, p. 563);
(b) criticism;
(c) commands, requests and threats;
(d) questions; and
(e) answers.

His data were derived from 1,500 remarks made by each of two children who were 6½ years old at the time. Approximately 38% of these remarks fell into the egocentric category. Only 45% consisted of spontaneous socialised speech, but an additional 17% consisted of answers which were classified among the socialised remarks, giving a total of 62% in this category.

He found that the percentage of egocentric remarks was higher between the ages of 3 and 5 years, and asserted that a definite increase in socialisation was traceable in the speech of children of about 7 or 8. He implies that adult conversation is highly socialised and that egocentricity is a symptom of a psychological immaturity which is outgrown in the course of time. He found moreover that egocentric reactions occur more frequently in free play and in child-child situations than in adult-child situations.

Investigations carried out by Rugg, Krueger and Sondergaard (1929), and others, confirmed Piaget’s findings. After analysing 3,125 remarks made by 27 kindergarten children, Rugg, Krueger and Sondergaard arrived at the following classification: self-assertion 40%; factual statements 16%; questions 10%; expressions of observations 8%; expressions of thought 6%; linguistic experiments 6%; dramatic play 5%; yes-or-no answers 4%; indications of social consciousness 4%; self-criticism less than 1% (Brooks, 1939, p. 178).

From the above analysis we can see that children speak in order to assert themselves and to exert influence, and not for the sake of social intercourse per se. They want to make their presence felt, to attract attention, to command, dominate, argue and show off. In "Thought and Language," L.S. Vygotsky expresses some other extremely interesting opinions on language development, but these cannot be discussed here.
McCarthy, the American child psychologist, adopted Piaget's classification but was obliged to introduce certain changes suggested by her own findings. She did not find as high a percentage of egocentric language as Piaget had done, though she agreed that egocentric reactions dwindled with increasing age. She added two new categories: social phrases and dramatic imitation.

6.3.7 Sex

It has been found that girls generally acquire language more rapidly than boys do. At the age when children are speaking in short sentences, girls have larger vocabularies than boys and during the earlier phases their language is more readily comprehensible than that of boys.

These differences with regard to vocabulary and comprehensibility diminish as the children grow older, and by the age of five or six years it is very slight.

During the school years girls once again outstrip boys as far as linguistic achievements are concerned: they do better in exercises involving word- and sentence-building, and they write longer essays containing longer sentences. On the other hand, boys do better at subjects involving calculation and hand-work. However it cannot be established with any certainty whether these proclivities are inborn concomitants of the child's sex or whether they are socially induced.

6.3.8 Intelligence and linguistic development

There is a positive relationship between linguistic ability and intelligence: the one aids the other. Generally speaking, the bright child will speak before the normal or subnormal child does, but there are many exceptions. Intelligence is particularly important with regard to the more complex levels of linguistic development: the child with a good intellectual endowment is capable of critical observation, of seeing connections between things, of understanding meanings and appreciating differences in meaning, and these capacities enable him to develop linguistic habits more rapidly and more effectively than the less gifted child will be able to do. Conversely, intellectual development is influenced by linguistic development.

With the aid of language the child is able to understand a far wider range of things and events, both past and present, than would be possible if he were wholly dependent upon direct experience. Language
makes it possible for him to experience, through reading, many things that would otherwise be beyond his reach. In this way, language influences intellectual development. On the other hand, a brilliant child has a heightened ability to distinguish between events, objects, meanings, etc., and his linguistic development will be further stimulated and encouraged when he learns to express these distinctions by means of symbols.

6.3.9 Bilingualism

Bilingualism poses an interesting environmental problem. There are indications that early contact with more than one language can lead to confusion and may even retard the linguistic development of the child concerned. But some investigators have found that in certain isolated cases children have been taught two languages simultaneously without any detrimental effect.

6.3.10 Imitation

The mere fact that a child learns the language of his environment proves the importance of imitation. Children imitate all aspects of other people’s behaviour. This is particularly noticeable with regard to motor and verbal activities. The fact that the deaf child does not learn to speak because he does not enjoy the advantage of being able to imitate the speech of other people is further evidence of the importance of this factor. DeCroly distinguishes the following types of imitation:

(a) imitation with or without understanding (comprehension)
(b) intentional and unintentional imitation (sometimes described as voluntary and spontaneous imitation)
(c) immediate and indirect/delayed imitation
(d) accurate and inaccurate imitation

Tests have shown that an accurate or precise imitation of sounds is very rare: it is much more usual for sounds to be reproduced with little regard for the accuracy with which they echo the original. Most present-day psychologists agree with Taine’s opinion that new sounds are not learned through imitating the speech of other people, but originate in the child’s spontaneous conversational play as he matures, and that the child will only imitate sounds that have already cropped up in the course of his spontaneous babblings. DeCroly believes that auditory differentiation must precede speech and is an essential element of imitation. He
maintains that the development of comprehension and of auditory perception are inseparable. He says that words do not have a purely musical value for children, and that children only distinguish words to which they attach significance. Imitation cannot, therefore, precede understanding, for a function must not only be within a child's capacities but must also satisfy an individual need or further an individual interest.

Leopold (1949) points out that imitation is not a passive process but requires the child's active co-operation, and that it is the child himself who decides what he wants to imitate. This observation emphasises the role of imitation with regard to the process of identification.

6.4 SPEECH DEFECTS (a cursory survey)

6.4.1 Introduction

In many cases speech development is hampered in one way or another. Speech disturbances have an extremely detrimental effect on the health, powers of communication, happiness and success of the individual. They should therefore receive close attention, particularly in the preschool and primary-school periods.

Many modern parents lead such full lives that their children and any problems they may have are pushed into the background and the duty of noticing a child's faults and defects devolves upon the teacher-educator.

Although there are special therapists who are trained to treat defects and correct faults, they are so few and far between that there can be no question of every child receiving expert treatment. It is therefore the duty of the teacher-educator to offer what help he can.

An untrained person cannot possibly treat, correct or even improve speech defects; nevertheless there are certain things that the teacher can and should do.

Every individual in his class has been entrusted to his care, and the child with defects should obviously receive due attention. (Here we are thinking of cases that crop up in the normal school.) In order to give this attention, the teacher must among other things:

(a) at least be able to recognise speech defects;
(b) use methods and aids which will enable him to teach the defective child as successfully as possible, despite the defects;
(c) ensure that the child is not treated with contempt and that his defect
CHAPTER 6

does not become any worse: the child must feel secure;
(d) seek counsel and advice concerning any child in his class who has a
speech defect, and make purposeful efforts to apply this advice in
relatively simple cases;
(e) do nothing which may aggravate the child's situation or complicate
his problem still further, unless such action is unavoidable;
(f) improve his knowledge of psychology, if he feels himself to be insuffi-
ciently informed, for some speech defects have psychological
causes.

There are various ways in which the teacher can improve everyday
errors in speech: we shall mention these in a later section.

6.4.2 Articulatory defects

These defects include incorrect uses of sounds. Usually consonants as
well as vowels are mispronounced, as a result of incorrect movement of
the tongue, the lips, and the soft palate.

The following terms are used to describe various types of defective ar-
tication:
(a) *lisp*: this is literally substitution, usually of *th* for *s*, e.g. "thluith" = "sluice";
(b) *lallation*: sluggish tongue-muscles and an inactive tongue-tip cause
the *r* sound to be mispronounced as *l*;
(c) *baby-talk* (infantile perseverance);
(d) Lazy and sloppy pronunciation, in which inaccuracies occur be-
cause the speaker is indifferent.

The most common causes of articulatory defects are: poor instruction
by the parents, perception disabilities, low intelligence, infantilism (the
child persists in lisping because adults think the habit "cute"),
emotional conflicts, abnormalities of the organs of speech, and brain
damage.

Therapy usually takes the form of practice in auditory discrimination
with regard to the child's mistakes: the sounds he substitutes, leaves out,
or distorts. The correct sounds are then reinforced in isolation so that
the new sounds become habitual before being transferred into meaning-
ful speech. Causative factors, if present, are tackled at the same time.

6.4.3 The child whose speech is retarded

Retarded speech is closely related to articulatory defects, but is treated
as a separate phenomenon because people afflicted in this way not only have difficulty in pronouncing words correctly but suffer from noticeable linguistic disabilities as well. In some cases the person cannot speak at all. Here we must distinguish between congenital aphasia (loss of the power of speech) and speech which has been retarded in the process of birth, or by abnormal or subnormal motor development, or by neurological deviations.

The following general causes should be considered in relation to the history of the individual child: low intelligence, deafness, poor co-ordination caused by illness or paralysis, prolonged illness (particularly during the first two years of life), weak motivation towards speech, ineffective teaching methods applied by the parents, confusion with regard to handedness or a change of habit with regard to handedness, a shock experienced while in the act of speaking, emotional conflicts, aphasia.

6.4.4 Voice defects

These are present when a person is unable, for structural or functional reasons, to produce normal, comfortably audible sounds.

Deviations such as the falsetto voice, thick speech, nasalised sounds (other than those which are normally nasal: m, n, ng), hoarseness and husky speech, jerky speech, a monotonous pitch, splitpalate speech, etc., are usually classified as voice defects.

6.4.5 Nasal speech

The ordinary class teacher can sometimes help cases of nasal speech. If the defect is caused by a lazy uvula (little tongue) it can be improved through certain exercises.

The correct nasalisation of the m, n, and ng sounds is sometimes hindered by a blocked nose. The condition can be alleviated by improving the child's hygienic habits.

6.4.6 An undetached tongue

A completely undetached tongue will be detected by the child's mother or by the doctor soon after birth, for babies afflicted in this way cannot suck and therefore cannot be fed. The defect can easily be corrected by medical intervention: the tongue membrane is cut loose.
A partially undetached tongue may possibly not be detected until the child begins to speak. Sounds such as r, t, d, s, will be affected, for the child will not be able to reach his hard palate with the tip of his tongue. He will be able to produce the r, t, and d sound fairly successfully by using a slightly different technique, but the r sound will be rolled (producing a "bry"). This condition can also be helped by medical intervention provided that the delay has not been so prolonged as to cause paralysis of the whole tongue.

