

ASSIMILATION AND ACCOMMODATION
and
THEORY THEORY



Jean Piaget



Allison Gopnik

Developmental Psychologists
Cognitive Orientation

ADAPTATION
Assimilation
Accommodation

Experimental situations
Conservation

**“...assimilation is that aspect of adaptation which conserves form or organization. Accommodation is that aspect which modifies form as a function of the external situation.”
(Piaget, 1981)**

Piaget also noted “the filtering or modification of the input is called assimilation; the modification of internal schemes to fit reality is called accommodation” (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 6).

Confusion: Awareness of disequilibrium between some aspect of the internalized representation of the world and evidence that contradicts that representation.

Stages versus Domain Specific

THEORY THEORY

Alison Gopnik and Andrew Meltzoff

Children function like scientists: they construct theories to interpret, explain, predict and thereby master their worlds.

Nativism

New contradictory evidence is discounted

Auxiliary Theories are proposed

The Original Theory is abandoned and a New Theory Created

Paradigm shift (Thomas Kuhn, 1977)

“. . . once, as children, we have engaged in the theorizing necessary to specify the features of our world [and of ourselves], most of us most of the time may simply go on to the central evolutionary business of feeding and reproducing” (Gopnik and Meltzoff (1996, p. 20)