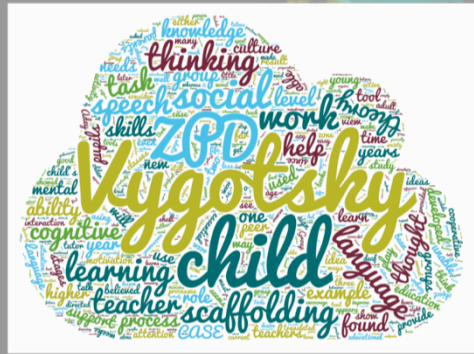


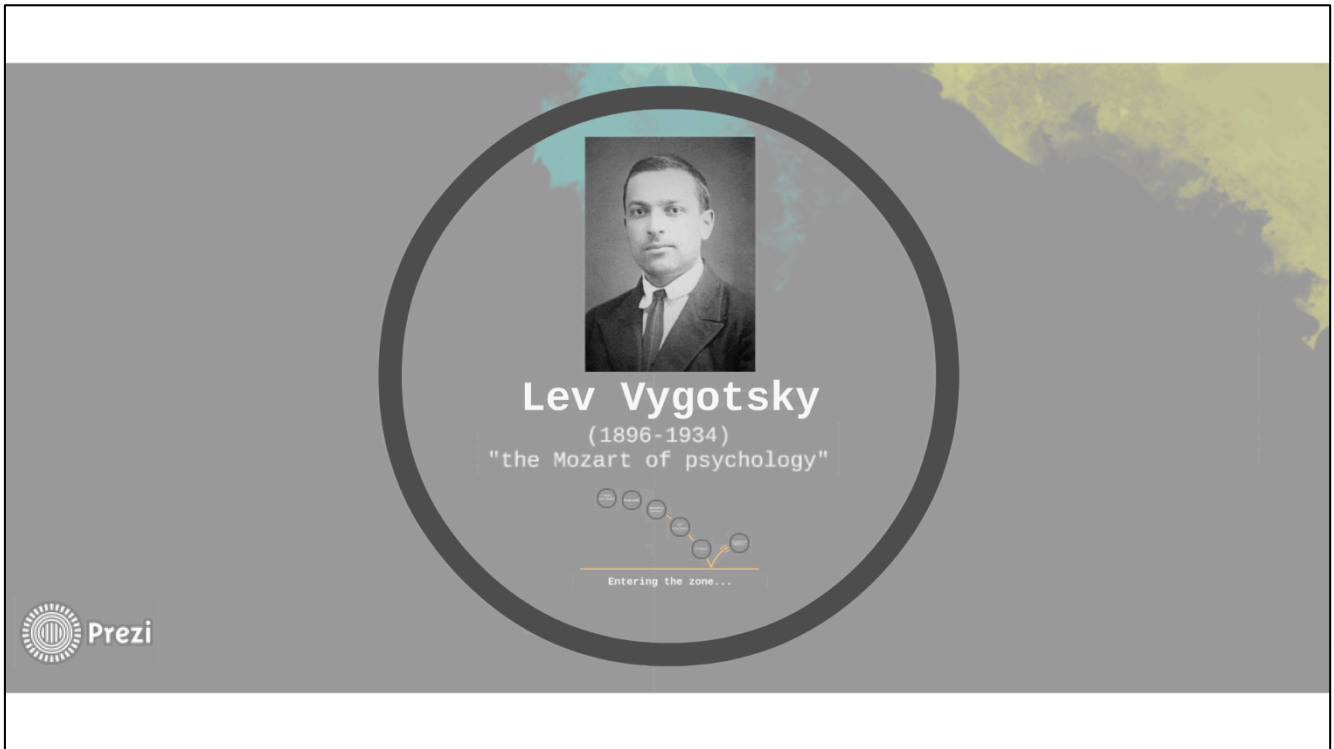
Claire Chalk
(31087756)

EDN679 Great Thinkers in Education



Prezi





A Prezi presentation slide featuring a central circular frame. Inside the circle is a black and white portrait of Lev Vygotsky. Below the portrait, the text reads: "Lev Vygotsky", "(1896-1934)", and "the Mozart of psychology". Underneath this text is a small diagram of five circles connected by arrows, with the text "Entering the zone..." below it. The background of the slide is a dark grey gradient with a faint world map. The Prezi logo is in the bottom left corner.