Sometimes children with perfectly normal tongues roll their r's ("bry") simply because their parents do so, i.e. the defect arises from imitation. In such cases the condition can be improved if the children concerned are taught to be aware of the tongue vibration involved.

6.4.7 The stammerer

Approximately 1% of school-going children stammer or stutter, and the defect usually originates very early in the developmental years. Stammering occurs about twice as frequently among boys as among girls.

Stammering may be defined as the inability to enunciate certain sounds. The afflicted person is temporarily unable to utter a word. As soon as the muscular tension abates there will be a spate of words, followed by another blockage when the person "sticks" at some other word or sound. Stammering and stuttering often occur together.

The great majority of stammerers begin to show signs of the defect either at ±2½ years or at ± 6 years, when the child goes to school. These two ages represent important "breaks" in the child's life: the first, his emergence from the period of babyhood and the second the breakaway from the intricate and protective family circle to a wider social milieu. During both these periods he has difficult adjustments to make and may suffer from emotional tension caused by a conscious or partially unconscious fear of meeting the group. Stammering is not really a speech defect, for the stammerer is able to speak fluently in some circumstances. Some children suffer from the defect only in the presence of strangers, others display it only when they are with their parents, others again when they are before an audience, etc.

The following are important causes:

6.4.7.1 Emotional state

The child who for one reason or another is nervous when required to
speak will find normal speech difficult. The nervousness may arise from a shock, fear, a feeling of constraint, a belief that his audience is critical of him, etc.

If the child is in a general state of tension there will be excessive strain on the organs of speech, and this is likely to induce stammering. Stammering may be an expression of anxiety or a feeling of inadequacy.

6.4.7.2 Unnecessary anxiety

Unnecessary anxiety on the part of the parents may help to induce stammering. Because they are afraid that their children will develop this defect, they interpret the interpolation of words like and, er, and then, etc. – words which are used by children and adults alike to fill the gap whilst the speaker considers precisely what he wants to say – as a sign of stammering. By making the child repeat words or scolding him for introducing interpolations, they make him overaware of the habit and thus create the ideal conditions for the development of real stammering. A child will soon begin to stammer if he is punished for speaking at all hesitantly or if his requests are not satisfied until he has repeated them without stammering.

6.4.7.3 Imitation

Jokes and stories about stammering may seriously harm normal speech development. One day the child will realise that he himself has stammered a little (as we all sometimes do) and this may engender the fear that he may become a habitual stammerer and be laughed at by others. If a parent or some other person with whom the child is in contact is a stammerer, the child may unconsciously imitate the defect.

6.4.7.4 Incorrect breathing

Children who stammer often breathe jerkily or release almost all the air from their lungs before beginning to speak. Their speech may consequently be interrupted for lack of breath. Any anxiety about stammering will make matters worse.

6.4.7.5 Left-handedness

Some investigators believe that the constraint and anxiety experienced
by left-handed children who are forced to write with their right hands can create a state of emotional tension resulting in stammering.

6.4.8 Hearing defects

Some investigators report that as many as 10% of school-going children suffer from hearing defects of one kind or another, some serious and some relatively slight. Sufferers may be divided into 4 groups:

(a) Those who are totally deaf. These children are also dumb in consequence of their deafness, and they must obviously attend special schools at which the teaching is adjusted to their needs and capacities.

(b) Children with very faint residual hearing. Because the degree of loss is so great, these children are placed in special schools for the deaf or in special classes for the hard-of-hearing in normal schools. Their speech is extremely poor, and they usually have to be taught to speak.

(c) Children with a fairly serious degree of hearing loss. When possible they are placed in the special classes for the hard-of-hearing, mentioned above, but as there are few such classes in the Transvaal, most of them have to attend ordinary classes. Their speech is usually nasal, monotonous, indistinct and displays a great many articulatory errors.

(d) Children with a slight degree of hearing loss. Fortunately the majority of cases fall into this category. All such children are placed in normal classes and their speech is usually normal. In some cases the speech tends to be nasal, or the child speaks too loudly or too softly, etc. People with split palates are often slightly deaf.

The following may be signs of auditory disabilities and should be noted by the teacher with this possibility in mind:

(i) inattentiveness: the child may have lost interest because of his inability to hear;
(ii) slow or sluggish thought: the child does not answer questions briskly, possibly because he cannot hear them clearly and therefore has difficulty in interpreting them;
(iii) poor progress in academic subjects;
(iv) speech defects, particularly faulty pronunciation and idiosyncratic speech habits, may have arisen because the child cannot hear words and sounds distinctly;
(v) a look of bewilderment or perplexity may indicate that the child is confused, cannot follow what is going on, and is looking for guidance though he may be too shy to ask the teacher to repeat a sentence or an idea;
(vi) sensitivity and touchiness on the question of hearing: he does not wish others to know about his condition or to offer sympathy. Deafness may be detected in the classroom by means of the clock test, or with the aid of an audiometer.

6.4.9 Conclusion

As we have seen, the sympathetic teacher can do a great deal in various direct and indirect ways, to help and guide the child with speech and/or learning defects and to correct errors in speech. Linguistic defects affect educational communication and thus hamper education and teaching.

From our discussion of the facts relating to linguistic development, it is clear that as the child grows up language becomes increasingly charged with meaningful thought. In our cultural milieu language is an indispensable tool for the construction of a meaningful life space. That is why it is so important that we should study linguistic development, for it reflects the manner and tempo of the child's development as a human being. Even very small children are wholly and intensely involved in the acquisition of language. Viewed chronologically, language is initially a medium for the expression of affective experiences. The child as a total being is involved in such expression even before it becomes a matter of choice. With the advent of volition the child begins to assign meanings consciously through the medium of language.

The child's intellectual development is closely related to his control of language.

6.5 ORIENTATION

This chapter has described the development of language as such. No child can develop without an adequate command of language. Language is the means by which he actualises himself, communicates with people who are important to him, is assured of their acceptance, and makes his own self-evaluation. Language as an ontic structure shows that it is by verbal expression that a child actualises his relationships and orientation and constitutes his life-world. It is so much a part of him that his command of language not only serves as an index of his development
A deficiency in this area is one of the plainest evidences of developmental problems.

A child who speaks clearly and communicates well at the age of two is commonly considered 'bright', a child with a future, when a child cannot speak at four, there is great anxiety about his psychological and particularly his mental wellbeing.

In the kind of study we have been undertaking, the student must remember that our object is not language but the child's selfactualisation by means of language. He uses language to assign meaning; language is the medium of support and teaching, the best way to become involved and to express his subjective experiences. The empirical educationist is never interested in the child's linguistic ability as such but in the part it plays in his development towards adulthood. We may make a detailed study of language, but our focus is the maturing child.
The development of thought

Chapter 7

7.1 Introduction 149
7.2 Media of thought 150
7.2.1 Images (image formation, imagination) 151
7.2.2 Muscular activity (action) 151
7.2.3 Language 152
7.2.4 Concepts 152
7.3 Modes of thought 152
7.4 Cognitive development 153
7.4.1 Piaget’s account of the development of thought 153
7.4.1.1 The sensori-motor stage (0–2 years) and the
pre-operational stage (2–7 years) 153
7.4.1.2 Concrete thinking operations (7–11 years) 154
7.4.1.3 The phase of formal thinking operations 155
7.4.2 J. Bruner’s account of the development of thought 155
7.4.2.1 Cognitive development 156
7.4.2.2 Modes of representation 156
7.4.2.3 The improvement of thought 157
7.4.3 J.P. Guilford’s view on the development of thought 158
7.4.4 Problem-solving 159
7.4.5 Creativity 161
7.5 Conclusion 161
CHAPTER 7

The development of thought

7.1 INTRODUCTION

A considerable portion of a person’s life is occupied by relationships which are not physically present at the time. This type of involvement presupposes the presence within the consciousness of ideas representing objective relationships with people, experiences and situations in respect of whom and in respect of which the person occupies certain positions. These ideas that are present in the consciousness, and the psychic manipulation of such ideas, constitute what is commonly known as thought. In this chapter we shall consider the nature of thought and the way in which thought develops in children.

However we cannot proceed without further ado to a more detailed definition of thought, for every educator sees the phenomenon in terms of the particular theory he himself upholds. He constructs a model which accords with his own particular approach, and bases his research on this model. Research data are thus directly related to the particular model of thought which the investigator has constructed.

When one studies the problem of thought one cannot but be struck by the extreme diversity of these thought-constructs. Because of this diversity, widely differing methods of empirical research are used, and the resultant findings show corresponding differences. It is important that we should understand and interpret experimental findings in terms of the particular thought-constructs on which they are based. Very few data of this nature lend themselves to broad generalising or to wide-range application.

Without embarking on a thorough study, we shall now mention various psychological approaches to the problem of thought, each of which describes and investigates the phenomenon in its own distinctive way. The Association Psychologists describe thought in terms of stimuli, reactions, the transmission of nervous impulses, and conditioning. To
these elements propounded by the associationists, the Psychology of Thought adds the factor of thought task, which it regards as a determining tendency. Development takes place via the conscious strata, though this school of thought also believes that some of the contents of consciousness are imperceptible. The gestaltists describe thought in terms of inner experience or a state of emotional tension which forces the person to seek solutions to his problems. To this end, the data must be restructured in such a way that, when insight dawns, the ancillary relationships form a gestalt or pattern which is itself the solution to the problem. J.C. Coetzee distinguishes between perceptual, associative, conceptual and imaginative thought.

Later we shall discuss Piaget’s concept of schemas and operations and Bruner’s generalisation principle in more detail.

