

Module VIII

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)



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e-EarlyCare-T

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Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

Module VIII is about the development of early intervention programmes for the developmental ages 0-6 years. Firstly, the structure of programme development will be discussed in two parts: the structure of programme development for 0-3 years and the structure of programme development for 3-6 years. Practical examples of the development of early intervention programmes for different disorders can be found in Laboratory 2: Resolution of 3 case studies on cognitive, social and language pathologies and in Laboratory 2: Resolution of 3 case studies on cognitive, social and language pathologies. Likewise, the use of intelligent resources applied to diagnosis and assessment at early ages can be found in Laboratory 4: Application of intelligent resources to diagnosis and assessment at early ages and the development of an intervention programme with the use of the eEarlyCare application can be found in Laboratory 5: How to develop an intervention programme with the e-EarlyCare-T web application.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

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Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1. Concepts of development 0-3: implications for programme development.

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

Discovery of objects

Children quickly analyse the world, developing representations that divide objects into figure and background (Rochat, 2001). **Attention** is progressively directed towards **three-dimensional objects** and with a tendency to pay increasing attention to more complex stimuli.

The development of the use of means-end strategies begins. Later, the use of materials or instruments that allow children to achieve something is one of the most significant achievements of practical intelligence. In this, task resolution is fundamental to achieve the cognitive development of reasoning. In this process of problem solving, the development of **object permanence** is fundamental and will be directly linked to the development of representation and resolution on the plane of virtuality.



Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

Discovery of objects



Infants from **four to five months** are interested in the effects of actions on objects and repeat them over and over again, what Piaget (1952) called **secondary circular reactions**. These observations and actions will also facilitate the development of representations. Circular reactions can be a mechanism for learning about what is already represented and discovering new types of actions, and thus initiating new representations (Parker, 1993). Here, **trial-and-error strategies** are used that lead infants to increasingly successful resolutions. The **intrinsic motivation** of the subject plays an essential role in this whole process. Next comes the development of the **tertiary circular reactions**, from **eight to twelve months**. These reactions are a **complex combination of objects (pushing one object against another)**. Babies' ability to repeat their schemes over and over again means that they analyse and study the procedure itself. In other words, they develop causality and multi-schema complexity (Karmiloff-Smith, 1992).

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

Symbolisation in childhood



The **contemplative attitude** enables them to begin **reflecting on events and asking questions about what they mean**. This transition is the **necessary precursor to symbolic functioning** which is an essential condition for the emergence of language.

All the activities of symbolic functioning appear and manifest themselves together between the ages of twelve and eighteen months and mark the line between early childhood and infancy proper.

Symbolic play begins in early childhood, from eighteen to thirty-six months. However, they **will show confusion between the symbol and the referent**.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

Manifestations of semiotic function at the end of the sensorimotor period



The main manifestations of **semiotic function** are: **deferred imitation, symbolic play, drawing and language** (Delval, 1996).

Deferred imitation enables the child to imitate in the absence of a model, which implies the development of internal patterns of representation of previously experienced situations. **Symbolic play** allows children to represent situations they have been involved in. Later, as their complexity increases, they are able to represent other situations that they do not necessarily have to have acted out directly. **Drawing** involves an internalisation of real situations and objects and the possibility of graphic representation. Although the degree of similarity will depend on the motor skills of reproduction. **Language is considered to be the most elaborate symbolic skill in terms of complexity and the one that allows the greatest interpersonal and cognitive development.**

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

Table 1. Relationship between dimensions of symbolic play and possible cognitive strategies to facilitate its development (taken from Sáiz, 2000 p. 120-121).