Today I will be review the one and only Lev Vygosky. While considering how best to discuss the work of this influential Russian psychologist, I decided to give credit to the fact that most educators should be aware of this name and the basics of his work.



Our plan for today is to review what you already know, then learn about his biography and the societal context within which he lived and worked. The reason for this being, his societal context impacted upon his work and accomplishments.

The slide features a vibrant, abstract background of colorful brushstrokes in shades of green, yellow, orange, and blue. A central mind map is composed of several circular nodes connected by orange arrows. The nodes include:

- A top-left node with a circular icon and some illegible text.
- A top-right node titled "Work" containing a list of bullet points and a small icon of a document.
- A central node featuring a portrait of a woman and several small icons.
- A bottom-left node with a circular icon.
- A bottom-right node with a circular icon.

In the bottom-left corner, there is a Prezi logo and a text box containing the following information:

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Below this text is a circular graphic with the text "Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development" and "Teacher scaffolding" written in various colors and fonts.

At the bottom right, there is a small, faint rectangular box containing illegible text.



As educators we already know a bit about Lev. He was a Russian psychologist who is most well known for the zone of proximal development and the influence of the more knowledgeable other. Today we will delve deeper into his societal context because, as you will learn, this greatly influenced his work and the way in which his ideologies are being critiqued today.

Biography

1896, 1 of 8 children, Jewish family, educated parents

Primary & secondary school, then graduated from Moscow State University in 1917 - Law

Self-directed philosophical studies

1917 returned to Gomel and pursued a teaching career

1924 formally entered into field of psychology, and followed passion of researching how children living with additional needs learn

Revised this research and theories in the 1930s after receiving criticism

Died unexpectedly from TB in 1934, age 37 years

1938 Vygotsky's work was repudiated under Stalin's rule of the Soviet Union. It wasn't until the early 1960s when his work was translated into English the value and his contributions were considered with weight

http://www.thefamousbiography.com/profiles/lev-vygotsky-198-190615463009460_01

<http://www.oxfordjournals.org/abstract/doi/10.1093/oxfordjournals.oxfam.a0000000>

Prezi

Lev was born in 1896 and was one of eight children. Both his parents were educated: his father a bank manager and his mother a teacher, although she never worked as a teacher instead choosing to raise the children. Lev went through primary and secondary school, and through a Jewish lottery system mandating a 3% population of Jewish students, was successful in enrolling in the Moscow State University.

Although originally enrolled in Medicine, he changed to Law, graduating in 1917 and returning to his home town.

Lev continued to undertake self-directed studies in philosophical sciences, and in 1924 formally entered into the field of psychology. It is here that he continued to follow his passion of researching how children living with additional needs learn.

Whilst caring for his younger brother, Lev contracted TB and died in 1934 at the age of 37.



Understanding the societal context within which Lev was born and raised, then ultimately worked within, supports our critical understanding of his work. Further, by understanding the restrictions of Lev's work it enables contemporary criticisms to be viewed from a differing perspective.

understand

Russian Empire

- A European superpower.
- Under rule of the Tsar.
- Autocratic government.
- Little industry.
- Majority of population were illiterate.
- peasant farmers, serfs.

A great site to check out photos of the Russian empire!
<http://www.rferl.org/media/photogallery/russian-empire-photos-recreated-100-years-later/2774384.html>



A society based upon Marxist socialism



Lev was born and raised within a society under rule of the Russian Empire. Despite being a European superpower it was actually quite backwards: little industry, majority of the population were illiterate, and either existed as a peasant farmer (who were living and working in much the same fashion as had been done in the middle ages) or a serf. The Tsar ruled the Russian Empire, and with a culmination of factors, such as the autocratic government and the pillars of autocracy, the Tsar had ultimate control

A great site to check out photos of the Russian empire!
<http://www.rferl.org/media/photogallery/russian-empire-photos-decreated-100-years-later/27743304.html>



A society based upon Marxist socialism



Then the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed, a society that was based upon Marxist socialism. How did this happen? Well...