A pedagogical perspective on thought would be very much to the point. In the absence of thought there could be no question of educational communication. If he is to be educated, the child must be capable of internalising the instruction he receives as well as educational actions. And the ability to do this is one of the attributes of childhood. Experience has shown that children can indeed absorb ideas, can follow educational guidance and can eventually learn to think in abstract terms and in a critical manner. From the pedagogic point of view, thought is seen as the attribution of significance by the child to situations in which he is totally involved. The child does not think with his intellect alone. It is necessary that we should view the problem from this perspective, because our proper concern is the significance of thought, and of the study of thought, with regard to the child’s progress toward adulthood. If he adopts the above as his perspective, the educationist will be able to view theories and research results selectively and with insight and understanding, to the betterment of his knowledge of the child as an educand.

In this chapter we shall suggest an approach to the study of thought. It is not the only way of doing justice to the perspective we have been discussing: several others are possible. It will not be possible for us to include all the information relating to this perspective on thought. Much that is relevant will have to be excluded, so we shall confine ourselves to considering the media of thought – i.e. the material of thought – and the modes of thought – i.e. how people think or what happens when one thinks.

7.2 MEDIA OF THOUGHT

When we consider thought as an activity in which people are involved, we must necessarily ask ourselves with what and to what ends do people
think. The medium in which one thinks will be determined by the end or purpose to which one is thinking, and this purpose may be immediate or remote. Nevertheless it is essential that we should distinguish between media and purposes.

7.2.1 Images (image formation, imagination)

Images are conscious representations of things or events which are not present at the moment and can thus activate no physical sensations. Through imagination I can break away from my own train of thought and allow my mind to wander, for example, to the beach, re-living past experiences and anticipating future ones. The situation I have imagined may be so real to me that it is only by a vigorous effort of will that I can force my attention back to my work.

Someone explains how I can get to a certain place. In order to follow his directions I picture the plan or pattern of the area in my mind. There is a direct relationship with reality, because I begin with places I already know. By means of mental pictures I “see” the place or the plan and it is as if I were actually present there.

By imagining concrete objects and situations I reproduce past experiences. Creative work can also be done in this way: the artist transfers an imaginary scene on to his canvas.

7.2.2 Muscular activity (action)

Some of our commonest mental constructions are not pictures or reflections of concrete things. An important group belonging to this category consists of mental representations of actions. What is the shortest route to Pretoria station? Try to imagine how you do up your shoes, or how you would checkmate your opponent from a certain position, or how you would play a volley or a backhand stroke in a game of tennis. In all these cases the imagined act implies muscular movements. What presents itself to the imagination is not a visual picture but an action which is carried out in a particular way. By imagining the action I know how it is performed. In this way, for example, a sportsman may improve his performance by imagining the action involved in a tennis stroke, or a bowling or batting technique, a diving position, etc.
7.2.3 Language

Among other things, language is a medium of thought. By means of language we symbolise objects, concepts, generalisations and attitudes. The word or linguistic symbol then represents the situation or the generalised concept that we have in mind. The codes and methods of codification are learned principally in the educational situation, where the child is taught not only the meanings of linguistic symbols but also how they are codified and how to use, manipulate or organise them. Piaget, Vigotsky, and various other writers have tried to explain the connection between language and thought.

7.2.4 Concepts

A concept is not a concrete entity, and is not found in nature. It is a construct produced by the human brain, and represents an attempt at dealing with some particular situation. A concept therefore has meaning, though usually it exists only in thought and is handled by means of a linguistic symbol. Through abstraction and generalisation, particular experiences and the meanings of specific objects are translated into concepts with ever-broadening ranges of reference.

A well-informed person can form, use and manipulate mental images of concepts such as mass, energy, speed, motive, intelligence, 

\[ C = \frac{E}{R} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{H}_2\text{SO}_4. \]

Thus the medium in which one thinks may be an image of a concrete object or situation which is seen as if it were a picture, or it may be an imaginary performance of an action, or it may be a linguistic symbol representing an object, attitude or concept.

7.3 Modes of Thought

No survey of thought would be complete without some attention to the how of thought. The question here is: what actually happens when a person thinks, or how are ideas manipulated? Research in this field has narrowed down to investigations of the products of thought rather than of the act of thinking. Until late in the nineteenth century studies relating to cognition and the processes of thought were regarded as belonging to the field of philosophy.

Round about the time of the First World War empirical research in
psychology centred upon the measurement of intelligence. In the U.S.A. the association psychologists carried out sporadic investigations into thought as the product of association, the connection between thought and perception, inductive and deductive thought, problem-solving, critical thought and creative thought. However, these investigations did not result in a global view of the phenomenon and threw little light on the development of thought.

Cognition occurs even in very young children, and manifests itself in the way in which they attribute significance to the phenomena they encounter within their life space. The mental activities or types of thought involved in cognition are: differentiation, recognition, integration, generalisation, induction and deduction. Memorising is the act of committing events or observations to memory, and remembering is the act of recalling the information that has been stored in this way. Problem solving is another mode of thought which requires a convergence of mental activities. It encompasses all the subsidiary activities by means of which information is organised into facts and relationships, thus forming structures which accord with the purpose or task or intended results of the person’s thinking.

7.4 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

7.4.1 Piaget’s account of the development of thought

Piaget divides child development into phases. He distinguishes three main phases, each of which is sub-divided into several segments. With regard to cognitive development he mentions the following stages:

7.4.1.1 The sensori-motor stage (0-2 years) and the pre-operational stage (2-7 years)

The child embarks on a visual, auditory and tactile exploration of his immediate spatial environment. The first movements are reflex actions performed without any real awareness of the situation. These are replaced by assimilation and accommodation activities and at about one year the child begins to imitate actions. At about two years new modes of behaviour begin to appear: the child’s language, actions and symbolic play indicate that he is aware in advance of the consequences of his actions. In this way some of his actions are internalised and acquire a mental existence. This is the preparation for thought. The child can re-
member an object and look for it if it has been covered up. During the pre-conceptual stage (2-4 years) language develops and begins to function symbolically. A pre-concept is an idea lying somewhere between the concept of an individual object and the concept of a general class of objects. At this stage the child cannot distinguish between *dog* (as the name of a kind of animal) and *dogs*, because he cannot distinguish between *all* and *some*, i.e. he cannot conceive of a general class or family of objects. And because he cannot generalise in this way he cannot think inductively or deductively. Piaget says that at this stage the child thinks *transductively*, i.e. from the particular to the particular. His thought consists of a series of mental symbols for actions. I recently came across the following excellent example of transductive thought. Driesie, a youngster who had just started school, was talking to his teacher, who was visiting his home. He knew her well because the families were neighbours. Whilst they were speaking of school matters he called her “Miss”, but when he was telling her about his dog he called her “Auntie”. The teacher was part of his school activities which had been internalised as such and had thus been differentiated from other activity-patterns.

7.4.1.2 Concrete thinking operations (7-11 years)

During the intuitive stage (4-7 years) the child thinks as he perceives. This implies that he understands a situation according to the way he looks at it, but the child is nevertheless able to grasp only one action or variable at a time.

An operation is an action which has been internalised so that the child can form a mental representation or image of it. It is reversible, in the sense that the child can go from the action to the image and back again to the prosecution of the action. This is the beginning of logical thought.

Operational thought develops and the child forms three types of concepts. The first is the concept of classification. He can sort a collection of differently-coloured blocks into groups, each of one colour. Secondly, he can arrange a number of blocks in order of size. The third concept is that of number. He can perceive the number seven, or seven objects, and understands the relationship between this number and the numbers six and eight. During this period the child can form concepts of quantity, weight, area, volume, length and numerical size.

Despite this conceptual development there are three variables that are not achieved until the end of this period. Concrete operations consist then, of mental representations of real actions or of realistic rep-
resentations of actions: hence the perpetual search for reality at this stage.

### 7.4.1.3 The phase of formal thinking operations

The adolescent is now capable of forming hypotheses and envisaging possible consequences. He can connect ideas with one another within his own consciousness, in terms of general classes and mutual relationships, and can form hypotheses on the basis of such connections.

The young person can now think inductively and form generalisations. From these generalisations he can work back to particulars by deduction. The following capacities have now developed:

- (a) The ability to think or reason about the relationships between ideas.
- (b) The ability to consider all possible disjunctions and combinations of ideas.
- (c) The ability to handle both opposites and converses within the same system.
- (d) The ability to understand action and reaction.

Thus the adolescent can construct hypotheses and test them systematically.

Piaget believes that these stages follow one another in strict sequence and that there is only a very small margin of variation as far as ages are concerned. (Many investigators disagree with Piaget on this point.) Each phase has an initiatory period and a period of successful execution. As soon as actions are being successfully executed the following stage begins to make its appearance. Every structure that develops forms an inherent part of subsequent schemes. The chronological ages which Piaget assigns to the various stages seem to be problematical. Research in the field suggests a much higher correlation between intellectual age and performance than between chronological age and performance – with regard, for example, to a sustained concept of quantity.

### 7.4.2 J. Bruner's account of the development of thought

Jerome Bruner's model of cognitive functioning is closely related to the structuring of effective learning experience, for his main interest is the investigation of the factors underlying successful learning and successful teaching. His theories and his practical research are geared to possible application with a view to the improvement of educational practice.
7.4.2.1 Cognitive development

A child's intellectual development is determined by the culture into which he is born. And culture is strongly influenced by technological developments. The manner in which a person moves, perceives and thinks depends upon techniques and strategies which are acquired or inherited within a cultural context.

Basically, Bruner's model of cognitive development is a construct founded upon movement, image-formation and language. The elaboration of these basic elements depends upon integration. The child's intellectual capabilities increase by reason of his growing ability to integrate his notions of movement, the images he forms and his methods of representing these, and the concepts he has assimilated together with the verbal symbols for these, into increasingly complex functional units.

7.4.2.2 Modes of representation

The representation of experiences is not merely a matter of memory-work. Bruner postulates three modes of representation. Enactive representation takes place by virtue of the fact that experiences of actions are retained in the muscles. Any motor skill such as riding a bicycle, playing tennis, etc., is stored in the muscles in such a way that the representation of the action involved is not only a knowing of but also a knowing how. Iconic representation (image-formation) occurs through the selective organisation of concepts and images to accord with the structure of the immediate perceptual field. The image thus formed in the consciousness is highly significant to the person at the moment of its appearance. The third mode of representation is a system of symbolising. Primarily, linguistic and numerical symbols represent concepts whose significance is contained in and represented by the symbols associated with them.