Dimensions	Content	Cognitive intervention strategies
Decentralisation	<p>First stage: Everyday actions referring to one's own body and devoid of any real purpose (e.g.: "drinking from an empty glass").</p> <p>Second stage: Games directed towards other participants: people or dolls; these are taken as passive agents, receivers of the child's action (12-18 months).</p> <p>Third stage: The child gives greater participation to people or dolls. This is an advance in the process of decentration (24-30 months), e.g. the child puts the fork in the doll's hand instead of feeding it directly and also accompanies its actions with its own verbal expressions or by attributing intentions, feelings or emotions to the agents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the child's interaction with toys (with the adult acting, if necessary, as a model of the actions to be carried out). - Enable the child to interact with toys (dolls and toys that help the child to reproduce everyday contextual situations), modelling and shaping of play situations by the adult. - Let the child initiate interactions; if necessary model situational patterns of decentration through overt verbal language as a behaviour regulating agent's actions.
Substitution of objects	<p>First stage: The child uses mainly real objects (brush, fork...) or small-scale reproductions for his play.</p> <p>Second stage: The child substitutes a real object for an undefined one (makes a stick into a fork...) as long as they have some quality that allows them to perform the same function to a certain extent.</p> <p>Third stage: The child replaces an object with a very precise function (fork) with an object with a very different function (comb).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the child's interaction with toys in order to imitate functional actions; if necessary model the action by the adult. - Facilitate the child's interaction with toys in order to initiate possible functional substitutions; model the action using substitution of objects, which may have some relation to those they substitute. - Enable the child to make non-functional substitutions; model the action by using objects in the substitution that are not similar to the objects they are substituting.
Integration	<p>First stage: Games are simple, isolated actions.</p> <p>Second stage: Elementary production takes place, consisting of applying simple schemas to two or more objects or agents.</p> <p>Third stage: Multi-schema combinations involving two or more symbolic actions. There will be an evolution in these: first the actions will be disordered and more or less juxtaposed; then they will be organised in a truly integrated sequence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide the child with appropriate contexts and situations to initiate the development of play. - Enable more elaborate game situations through modelling and shaping by progressively increasing the difficulty in organisation and sequencing.
Planning	<p>First stage: The child seems to be provoked by the presence of certain toys or objects; they are not directed by a concrete plan or action.</p> <p>Second stage: The child looks for the materials needed for a certain game and makes preparations before starting the game, and/or verbally announces that they are going to carry it out (indicating that they have a plan to execute).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide the child with toys and situational frameworks for the action to take place. - Modelling and shaping situations that facilitate the elicitation of intentionality towards play; using language as a regulator of the actions that are performed.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.1. Cognitive skills precursors (0-3 years)

The precursors of theory of mind in the sensorimotor period

From eight to twelve months triangular relationships are established between the child, adults and objects. These relationships include:



Joint attention patterns.

Gestural communication (proto-imperative and proto-declarative).

Primary (4-5 months) and secondary (12 months) intersubjectivity.

Meta-representational skills.

The link between the development of protodeclaratives, symbolic play and theory of mind is most likely the ability to have metarepresentations.

1.2. Therapeutic implications in early childhood



First of all, there is no single way of intervening, as this will depend on the initial developmental level of the child we wish to mediate. Therefore, before any action is taken, the real situation of the subject with whom we want to work needs to be evaluated in order to define a baseline for intervention and subsequently analyse both the acquisition processes and the acquisitions themselves.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.2. Therapeutic implications in early childhood

Table 2. Cognitive strategies to support child development during the sensorimotor period (taken from Sáiz, 2000 p. 122-123).

Developmental ages and their relationship to the stages of the sensorimotor period	Sensorimotor intelligence	Cognitive intervention strategies
Stage I (0-1 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of reflexes. - Signs of accommodation of perceptual selection schemes (attunement to attachment figures). - Beginning of non-specific linkage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop visual tracking of objects. - Facilitate sucking-pausing relationships between mother and baby. - Enable breast-shaking or feeding-pause container relationships. - Implement rocking-pause relationships.
Stage II (1-4 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary circular reactions. - First adaptations acquired. - First scheme co-ordinations. - Beginning of the social smile. - Emergence of primary intersubjectivity. - Start of proto-conversations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop sucking and grasping coordination. - To facilitate vision-hearing coordination. - To develop phonation-audition coordination. - Enabling the elicitation of social smiles. - Facilitating the development of primary intersubjective behaviours. - Implement the development of contingency awareness. - Develop circular games. - Facilitate the development of proto-conversational patterns between infant and nurturing figures.
Stage III (4-8 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secondary circular reactions. - Full coordination of vision and grasping. - Beginning of the means-ends differentiation. - Anticipatory behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating the development of vision-impairment coordination. - Enable the development of the beginning of means-ends differentiation. - Facilitate the development of the search for partially hidden objects. - Enable the development of anticipatory behaviours.
Stage IV (8-12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of secondary schemes. - Pursuit of ends using others as means. - Reciprocal assimilation of means-ends. - Progressive differentiation of means-ends. - First acts of practical intelligence. - Occurrence of intentional behaviours. - Beginning development of proto-imperative behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating pursuit of ends by using other schemes as a means. - Search for completely hidden objects that have just been hidden. - Enable situations in which the child has to communicate and reinforce intentional communication behaviours. - Facilitate the development of proto-imperative behaviours. - Facilitate the search for an object in different places where it can be hidden.
Stage V (12-15 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tertiary circular reactions. - New media are discovered by experimentation and known patterns are differentiated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the search for an object in different places where it can be hidden.
Stage VI (15-18 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of new media by mental combination. - Occurrence of proto-declarative behaviours. - Object permanence. - Start of performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present problem situations in which the child has to develop mental combination. - Facilitate situations in which the child has to develop protodeclarative behaviours. - Facilitate the search for objects in all locations. - Facilitate the development of representative behaviour.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.3. Structure for the elaboration of programmes for 0-3 years of age



