Developmental neuropsychology

J.M. Glozman
Moscow State University, Russia

The presentation is aimed to systemize and generalize Russian and Western studies in developmental neuropsychology with emphasis put on social aspects of child development. This approach stresses an influence of social and cultural factors on child cognitive development, the social nature of mental functions formation and the role of mediation - a use of social means in the genesis of higher mental functions and their rehabilitation in pathological states. Theoretical and methodological foundations of developmental neuropsychology will be analyzed. The dynamic ontogenic localization of higher mental functions at variable levels and types of brain structures and of their functional integration while acknowledging the same cognitive activity by children of different ages are discussed. Different types and mechanisms of abnormal (or not typical) development will be described, including dysgraphia, dyslexia, ADHD, memory, reasoning and motor disturbances and others. Qualitative and quantitative approaches to neuropsychological assessment of children are compared. Neuropsychological remediation of mental and social functioning of children is contrasted to pharmacological approach to help underdeveloped children. Some trends in the progress of developmental neuropsychology will be discussed. The progress of developmental neuropsychology follows the general tendency all over the world to replace the “static neuropsychology”, relating subject’s - both adult or child- behaviour to definite brain areas with “dynamic neuropsychology”, analyzing the dynamics of brain / mental functioning interaction through the social conditions of subject's life that is viewing childhood disorders within a developmental context.

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glozman@mail.ru