Clearly, all three of these modes are closely related to the cultural context and the progress of the child's development.

In the course of his development the child moves from one to another of these modes of representation in very much the same way as he passes through the phases propounded by Piaget. It is important to note that these representations, as expounded by Bruner, are significant to the child. Little is known about the relationships between them or about the development from enactive through iconic to symbolic representation. Bruner and his colleagues have done a great deal of research in connection with the transition from iconic representation to the use of
language. From this it is apparent that during the primary-school period language becomes increasingly important as a medium of knowledge. The transposition of experiences into symbolic forms (linguistic and numerical) provides the child with a means of representing things which are remote in time and space, and of re-shaping, connecting and integrating them to form significant wholes.

7.4.2.3 The improvement of thought

Bruner is not much interested in inborn talent or ability. He is convinced that methods and techniques for the enhancement of ability can be developed. He says: “What is significant in the child is to what degree it depends not upon capacity but upon the unlocking of capacity by techniques that come from exposure to the specialised environment of culture” (Bruner, 1964, p. 7). If we remember Bruner’s lack of interest in talent it is easy to understand what he means when he asserts that anything can be taught to any child in an intellectually honest manner.

Thought can develop only if previous knowledge is organised in such a way as to obtain clear generics (generalisations) which can be comfortably manipulated. Amorphous masses of knowledge are uncontrol­lable. Knowledge must therefore be organised and codified. The child organises and manipulates knowledge in a manner that accords with his own cognitive structure. The child can elaborate, connect and re-orga­nise only those attributes of knowledge which are already present in his mind and which he already understands.

Cognitive style is an important aspect of Bruner’s emphasis on tech­nique or strategy. The specific task of didactic instruction is to help the child to develop effective strategies. For this reason he regards dis­covery as the ideal strategy and favours heuristic teaching which is designed to help the child to work out his own strategy.

Thus Bruner distinguishes three stages in the development of the child’s powers of thought: enactive, iconic and symbolic representation (compare these with Piaget’s three phases). All these forms of representa­tion have meaning for the child, but in the course of his development linguistic symbols become increasingly predominant as the medium of thought. The child must be able to organise his experiences if he is to generalise and codify them by means of linguistic symbols. This being so, thought can develop effectively only in the educational situation, in which the child is led by an adult.
7.4.3 J.P. Guilford's view on the development of thought

Guilford (Bailer & Charles, 1968, p. 286) set himself the task of identifying the primary intellectual capacities, with a view to building up a theoretical model of the structure of the intellect. By means of factor analyses of a large number of intelligence test items he distinguished 120 primary intellectual capacities. He then distinguished among these by arranging his model in cubic form in terms of:

(a) content, i.e. type of information (4)
(b) intellectual process, i.e. the manner of manipulating content (5)
(c) product, i.e. what results from the process. (6)

Guilford was not attempting to investigate the development of thought as such. Nevertheless, his interest in the intellect and in the measurement of intelligence did throw some light upon the development of thought and does have some bearing upon the factors we originally set out to consider: namely the media and the modes of thought. These factors correspond to a considerable extent with Guilford's factors of intellect.

According to Guilford the intellect has "figural, symbolic, semantic and behavioural content". These elements correspond very closely with the media of thought mentioned above: images, actions, language and concepts.

The activities of the intellect are cognition, memorising, divergent production, convergent production, and evaluation. These too, correspond with categories such as differentiation, integration, induction, deduction, generalisation (recognition), memorising, problem-solving and creative thought, which have been suggested by other authorities on the subject.

In addition, Guilford includes among the intellectual factors the products formed when individual parts of the content have been affected by the action of the intellect. He distinguishes among these products by means of the following general terminology: relations, as connections between units; organised systems; changes or redefinitions; and implications.

The type of thought known as productive is usually classified under a separate rubric. Its principal constituents are problem-solving and creative thought. It is possible that productive thought actually means problem-solving (convergent thought) and creativity (divergent thought), and many writers believe that this is so. By productive thought we mean thought which has a result or product which is new. In contrast to this we have reproductive thought, which consists in recalling and manipulating previous experiences within the consciousness. The Gestaltists justly accused the Associationists of confining their attention ex-
clusively to reproductive thought. The emergence of the Psychology of Thought represented a definite move in the direction of productive thought. Psychologists of this school put forward the notion that a person may be unaware of some of the contents of his consciousness, and argued that the forming of associations occurs under the direction of a determining tendency, namely the task of thought or the end to which the person is thinking.

Convergent thought is directed towards the solution of a problem, while divergent thought is creative in character. Reproductive thought, i.e. the remembering of experiences, occurs throughout the whole course of development from infancy to adulthood. So too, do problem-solving and creativity. The small child has very real problems which require solutions. The problems are unsophisticated and the solutions fairly naive. But as he gains experience and his mental capacities increase he is able to employ more complex thought processes to solve more complicated problems. It is important to remember that problem-solving occurs even in very small children. In the two sections that follow we give our attention briefly to problem-solving and creativity.

7.4.4 Problem-solving

Various writers have tried to describe the thought processes that take place from the time a person becomes aware of a problem until a solution has been reached. Rossman (1931, p. 44) studied the work of more than 700 productive inventors. His studies enabled him to identify the following seven stages:

(a) Awareness of the problem.
(b) Analysis of the problem.
(c) Assimilation of all the available information.
(d) Formulation of objective solutions.
(e) Critical analysis of the solutions.
(f) The birth of a new discovery – the real idea.
(g) Experimental testing of the idea.

There are various other ways of describing this course of mental events. In 1933 John Dewey put forward his well-known description of the following five steps:

(a) Recognition of the problem.
(b) Analysis of the problem.
(c) Proposing possible solutions.
(d) Testing the consequences of these possible solutions.
(e) Evaluation of the chosen solution.

It seems that the first step is the most important: the person must be
aware of the problem as something challenging him personally and demanding a solution.

Guilford's theory of problem-solving covers the following elements:

(a) **GATHERING INFORMATION**

After the person has become aware of the problem and has decided on a plan for solving it, information assumes primary importance. The information must either be obtained from the environment or sought in the depths of memory. It may take the form of direct learning results which have been memorised, or of learning results which must be transferred to and applied in the new situation. Since the information, whatever its source, is usually required to function in a new situation, Guilford speaks of a transfer theory in this connection.

(b) **MANIPULATING THE INFORMATION**

According to Guilford the development of ideas in thinking which leads to the solution of a problem depends upon the following factors:

(i) **Fluency of thought**
A fluent thinker can evaluate logical possibilities and alternatives competently and without strain, as if he were simply recollecting them. Productive thinking requires both a good memory and fluency of thought.

(ii) **Supple thinking**
Suppleness is the opposite of rigidity, and is necessary for the production of transformations.

(iii) **Insight**
When one is handling information and manipulating relationships, the dawning of insight initiates pattern-formation.

(iv) **Evaluation**
Evaluation occurs constantly during the process of organising information: one judges as one goes along whether information is true or false, relevant or irrelevant.

Naturally, the modes of thought distinguished by Guilford's factor analyses improve as the child develops and as his thinking media increase their range and functionality.
7.4.5 Creativity

It is generally agreed that opportunities for creative thought are essential for self-realisation, no matter what the person's field of interest may be.

Originality is the essence of creativity. But the whole school system is geared to conformity rather than originality, with the result that the traditional school subjects offer the talented pupil little scope for original expression or for thinking out possible solutions to problems – quite the contrary. And creativity, like other human attributes, forms a continuum and we therefore should not expect to find it only in especially gifted people. Divergent thought requires opportunities for practice however.


7.5 CONCLUSION

It is clear from our cursory survey of thought as a human phenomenon that we know very few facts upon which we can build indisputable opinions. The following propositions seem to be generally accepted among people who have made thought their special field of study:

(a) Significance attribution or the expansion of functional significance takes place through thought.

(b) As an act of consciousness, thought functions constantly, both implicitly and explicitly, in educational and teaching events. Without thought there could be no self-development and thus no progress towards adulthood.

(c) The media of thought are internalised actions and modes of behaviour, images, language and concepts.

(d) The modes of thought or thinking operations are (1) cognition, which includes differentiation, integration and classification; (2) memorising, i.e. the act of storing the contents of consciousness in the memory; (3) remembering, or the act of recollecting items stored in the memory; (4) problem-solving and its constituent acts, which include recognition of the problem, organisation of information, insight and evaluation; and (5) creativity.

These modes of thought develop from simple to more complex forms. Anything that a person does by way of codifying events and organising relationships has been made possible by what other people have done for him. They supply the words the person uses to name things in the
The process of significance attribution. They supply ideas and concepts from the adult form-systems of groups and generalisations, and in accordance with the values of the community.
# The secondary school child

8.1 Identification of the secondary school child 165
8.2 The adolescent’s developmental aims 166
8.3 The adolescent’s relations to self 167
8.4 Relations with peers 169
8.4.1 Introduction 169
8.4.2 Friendship between adolescents 170
8.4.3 Social acceptance 170
8.4.4 Conformity 171
8.4.5 Heterosexual relations 171
8.5 Relations with parents 173
8.5.1 Introduction 173
8.5.2 Importance of these relations 174
8.5.3 Awareness of the family’s nature 175
8.5.4 Reduction of dependence on parents 175
8.6 Relations with ideas 177
8.6.1 Introduction 177
8.6.2 Structure of formal thought 178
8.6.2.1 Differentiation between thought and the external world 178
8.6.2.2 The use of abstract concepts 179
8.6.2.3 The interpretation of literary and graphic material 179
8.6.2.4 The adolescent in his world 180
8.7 Relations with moral and religious values 180
8.7.1 Introduction 180
8.7.2 Moral development 181
8.7.3 Religious development (Protestant Christianity) 182
8.8 Adolescent developmental tasks 184
8.8.1 Introduction 184
8.8.2 Relations with ideas in the school environment 184
8.8.3 Relations with his parents 185
8.8.4 Relations with self 185
8.8.5 Relations with peers 185
8.8.6 Relations with values 185
8.8.7 Relations with the career world 186
8.9 The adolescent in his life-world 186
CHAPTER 8

The secondary school child

8.1 IDENTIFICATION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILD

The secondary school spans standards six to ten. The standard six child is usually about thirteen, the standard ten child about seventeen. The vast majority of children fall between these limits, though an extra year or two may be added on, especially at the upper end of the scale.