1. Specification of the intervention unit.

2. Structure of the Intervention Unit:

- Objective of the intervention.
- Evaluation indicators of the intervention unit.
- Task (activities).
- Materials needed to do the intervention.
- Generalisation activities (i.e. activities similar to those proposed in the task but which involve their development in another context or which have a higher degree of difficulty).

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

1.4. Examples of 0-3 years programmes



Unit: Ability to develop pause-suction actions II

Objectives

1.- To develop visual tracking of objects.

Indicators of assessment

- The infant follows objects presented in his/her field of vision.
- Infant follows objects presented in his/her field of vision from right to left.
- Infant follows objects presented to him/her in his/her field of vision from left to right.
- Infant follows objects presented to him/her in his/her field of vision from top to bottom.
- Infant follows objects presented to him/her in his/her field of vision from bottom-up.

Task

Present objects that are attractive (brightly coloured, and that produce no loud noises) to the baby. Place them in the baby's field of vision from left to right or right to left. Top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top.

Materials

Brightly coloured rattles.

Brightly coloured objects (rounds that can be grasped).

Generalisation activities

Introduce the baby to different objects of different sizes. Place bright objects, not too big, in the baby's field of vision (about 15-20 cm from his eyes) and draw his attention to them. When the baby is looking at it, the object will be moved from one side of the baby's face to the other, passing through the centre. Move the object up and down from chest height to forehead. Repeat the exercise in a field 30 cm in diameter.

Sáiz-Manzanares y Román (2011) p. 47-48.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.1. Lines of cognitive intervention in the pre-operative period

Table 3. Acquisitions and limitations of pre-operational thinking (reference Delval, 1996) and the cognitive strategies that can encourage development (reference Sáiz and Román, 1996) (adapted from Sáiz, 2003, p. 128-129).

