

Abstract

This research exercise aimed to replicate use of the instrument (“Vygotsky’s Blocks”) of Vygotsky and Sakharov (1928-1934) in combination with the 22 wooden blocks and the later adaptations and scoring framework of Hanfmann and Kasanin (1937; 1942). This procedure – the functional method of double stimulation – examined new concept formation from early childhood to adulthood (N=60 subjects, aged three- to 76-years-old) to establish whether contemporary adults and children produced the same or similar patterns as those described by Vygotsky (1986). The study found a developmental trend consistent with Vygotsky’s (1986) writings on the ontogenesis of concept formation. The path from the syncretic, to the concrete and factual, to the intermediate phase before true conceptual thought becomes possible was reflected in a positive correlation between the age of the subjects and their modes of thinking. This verified Vygotsky’s assertion that true conceptual thinking only becomes possible in adolescence. This study aimed to encourage further research with this procedure to confirm the trends found by this study and to validate the adapted scoring method of Hanfmann and Kasanin (1942) for the purposes of cross-sectional use.

Key Words: Vygotsky, Sakharov, Hanfmann and Kasanin, Kozulin; Vygotsky’s Blocks; concept formation; method of double stimulation; cross-sectional