A scholar enters secondary school as a child; he leaves it as a youth on the threshold of maturity. Physical growth has been phenomenal: the matriculant is sexually mature, but psychological development is the real key to the level of adulthood he shall have achieved. The total development of these years is usefully described by the term adolescence, which literally means ‘growing or developing towards something’. Adolescence describes the maturing period as such. We therefore think of the adolescent as a youth who is gradually, in a biological and a cultural sense, growing into the adult world.

Complete agreement does not exist about the chronological division between the periods of childhood and adolescence: children differ too much and there are too many different approaches and criteria for division. With due regard to cultural influences we can usually say that adolescence takes up the years from 12 to 22: early adolescence from 12 to 15, middle adolescence from 15 to 18 and late adolescence from 18 to 22. The secondary school child is therefore in early and middle adolescence. The lower limit is dominated by physical puberty and the upper limit by cultural demands. Adolescents have always received the ‘torch of civilisation’ from the previous generation, to continue the values and norms as well as the content of their culture. In an advanced and therefore demanding culture, adolescence is extended so that the youth may be adequately prepared for all the facets of adult life. Earlier gener-
ations with their static culture, like primitive peoples, set up sexual maturity as virtually the sole criterion for adulthood. The extended adolescence of an advanced culture gives rise to generation gaps, student unrest and riots, mainly because of the ambivalence of life for the young. They are both child and adult. Of course, it is mainly the post-school youth or late adolescent who is subjected to this ambivalence. The following chapter is devoted to this subject. *For purposes of clarity, we shall be referring to the secondary school child as the adolescent and to the post-school youth (late adolescent) as the youth.*

Because there is such a phenomenon as a post-school youth, the secondary school child is more readily forced into the ‘child’ category. Although physically mature, he is often not accorded due recognition of his independence and dignity.

We could deal with developmental phases (cognitive, affective, etc.) but since these are always observed in terms of specific situations – in relation to people, ideas, objects, or himself – we shall be describing the adolescent in terms of these relations.

### 8.2 THE ADOLESCENT’S DEVELOPMENTAL AIDS

We have already distinguished the following aims:

- Meaningfulness as the will to understand;
- Adequate self as the will to be somebody;
- Belonging as the will to belong to the people he esteems.

These aims are complex and comprehensive. The child does not verbalise or formulate them or deliberately plan ways and means of realising them. It is the observer who classifies his aspirations and actions into these categories. Self-actualisation is the comprehensive developmental task. His full potential can be realised only if he *understands* and orients himself, if he *experiences personal adequacy* (which is seen as a positive self-concept) and if *he belongs to* and is accepted by *the people he values.* Although these aims can be conceptually distinguished they cannot be realised independently (i.e. in isolation from one another). The empirical educationist verbalises the child’s aspirations, but it is the child who *wants to know, wants to understand,* wants to orient himself. It is the child who *wants to accept himself* and *wants to belong to people.*

These aims are as valid as ever in the secondary school phase, but they require a fresh content. Orientation now takes place by using formally operational kinds of thought to assign meaning to what he is involved in – especially objects, ideas, other people and himself. His self-concept takes on a high degree of permanence, crystallised by his continuing achievement of adequacy. His relationships with parents and with
peers of both sexes show new characteristics, but the underlying aspiration is still to belong. These developmental aims are achieved only in so far as the child relates to himself, to people he esteems (parents, peer group) and to objects and ideas, including values, attitudes and so forth.

8.3 THE ADOLESCENT’S RELATIONS TO SELF

The child enters secondary school with a real sense of identity and a definite self-concept, either positive or negative. This self-concept comprises the totality of evaluation of all the components of his self-identity. Self-identity in turn refers to his conception of his body, of himself as a scholar including achievements and skills both within and outside the classroom – of himself as a child of his parents and a member of his peer group. Each identity component is evaluated, so that self-conceptions vary in quality. Some are high. The child who excels in athletics or mathematics considers that ‘I am a good athlete’ or ‘I am good at maths’. Others are low. He may see himself as physically unattractive or inept at communication. ‘I am ugly’ or ‘my friends don’t like me’. Some self-conceptions are central and crucial while others are peripheral and less vital. The child’s self-concept is the integrated totality of all these self-conceptions.

During early and middle adolescence, at secondary school, important bodily changes take place that profoundly affect his relations with objects and people. His ‘new’ body may be experienced as either admirable or humiliating. This includes physical, psychological and social changes, because his developing relations concern the physical, psychological and social self that form such important components of his self-concept.

The physical self (body-image) is more important during adolescence than in any other stage of a person’s life except possibly old age. Basic physical changes focus attention on the body. His experience of his body is not a voluntary one. His corporeality now begins to demand attention, and it is centred on the body itself (Engelbrecht 1970, p. 176). New sensations, characteristics and physical interactions make their appearance. With these dramatic changes, the body itself becomes a symbol of experience. Depending on its condition and quality, the body gives rise to subjective experiences like the following: being good at gymnastics, self-esteem based on athletic achievements, security based on physical strength, acceptance and esteem based on a good-looking face and body. Awareness of the body is present from birth and because of its permanence it is also the basis of sexual identity. When secondary sexual characteristics appear, the teenager adapts to these according to his interpretation of how others perceive his changed body. Despite
unisex clothing and hairstyles, he cannot be sexually neutral. Peers of both sexes evaluate him in terms of sexuality. So it happens that the individual acquires a new status, no longer derived from his skill with marbles but on his adequacy in the male (or female) role, which varies from time to time and from culture to culture. The girl experiments with cosmetics, perfumes, hairstyles and fashions which are not only suggested but enforced by advertisements. This is not merely a way of killing time: the girl is personally involved. The question is, can these experiments bring her closer to her physical ideal – perhaps even realise the self-portrait presented by fantasy? The response of others (particularly the peer group) is influenced by characteristics like height, strength, excess weight, skin problems, freckles, good looks, attractiveness. The adolescent’s own experience of the way he looks is even more important than the response of others. The secondary school child’s preoccupation with his body is entirely understandable: the body is he, it is she, regardless of circumstances. To the high-school athlete it is incomprehensible that bulging muscles should add little to the prestige of an adult man. The plain girl cannot believe that as she grows older, her lack of radiant charm will become less important.

This preoccupation with the body is essential: the adolescent’s perceptions are limited by the tyrannical standards of his peer group (Rogers 1977). Deviations from accepted standards of dress and appearance are at best tolerated. The price of nonconformity is rejection. Consequently, both sexes go to great lengths to conform to the approved stereotype.

The adolescent’s concern with his appearance seems exaggerated, especially to adults, but it is part and parcel of his intense experience of his own corporeality.

As the body-image is a vital component of the self-concept the adolescent’s preoccupation with his body and its extensities that determine his appearance is quite comprehensible. The self-concept includes far more than his body-image but at the same time the influence of this body-image on the self-concept is more vital than one might expect. It is by way of the body that one relates to the world and to other people – once again, not the body as a biological or physical entity but as it is subjectively experienced. A girl with acne is painfully hesitant about forming social relationships in a new environment. This body-image – the body as experienced by its owner – is the medium through which relationships with people and objects (e.g. gym apparatus) are formed.

Relations with one’s own body can be enhancing or humiliating, pleasant or unpleasant, evoking the verdict ‘I like my body’, ‘I don’t like my body’ or something in between. For the adolescent, this becomes ‘my body has to be protected from the critical eyes of others’ or ‘my body is
unquestioningly accepted by others, so I can forget about it and attend to the problem as perceived.

The self-concept is also important as an outcome of relations with objects, ideas or other people. The polarisation effect of relations (see Relations ch. 1) is always approach or estrangement, pleasant or unpleasant – in short, positive or negative. The adolescent accepted by peers and significant others will also accept himself (Coopersmith 1967). This aids a positive self-concept.

An adolescent whose achievement in most of his school subjects is high by his own standard, will have a positive academic self-concept that will assist his general self-concept. Success in public performance – before the class or some other audience – will also assist his self-concept in the same way as praise or encouragement from people he values.

Self-concept is inversely proportional to anxiety (Vrey 1974). The weaker the self-concept, the greater the anxiety. The greater a person’s self-acceptance, the fewer the frightening situations he anticipates or encounters, since he has fewer doubts about his ability or acceptance. The poorer the self-concept, the less effective will be the strategy he uses to cope with anxiety or tension (cf. May 1950).

We must also consider the effect of a person’s relations on his subjective experience of himself – a vital factor in an adolescent’s self-actualisation. We are referring, of course, to guided actualisation. Educational support is largely a background affair, present by implication, while the educator’s direct intervention and assent are a matter of specific decision and can arise at any time.

8.4 RELATIONS WITH PEERS

8.4.1 Introduction

Relations with peers become more and more important as the child grows older. By the time he is adolescent, they are vital for self-actualisation. He goes to school with his peers, plays sport with them, goes to the cinema with them, relaxes with them in the school grounds and elsewhere. His friends are both company and a sounding-board for his voice and opinions. Some of these opinions cannot be aired in front of adults – his views on teachers, parents, discipline, personal problems at school, military service, relations with the opposite sex etc. Such opinions must be clearly formulated before they can be aired. This encourages the adolescent to think clearly and express himself clearly in order to be understood.
Various facets of an adolescent’s relations with his peers are important for self-actualisation.