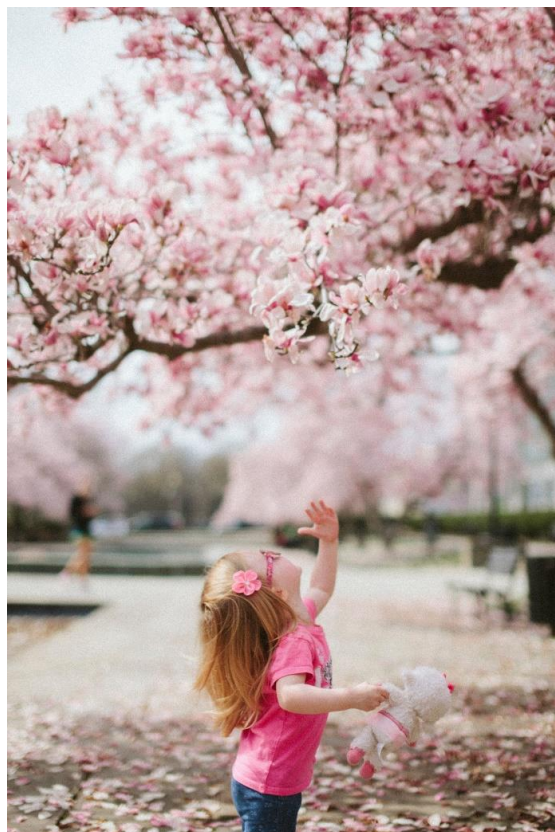
PREOPERATIVE ACQUISITIONS	COGNITIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to represent by means of differentiated signifiers. The child develops the ability to represent that began in the sensorimotor period. - Ability to communicate through language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * informative function: transmitting/receiving information through language. * self-regulation of one's own behaviour through language. * function of regulating the behaviour of others through language. - Ability to use language to explain the events of everyday life. - Understanding of entities and functions (acquisition of invariants and regularities of a qualitative nature). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identities. An object remains the same even if it undergoes some transformations (as long as the transformations are qualitative). * Functions: Functional dependence is developed (a change in one situation produces a change in the second and so on, deals with qualitative transformations). - Differentiation between appearance and reality. - Elaboration of the theory of mind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the development of representational skills (through the use of language, drawing, deferred imitation, improvement of symbolic play, in general of all representational skills. The adult will act by modelling (acting as a model) and shaping (guiding the child's actions verbally and/or manually). The adult will also reinforce the child's attempts (however small they may be). - To promote the child's use of language both to ask for and to transmit information. - The adult will model their own actions by regulating their own behaviour through their own language (Meichenbaum and Goodman's (1969) strategies of self-instructional training). - The adult will first shape the child's actions through their own language and then seek to make the child regulate their own actions with their own language (see Cognitive Training Programme, Sáiz and Román, 1996). - Work from the tangible, providing the child with multiple experiences that help them better understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The variations that occur in objects and fundamentally the process of transformation both in the formation of identities and in the development of functional dependence. - Work on the development of resolution processes. - Facilitating the development of theory of mind, enabling fictional and dramatized situations that help the child to break out of centring processes, to put them self in the place of the other and to take different perspectives or points of view into consideration.
BEGINNING OF ACQUISITIONS AND LEARNING THAT MUST BE PERFECTED IN THE PRE-OPERATIVE PERIOD.	COGNITIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begins to develop problem-solving strategies, but has difficulty in considering several aspects of the same situation simultaneously. - Still has difficulties in understanding that an object can belong simultaneously to two classes. - Has difficulty understanding processes and tends to see elements in isolation. - Has difficulty in developing generalisation processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To facilitate the development of problem-solving processes* by enabling the child to tangibly deal with several aspects of the same situation simultaneously. - Using problem-solving strategies* the adult will play games in which the child can see that an object can belong to two or more categories at the same time (categorisation processes). - Place special emphasis on the child observing and understanding the process and not just the outcome of a problem or situation. - Facilitate the development of generalisation processes* of learning. * See Cognitive training programme for young children (Sáiz and Román, 1996).

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.1. Lines of cognitive intervention in the pre-operative period



- Development of **mentalist verbs**. These are considered metarepresentational expressions.
- The development of metarepresentation is important for the acquisition of **Theory of Mind**, although it involves a high degree of recursion.
- Theory of Mind relates to the development of mental states, language development, especially in its **pragmatic components, cognitive and metacognitive processes** (Rivière and Nuñez, 1996).

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.3. Lines of intervention in entities and functions of transformations in the pre-operative period

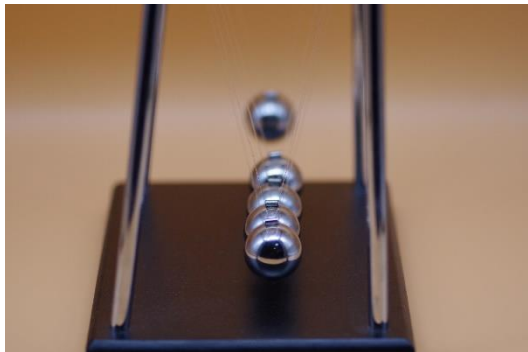
In recent decades, research on Piagetian theory has led to changes in the understanding of developmental acquisitions related to the world of interactions with objects and the **reasoning** developed in their comprehension. The most significant contributions to knowledge of the world of transformations and to the understanding of physical phenomena are presented below.

a. Causal reasoning and the world of transformations

Children around the age of three begin to analyse different physical causes and their effects on objects (cutting, melting, breaking, etc.). Causal representational reasoning begins around the age of three and is acquired, depending on the type of problem, around the age of four, although understanding of it in real and non-representational situations begins as early as the age of two. However, it will not be fully acquired until the subject has a causal understanding of the physical world.

b. Reasoning and causal principles

1. Principle of priority (causes precede effects).
2. Principle of covariation (causes and their effects must covary systematically).
3. Principle of temporal contiguity (causes and their effects must be contiguous in space and time).
4. Principle of similarity of causes and effects.