8.4.2 Friendship between adolescents

Close friendship is the most important relationship an adolescent can form with a peer. Such a friendship averts the torments of loneliness that can be experienced even in a group. Physical presence does not ensure real encounter or psychological closeness. A boy and girl can dance together for a long time while remaining absorbed in their own thoughts. Unless there is an emotional bond of intimacy, concern and friendliness requiring knowledge of the other person, the adolescent’s loneliness is not relieved.

The most meaningful friendships arise where the parties meet as equals, feel at home with one another and feel free to share the most intimate secrets, the most private thoughts and emotions. There is no need to pretend or to fear that confidences will be betrayed. Parties to such a friendship can openly criticise one another without condemning.

Such friendships are more common where important characteristics like intelligence and socio-economic status are shared.

Close friendships are unforced. There is no room for formality or social amenities. Silence imposes no strain. Long, vivacious conversations can be followed by silence without any discomfort. In more formal relationships, such silences are embarrassing and intolerable.

8.4.3 Social acceptance

In every peer group there are adolescents who are generally popular and others who are generally rejected. Various intermediate gradations also occur. Sociometric studies have taught us a great deal, e.g. the finding of Jersild (1963, p 258) that popular adolescents are cheerful, friendly, active and natural, that they participate readily in all sorts of activity and are quite willing to take the initiative.

Poorly-accepted adolescents are often moody, sad, anxious and insecure. Cause and effect are closely interwoven. A child rejected by his peers on account of his moodiness will become even more moody. As they grow older, other norms for acceptance develop; but physical achievements in sport (i.e. athletics) however, together with friendliness and sociability are always held in esteem by the community and remain therefore prevalent in the hierarchy of norms for acceptance by others.
8.4.4 Conformity

Adolescents in all cultural groups show great similarity in dress, speech, habits, idiom etc. We describe this as conformity, and its universality means that an adolescent has to conform in order to be known as a member of the group. The implication is that conformity is either implicitly or explicitly enforced. To be absorbed into the group, the individual must conform. Since the adolescent is anxious to be accepted, he conforms willingly.

In his eagerness to conform, he may take part in activities he himself does not approve, such as drinking or smoking. He will conform even if it entails a contravention of social or parental norms.

Competition is a universal cultural phenomenon and common amongst adolescents. Depending on the cultural group, outstanding members may deliberately fail to conform. If achievement in some sphere is valued by the peer group, the high achiever will enjoy added esteem. The compulsive competitor is usually a person with a poor self-concept. He feels constrained to prove his own value (to himself also) by excelling. Such competition is self-destructive, because such a person cannot really relax with his peers and enjoy it. Competition is wholesome when it is spontaneous and when it is enjoyed: good-natured competition enhances popularity and does not damage conformity.

Conformity is a factor in the adolescent's growth to adulthood, but in his identity formation his unique qualities must take shape too. Only then does he become a person in his own right and not just one unit among many. In the educational situation, the adolescent must be allowed to conform to his peer group – periodical withdrawal by the educator is an essential component of education. But they must meet again and the adolescent must be supported in the formation of his own identity, shown that 'you are you', a person with his own dignity, unique and unrepeatable. Conformity tends to cancel identity. It is, however, essential to the adolescent to become fully aware of his own identity.

8.4.5 Heterosexual relations

A well-established sexual identity is needed before heterosexual relations can be formed. We can distinguish three overlapping phases in a child's psychosexual development. Sexual identity is the first. Starting with pink or blue baby-clothes, the child learns that he is a boy or she is a girl. The next phase is the acquisition of masculine or feminine skills – typical behaviour that becomes automatic, such as neatness and daintiness in girls, or playing with dolls, while boys enjoy rougher games. The
third phase is sexlinked values, knowledge and attitudes, the latter being culturally determined to a considerable degree. Each of these developmental phases remains a distinct component of sexual identity, which acquires a new dimension during adolescence.

It is this experience of sexual identity, with its corresponding behaviour and attitudes, that underlies the attraction between boy and girl. The boy-girl relationship is extremely important to the child’s self-actualisation and self-reliance, and it is characterised as follows:

(a) ‘Chance’ meetings occur, dates are made for sporting events, the cinema, etc.
(b) Older children make more formal arrangements, and the boy begins to court the girl.
(c) Random caresses begin to occur or the couple start ‘going stedy’.
(d) It is noticeable that it is the erotic factor rather than sexual affinity that sustains the relationship. The erotic element is seen in mutual attraction – the urge to be together, mutual admiration, gazing at each other, affirmations of love – without any clear-cut sexual intention (cf. Langeveld 1961, p. 253).

A boy and girl in love intensely experience a wide range of emotions: from the heights of ecstasy and joy to the depths of pain and depression, from overwhelming tenderness to rage; from exhilaration to fear. These variable emotional states often cause absence of mind and sadness, or cheerfulness and gaiety.

(e) The adolescent’s preoccupation with his body brings uncertainty to the relationship because there are new physical phenomena to be assimilated, such as menstruation or ejaculation, as well as new drives and desires. It is essential that an adolescent be given the authentic facts concerning his or her body in an atmosphere of trust and pedagogical acceptance and responsibility.

(f) These heterosexual relationships are also characterised by a desire for authentic knowledge concerning the partner’s body and the effect of the relationship on the other.

(g) The boy-girl relationship is also noted for uncertainty, doubt and anxiety. Whether the sex act has been experienced or not, both have urgent and anxious questions in their minds concerning masturbation, menstruation, pregnancy, abortion, contraception, homosexuality and related matters. The adolescent wants authentic information presented frankly and without moralising. Inadequate or faulty information can cause considerable uncertainty and doubt, leading to anxiety – often quite unnecessary – which can so occupy the youngster’s mind that he cannot concentrate on his daily commitments.

In the way of educational support he needs, first and foremost, factual
knowledge imparted without prudery or coyness. It should always be imparted during a pedagogical encounter in a pedagogical atmosphere. An adolescent needs to stand on his own feet. This effect is particularly noticeable in heterosexual relationships, where he is obliged by his own choice to take a stand on his own values and even to say NO to what would otherwise be quite in order. May (1970) points out that contraception, which has attracted so much attention of late (e.g. press reports on the Pill) is a typical manifestation of the post-Victorian permissive society, which prefers to find pragmatic solutions for the moral problem of taking a stand on one's values and saying NO. Since even adults find this so difficult, mechanical aids are resorted to. The educational implications are plain. It is not yet clear who - parent or teacher - is the most competent person to give the secondary school child authentic, pedagogically relevant instruction on this score (and it is probably not an either/or question: both have a part to play) but it is vital that such instruction should be given. (Note the questions sent by adolescents to the advice columns of newspapers.)

Personal conversations with adolescents show that such instruction must rest on two bases: a relationship of unconditional acceptance between educator (parent, teacher, instructor or minister) and adolescent; and secondly, authentic instruction without moralising. It is the educator who must provide the right climate of positive relationship, affective atmosphere and self-disclosure in which authentic information can be imparted and in which the adolescent feels free to discuss intimate problems without embarrassment to either party.

Heterosexual relationships between adolescents are a fact. Their nature and quality can promote either self-realisation or self-destruction, and therefore responsible pedagogical help and support are a matter of urgency.

8.5 RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

8.5.1 Introduction

The adolescent’s relations with his parents are a continuation of their earlier relations. The parents have authority and - ideally - provide the secure basis from which the child initiates other relationships. The child still depends on his parents and is strongly influenced by them. His increasing involvement with the world outside his home entails new perspectives concerning his parents. From this perspective, parents are seen as people comparable to other adults. In a psychological sense, the
adolescent leaves the parent's home and takes up a new personal vantage point outside the family from which he sees both the world and the home in a new light. This sporadic departure (in the psychological sense) from the sheltering home is a trying out of the adolescent’s wings, a finding of his own feet in a world where he must live as an adult alongside his parents. In this section we are going to concentrate on these trial runs, which constantly modify the nature and quality of the child’s relations with his parents.

These assumptions of new vantage points can be seen as the adolescent’s fight for emancipation. It is indeed an effort and a fight, because leaving home implies the possibility that the door may shut behind him and not easily open again. We see this in the anxiety and conflict experienced by many adolescents, particularly those whose relations with their parents were not wholesome to start with (children, for instance, who feel rejected). When the youth attains maturity, this means that these temporary experimental vantage points have solidified to a single permanent base from which he will constitute an adult life-world. The emotional bonds of love and attraction, or their opposites, will continue to influence him. Let us take a closer look at specific aspects of the adolescent’s relations with his parents.

8.5.2 Importance of these relations

The importance of an adolescent’s relationship with his parents is unmistakable when one hears a post-school youth’s account of it. Its importance rests on the presence or absence of love as its dominant feature. Mutual love is not an isolated phenomenon but something that cases the relationship. It gives rise to many other positive emotions and clamps down many negative ones.

The effect of a stable love base is far reaching. The adolescent who is loved simply because he is his parent’s child does not constantly have to plan to keep their goodwill. He can take this for granted even when he differs from them or tries their patience. The young who can rely on parental love feel freer to take risks, to explore, find themselves, try out their abilities, develop decision-making powers and openly compare alternatives – particularly as regards the choice of a career. They feel free to make the inevitable mistakes without fearing that these will mean total rejection by their parents. Nor do they have the destructive guilt feelings suffered by children who are not really loved by their parents. The adolescent who is sure of his parent’s affection is free to differ from them. He can in fact fight for his rights, as he sees them, without fear of retribution or vengeance.
8.5.3 Awareness of the family’s nature

Once the adolescent finds a vantage point outside the family, he can succeed in putting some distance between himself and it. He can look critically at the family that is so important to him. They are extensions of himself and are judged by subjective standards. Favorable features enhance his self-image; unfavourable ones lower it. He demands improvements in these latter aspects - his parent’s clothes and general appearance, the condition of the furniture, Dad who laughs so loudly (especially at his own jokes), Mom who is not tidy enough, and so forth. This outspokenness causes friction, particularly when the adolescent is highlighting faults about which the family already feels sensitive or inferior.

8.5.4 Reduction of dependence on parents

Emancipation is a complex affair. It starts in early childhood. The young child’s development toward independence is sometimes defined as emancipation, which literally means the achievement of equal rights. Clearly, emancipation in this context comprises the whole lengthy progress from birth to maturity, for the child becomes progressively more self-reliant as he learns to dress and feed himself, move around, acquire knowledge, and so forth. As this orientation increases he achieves adult knowledge and competence and therefore equality - he is no longer a child but a fellow-adult. During adolescence we stress that aspect of emancipation that is concerned with independent moral judgments and responsibility for decisions. These are impossible without effective orientation to the outside world and the establishment of a functional lifeworld.

There are two sides to adolescent emancipation - on the one hand, the adolescent’s readiness to take his own decisions and accept responsibility for them; on the other, the parent’s readiness to permit this. Successful emancipation demands a synchronisation of the two processes. They must co-incide in time. If the adolescent is ready to take decisions, the educator must make a concession for which the youth then accepts responsibility. The educator must avoid granting impulsively demanded responsibilities for which his charge is not ready, or responsibilities for which he has not even asked; nor must he refuse those for which the adolescent is ready. Successful emancipation, then, is an educational matter in which the maturing youth is supported towards self-actualisation.

Reduced dependence goes hand in hand with greater self-reliance in
thinking, deciding and acting. The following parental attitudes retard emancipation:

(a) Reluctance or refusal to give the child his rightful independence. This type of parent takes a wide range of decisions the child is capable of taking for himself, e.g. as regards the clothes the adolescent wears.

(b) A denial of freedom. Conditions are attached to the permission to do things, and the parent checks up on the child’s compliance with conditions – in other words, the child is not trusted.

(c) The adolescent is treated like a much younger child by constantly reprimanding or pampering him.

The adolescent experiences these attitudes as statements that ‘you are too young’ when his ambition is to be adult. The parent can responsibly refuse freedom only when he is prepared to explain his full reasons in a pedagogical encounter.

On the adolescent’s part, the following attitudes harm emancipation:

(a) Insistence on a freedom he cannot yet responsibly exercise and which may therefore result in mere license.

(b) Failure to accept freedom and independence. Such timidity results from ineffective education, unsuitable parental attitudes (e.g. ‘I’m not good enough for you any more’) or defective dialogue between parent and child.

(c) Avoidance of contact, so that there is no fellowship that can produce encounter.

(d) Adolescent prejudice that rejects everything the parent says and so destroys communication.

When emancipation miscarries, rebelliousness, quarrels and reproaches result. Even in adulthood the former adolescent may still taunt, defy and misjudge the parents. No child needs to be defiant unless he is rebelling against parental domination – even if unconsciously, and at this age quite unnecessarily.

The essence of emancipation is the adolescent’s freedom, wish and ability to take responsibility for his thoughts, moral judgments and practical decisions (Jersild 1963). When emancipation is a success, parent and child remain close. “Honour your father and your mother” creates no problems. Parental advice is freely asked, neither enforced by the parent nor slavishly followed by the child. Even the parent’s moral judgment is respected, but the adolescent eventually acts on his own convictions.

It is natural and wholesome that the adolescent should, during this time, increasingly dissociate himself from his parental home, both physically and psychologically. If readiness for emancipation on both sides is well synchronised, the child will always return. Good synchronisation
helps to give the adolescent a realistic idea of his parents. As a child he obviously had an unrealistic view, because the parents were tall and strong when he was small and helpless. Even in moral matters the parents were virtually omnipotent — sole arbiters of right and wrong. Only if synchronisation is good will emancipation give the adolescent a realistic idea of his parents. And once the adolescent has formed a realistic conception of his parents, he has progressed far and effectively towards emancipation.

Mark Twain has given us a striking description of an adolescent: “When I was a boy of fourteen my father was so stupid I could scarcely stand to have the old man around, but by the time I was twenty I was astonished at how much he had learned in the last seven years” (Jersild 1963, p. 238). This realistic image of the parents makes a significant contribution to a positive self-image: while the child sees his parents as strong and omnipotent he necessarily sees himself as small and powerless. Clear educational support from parents, in enforcing reasonable standards of behaviour, help the adolescent’s emancipation by promoting a positive self-concept (Coopersmith 1967).

Effective adolescent/parent relations are the most potent factor in the adolescent’s growth to independence. In all his uncertainties and in all the tensions and anxieties arising from these, the unconditional acceptance and security derived from his parents are the sole stable and stabilising factor.

8.6 RELATIONS WITH IDEAS

8.6.1 Introduction

In constituting his life-world, the adolescent is increasingly concerned with ideas. Like objects, people or the attitudes of people towards himself, ideas become important only when he becomes aware of their significance for him and their implications for his own identity. The adolescent’s degree of personal awareness — of himself and of the world, from which his life-world develops — depends on his cognitive development.

The adolescent’s cognitive powers function on an intellectual plane unknown to children. Piaget (Inhelder and Piaget 1958) has shown that these changes are a function of three factors: (1) the maturity of the nervous system, (2) experiences with objects in his life-world and (3) experiences with people he esteems.

According to Piaget, the adolescent is now in what is usually called the period of formal operations. His logical powers enable him to reason
from a verbalised hypothesis. He can speculate on the nature, consequences, value and social and personal importance of such an hypothesis. His interest extends beyond personal experience and involvement. Elkind (1968) says that abstract thought enables the adolescent to conceptualise concepts of identity and destiny. Directing this thought to himself, he becomes aware of new dimensions in his own identity and in his ability to conceive of logical consequences. He can also think about his destiny and so form a conception of his ideal self. His cognitive powers enable him to move on an abstract mental level where ideas can be assimilated and thoughts and situations understood; and so we next need to study the adolescent's intellectual powers and his mode of intellectual involvement in situations and ideas.

8.6.2 Structure of formal thought

It is inherently difficult to grasp the structure of formal thought because one is not aware of the act or process of thinking in oneself but only of the product. Structure can only be deduced from manifestation. We had therefore best attend to some cognitive manifestations of formal operational thought and some of the affective consequences of these (cf. Elkind in Adams 1968).

8.6.2.1 Differentiation between thought and the external world

Between childhood and adolescence, a progressive differentiation between thought and reality takes place. Each phase of development produces its own problems. The primary school years are the period of concrete operational thought. These concrete operations lead to elementary deductions and therefore to concrete hypotheses concerning reality. The child is not aware of the hypothetical element and accepts his deductions as perceptions of objective reality. He does not see that his conceptions must be judged in terms of reality; he seems to feel that reality must be judged in terms of his deductions (hypotheses). To him, his deductions are facts.

During the secondary school years the adolescent sees that his hypotheses or deductions are arbitrary and have to be assessed in the light of reality.

This mode of thinking has been demonstrated in various laboratory tests (Adams 1968, p. 145). A problem (concept formation at a visual level) is presented. To solve it, the adolescent formulates an hypothesis
and compares the possible solution it engenders with the practical situation. If the possible solution is not the correct one, the hypothesis is discarded and a new one formulated. The child, on the other hand, clings to his hypothesis and is reluctant to part with it even if reality proves it wrong. The primary school child tends to be rigid in his thinking and to cling to his solutions. The adolescent considers the evidence, thinks dynamically, is aware of the arbitrariness of his method and tries out alternative possibilities. It is this awareness of possibilities that pinpoints the real differentiation between thought and reality.

8.6.2.2 The use of abstract concepts

An adolescent thinks more abstractly than a primary school child. By abstractly we mean that his thought is more general and less fused with immediate experience. This phenomenon is universal and can be copiously illustrated, as in a research report by Elkind (1963). Children of various ages were asked, ‘Are all the children in the world protestants?’ Primary school children typically answered, ‘No, I know of children who are not protestants.’ Clearly this reply is linked to the concrete situation and does not apply to children generally. Adolescents, on the other hand, replied: ‘No, because there are different religions in the world’. This reply is general and takes into account all children everywhere; it is not linked to actual cases. The adolescent’s reply provides for all the positive and negative possibilities inherent in the problem; the child is aware only of certain cases known to him.

8.6.2.3 The interpretation of literary and graphic material

To comprehend a piece of prose or a description, the child considers the indications contained in it. The adolescent considers the situation as a whole, including relevant concepts not contained in it. Adams (1968, p. 151) found that children cannot interpret political cartoons. Adolescents can, because they can move from the literal to the metaphorical meaning. To a child, a donkey is a donkey. The adolescent can see the connection between a donkey and a given political figure, and he takes in the double meaning. The ability to see possible meanings in a concrete figure, however remote from the literal meaning, once again results from that combination of meanings in the cognitive structure (not subsumption or inclusive relations) which is a potential ability of formal operational thinking.
8.6.2.4 The adolescent in his world

We have seen that, when formal operational thinking starts, the adolescent begins to grasp his identity and destiny and that this leads to a self-image and an ideal self-image which are compared. He also grasps the actual situation as compared with the ideal situation in his home, school and country and in the world. This discrepancy between what is and what should be leads to depression and discontent (often called Weltschmerz). Because of this discontent about reality, the adolescent tends to be a rebel, but his rebelliousness is usually confined to words. During adolescence, the otherwise happy adopted child starts looking for his real parents and the handicapped child is subject to fits of internal depression. Formal thinking makes it possible to evaluate a situation in which he is involved, and shortcomings in the actual state of affairs depress him.

This power of critical evaluation is directed at himself also and gives rise to the well-known adolescent egocentricity. He sees himself at the centre of the stage and imagines that everyone is evaluating him critically. He then tries to make himself more acceptable by means of clothes, cosmetics, hair styles, etc. If he succeeds in being accepted, this contributes to a positive self-image and the concomitant tendencies to action. The stabilisation of the self-image does much for effective self-actualisation.

The structure of adolescent thinking centres on factors like formal operational thinking, abstraction, comprehension of double meanings and the experience of depression because of the discrepancy between the actual and the ideal.