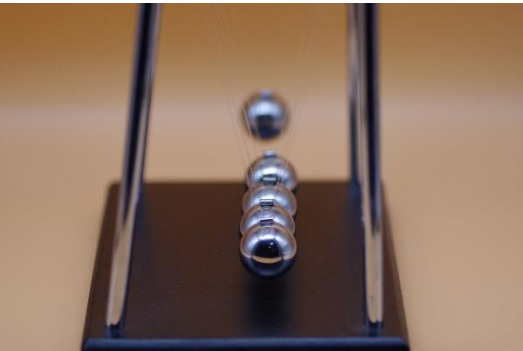
Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.3. Lines of intervention in entities and functions of transformations in the pre-operative period

In summary, it seems that **the beginnings of causal thinking about physical objects are present in children from the age of two**, and this coincides with the onset of the **child's representational capacity**. However, the development of rational causal thinking is directly related **to the ability to develop meta-representation**, i.e. to mentally imagine trajectories of objects and representations of them from a mental continuum, even if it is not temporal in a visible sequence. Of particular importance in this process is the way in which transformation tasks are presented. **If the tasks are presented in a real and experimental way, the children will be able to tangibly verify the possible transformations of an object**. This will later enable the ability to meta-represent them and the mental generation of a transformation sequence, even if it is not spatially contingent in the here and now. **Causal reasoning is fundamental to cognitive development, it is particularly important in learning about empirical relations in the world, and in learning what the world is like.**



Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.4. Examples of 3-6 year programmes



The development of problem-solving processes can be supported through the application of the following tools:

- 1.- Stimulation and guidance through language.
- 2.- Help in the choice of material.
- 3.- Help in the preparation of the assembly.
- 4.- Modelling and moulding of the action.

It should also be borne in mind that not all problems can be taught in the same way; those that are more familiar are easier and those that involve different levels of abstraction are more complex.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.4. Examples of 3-6 year programmes



Possible contents of the Programmes for 3-6 years

Cognitive and metacognitive skills

1. Work on the basic prerequisites for learning (spontaneous eye contact and on command, verbal and manipulative imitation, attention, following instructions).
2. Thinking strategies (what I have to do, how I am going to do it, how I am doing it, how I have done it).
3. Planning thinking.
4. Consequence thinking.
5. Means-ends thinking.
6. Alternative thinking.
7. Self-evaluative thinking.

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

2. Concepts of developmental development 3-6: implications for programme development

2.1. Programme development structure for 3-6 year olds

2.1.4. Examples of 3-6 year programmes

Possible contents of the Programmes for 3-6 years

Mental skills

1. Work on interpersonal problem solving.
2. Thinking strategies (what I have to do, how I am going to do it, how I am doing it, how I have done it).
3. Ability to identify the effects of actions.
4. Ability to identify the mental states of others.
5. Ability to evaluate.
6. Work on mental verbs (forgetting, knowing, teaching, wondering, solving, supposing, understanding, explaining, learning, remembering, believing).
7. Work on first order theory of mind tasks.
8. Work on second order theory of mind tasks.



Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

3. Steps to initiate the development of an early intervention programme



1. Study the clinical history of the user.
2. Assess their current age of development in the different areas (psychomotor, cognitive, communication and language, socialisation and personal autonomy).
3. Establish the difference between the developmental age and the chronological age of the user.
4. Establish the priority of the most affected area or areas of development.
5. Depending on the professional profile of the therapist, choose the corresponding area and start the production of the intervention programme, always from collaborative and interdisciplinary work.
6. The programme should include: objectives, evaluation indicators, activities, materials, spaces, start date, follow-up date and results. It is recommended that a registration template be drawn up, a model is attached.

Objectives	Evaluation indicators	Activities	Materials	Spaces	Start date	Follow-up date	Results

Early intervention programmes (0-6 years)

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