Basically, the adolescent is wrestling with concepts to which he is trying to give meaning. Because of his personal involvement, his emotional experience tends towards depression. If we allow for limited experience, the adolescent handles concepts as an adult does. The adolescent needs support in uncovering relevant meanings but he also desperately needs security and acceptance from parents and other adults important to him.

8.7 RELATIONS WITH MORAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES

8.7.1 Introduction

One of the aims of education is to bring the child to a point where he supports the norms of his society from personal conviction. His culture
contains moral, religious, social and other norms deriving from the corres­ponding values esteemed by the community. The totality of these values is subsumed in the way of life maintained by that community. This way of life embodies the vital values from which no one can disso­ciate himself, because one is always confronted with values – and their implied norms – to which one must give concrete form by taking up one's own stance towards all that makes up one's world. Every human being is constantly subjected to obligations in that he is required to steer his life in a certain direction by virtue of the choices he makes (cf. Liebenberg in Landman, Roos and Liebenberg 1977). A freely willed action belongs to the moral sphere (Coetzee 1952, p. 136).

At white South African schools, where a Christian National system of education is enforced by law, the child encounters Christian values such as charity, chastity, justice and integrity at an early age. According to the Christian perspective, man's relationship to God comes first and his relationship to his neighbour second. The adolescent's relations with religious and moral values develop to a point where he will conform to such religious and moral norms as 'you shall not steal' of his own free will. The question is how successful his identification with the norm has been. Empirical research has brought to light a number of these ess­ences.

8.7.2 Moral development

Moral development contains a clear cognitive component. The adoles­cent becomes increasingly capable of conceptualising and generalising moral norms. Understanding moral concepts, he is able to transcend the morality based on rules and achieve a morality based on principles. A principle embraces a whole spectrum of concrete situations. The value of 'honesty' gives rise to the norm 'you shall not steal'. The principle refers to more than theft as such – also to dishonesty during examinations, care­lessness about the possessions of others entrusted to one's care, lying for one's own advantage, and so forth.

Piaget (1932) describes a gradual transition from heteronomous to autonomous moral judgment. The former means a morality based on rules (norms) prescribed by others, while the latter is based on a person's own convictions and judgments. The young child does not steal because his parents forbid it. The adolescent with autonomous moral judgment sees that his parents obey the norm and he agrees with the principle underlying it – that one should not steal. Adolescence also brings a shift from moral realism to moral relativism (Jersild 1963). To the child (the moral realist) it is a more serious transgression to break a
dozen eggs by accident than to break one on purpose. The adolescent is more of a moral relativist and takes into account the conditions, relations and relativities: the transgressor's intentions as well as the practical circumstances and the consequences of the transgression. To him it is a more serious matter to deliberately spill one drop of ink on his friend's drawing than to upset a whole bottle over it by accident.

Empirical research into adolescent levels of moral judgment has established 'that the average young person of adolescent age is likely to subscribe to ideas of right and wrong that come close to the ideas held by adults' (Jersild 1963, p. 388).

Moral judgment is always manifested in a given situation comprising a number of contributory factors such as the adolescent's self-concept, the status of other parties, his relations with these parties, awareness of the situation's components, etc. The complexity of actual situations means that an adolescent who agrees with a given moral norm may yet, in a situation containing too many of the above factors, show a considerable discrepancy between his stated moral principles and his actual behaviour.

It is probably due to educational influence that - according to researchers such as Peck and Havighurst (1960) and Taba (1953) - the level of moral judgment reached at the age of ten remains largely constant throughout adolescence. The norm practised by the parents will be the norm followed by the child - whether positive or negative.

8.7.3 Religious development (Protestant Christianity)

The adolescent's religious background and his education in regard to the origin, nature and destiny of humanity is of the most vital importance. A personal religion means a faith and hope to which an adolescent can cling during the uncertainties and vicissitudes of his development. We need to ask whether anything about the religious level is peculiar to adolescence.

A given religion is a feature of given culture or like-minded group, and so differences in the practice of religion are to be expected. Most religious denominations have prescribed ways of admitting the adolescent to full church membership. In most South African English and Afrikaans churches it is done by way of confirmation. Various surveys in the USA (cf. Jersild 1963, p. 374) have shown that some 90 per cent of adolescents profess a belief in God. Gallup polls show that the positive orientation towards God and religion in adolescents corresponds with that of adults. An important inference is that adolescents are aware of a need for God. It is incumbent on the educator to support the adoles-
SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILD

Because of his critical attitude the adolescent demands, of himself and of others, an integration of professed religion with everyday life. The adult - parent, teacher or minister - whose relations with other people are obviously unsatisfactory will not have much success in instructing adolescents on religious and moral matters. Yet the adolescent is intensely aware of acceptance. Kindness, respect and esteem from his religious instructor mean more to him than that instructor's religious status. It is the same at school: the secondary school child attaches more importance to the teacher's kindness, respect and esteem for himself as a scholar than to the academic knowledge he attributes to the teacher. It is a well-known fact that scholars work harder at and derive more pleasure from subjects taught by teachers whom they like.

Because of the adolescent's concern with abstract ideas, he is able to understand religion at a deeper level. The focus shifts from concrete situations (like Daniel in the lion's den or the miracles of Christ) to the knowledge, feeling and faith in which he - dependent, finite, temporal creature - is united with the eternal, all-sufficient, transcendent God who, in Jesus Christ, is lovingly concerned for man.

Ross (1950, p. 158) found in a study of 2 000 adolescents that 'the findings indicated that for a large number of young people religion is "a vague body of inherited or acquired ideas" which they have not, to any substantial degree, experienced or understood.' The adolescent who...
can see an integration of profession with practice in his own home—experience the importance of religion for life and also a personal conversion—is fortunate indeed.

Many adolescents have difficulty in reconciling religion with science, especially natural science. The supposed discrepancy is, of course, a myth. This is why the adolescent must have educational support to understand that the mature scientist, like the mature believer, is humble. As science approaches the frontiers of knowledge, it becomes increasingly aware of the mystery of the unknown. 'When the scientist thus begins to speculate about meanings he is involved in a search not unlike that of a religious person who raises questions about ultimate meaning' (Jersild 1963, p. 384). Educational support that provides this knowledge, safeguards the adolescent against unnecessary doubts and efforts to reconcile the facts in artificial ways.

Morbid guilt is harmful in many ways, not least in hampering self-actualisation by distorting the self-image. The Christian faith makes it possible for the adolescent to confess his guilt and to appropriate forgiveness by faith. This is one of many ways in which a living faith promotes self-actualisation.

8.8 ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

8.8.1 Introduction

Practically speaking, adolescence comprises two phases; or, differently put, it is so prolonged by our technocratic culture that it includes post-school youth as well as the secondary school period. The secondary school child's developmental tasks are only a partial indication of the border-line between the two phases. Certain components of the process will continue, while others show a clean break. We can best look at these developmental tasks in the light of the adolescent's emancipation, with which we have already dealt in this chapter.

8.8.2 Relations with ideas in the school environment

(a) The secondary school child has to pass his final or matric-examination.
(b) He has had a good deal of success in learning to think abstractly and to solve problems involving symbols (linguistic, mathematical or chemical) and ideas.
(c) He has achieved considerable self-reliance in work involving problem-solving in most of his subjects.
(d) At the end of his matric year, he takes responsibility for completing his studies. This takes him a long way towards accepting responsibility for his own life.

8.8.3 Relations with his parents

(a) Emancipated, he sees his parents more realistically. They, too, obey accepted cultural norms and are not as ‘omnipotent’ as he used to think them.
(b) Though he misses his childhood home, he is self-reliant enough to leave it temporarily or even permanently.
(c) He can form his own opinions on fundamental matters such as religion even opinions that conflict with those of his parents.

8.8.4 Relations with self

(a) A personal identity has crystallised.
(b) A consistent, more realistic self-concept has taken shape.
(c) The adolescent is aware of his own identity or self in relations involving a conscious knowledge of his own capacity and the ability to act more or less intelligently, more maturely than he used to.
(d) A male or female sexual role has been consolidated.
(e) He has learned to control his emotions and to avoid many of the situations that used to cause tension.

8.8.5 Relations with peers

(a) Following the peer group’s demand for conformity, self-identity develops in such a way that the person’s uniqueness – his difference from the peer group – is accepted.
(b) During differentiation from the peer group, closer relationships – more mature because less egocentric – are often formed.
(c) Heterosexual relationships are formed. These are strongly erotic, but infatuation often passes into love.

8.8.6 Relations with values

(a) Formal operational thought enables the adolescent to form his own
opinions about religious and moral issues inter alia. These decisions are taken freely and without compulsion from parents or teachers.

(b) Following a period of doubt, the adolescent has formed his own religious convictions – particularly the adolescent raised in a religious home.

8.8.7 Relations with the career world

(a) At the end of his school years, the adolescent chooses a career. In cases where years of practical or university training have to elapse, this decision may change.

(b) A career is chosen as a matter of self-actualisation. The career is seen as the area within which self-actualisation can take place.

8.9 THE ADOLESCENT IN HIS LIFE-WORLD

In Empirical Education, the attribution of meaning is vital. It cannot take place without involvement. The quality of both meaning and involvement is determined by what the adolescent subjectively experiences, and both are components of self-actualisation – which, because of the need for educational help, is guided actualisation.

A meaningful life-world is formed when the adolescent, by assigning meaning, forms relations with objects, people, ideas, values, the self and God. A significant relationship means more than 'I understand'; there is always a polarisation effect which can be expressed as 'I am attracted to my parents even though I have left them', 'I am attracted to peers of both sexes', 'I accept myself, experience self-esteem and a positive self-concept', etc. There are also negative relations characterised by estrangement, rejection, and so forth. The adolescent's life-world is always expanding, partly because of the broadness of his interests and his acquaintance with ideas. His relationships, as dealt with in this chapter, are an expression of the life-world of the secondary school child as adolescent.