It started back in the Russian Empire when Napoleon and Alexander I had a tiff (although it wasn't based upon the argument of "he said I'm silly" and "but he told me I'm silly first!"). This long standing grudge gained momentum over time, and when Russian military followed Napoleon to France, they began to notice life in Russia wasn't as sensational as what they were led to believe. For example in France they saw serfdom was not the norm. When the military arrived back to Russia they spread word - that is, the outside world is not as authoritarian as they were used to in Russia. Over time this gained momentum and with the contribution of other political, economical and social factors led to the 1825 Decemberist revolt. This is when Russian army officers led soldiers in a protest against Nicholas I's assumption of the throne.

Moving forward to 1861 and this is when serfdom was abolished - on rather unfavourable terms to the peasants. Tensions continued to rise.

(NB: Lev was born a few decades later in 1896 into this context). In 1917 the Russian Revolution arrived, and in 1922 the USSR was formed.

Societal context

Traveling back in time...
understand the past to interpret the present



Work

After presenting his 1924 paper (methodology of reflexological and psychological research), Vygotsky was offered a role at the Psychological Institute of Moscow.

Amongst other agendas, he pursued his passion of studying how children with additional needs learn, and later formed the Laboratory of Psychology for Abnormal Childhood.

Collaboratively worked with his students Alexander Luria and Alexei Leontiev to research learning, cognition and development.

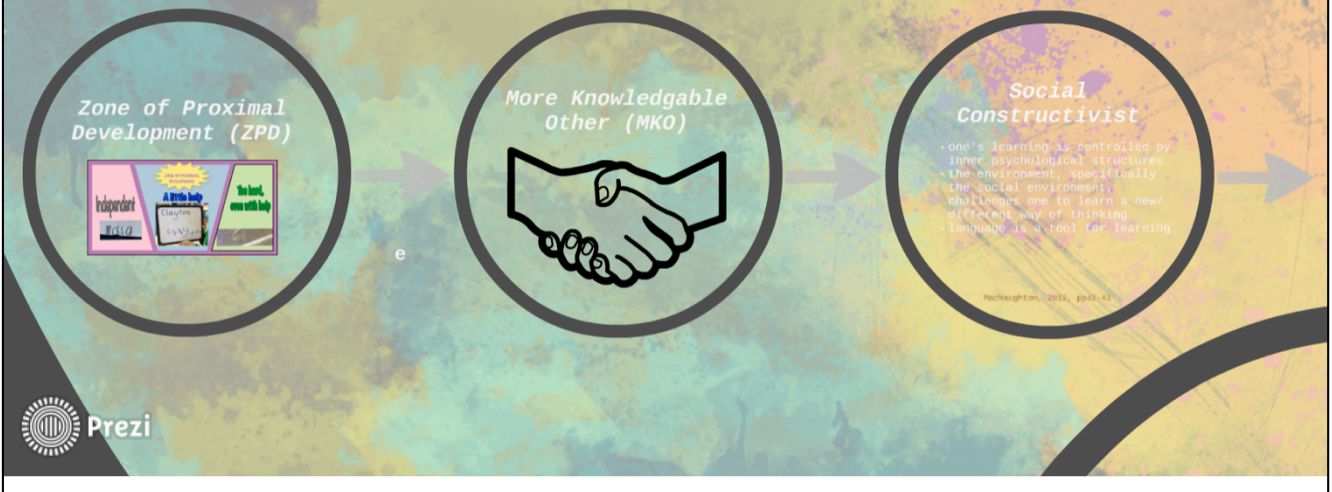
It was during the early 1930s Vygotsky consolidated his theories, and explained the zone of proximal development, more knowledgeable other, and how the external environment (especially the social environment) influence a child's learning. This is what he is known for, his legacy.

Prezi

What did this mean for his work? How did he actually work and research in this time?
What did he achieve?

After graduating in 1917 in Law, he returned to his hometown and worked as a teacher. He presented his paper on the methodology of reflexological and psychological research, and as a consequence of being well received, was offered a research fellowship at the Psychological Institute of Moscow. It was here he pursued his passion of studying how children with additional needs learn (although you can imagine the descriptors were not P.C. by today's terms!).

HOW THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT influence a child's learning. T



He worked with Alexander and Alexei and researched learning, cognition and development, and during the 1930s consolidated his research to explain the zone of proximal development, more knowledgeable other and the influence of the external environment on a child's learning



The ZPD is the level at which instruction should be provided. If you look at this example: Maia's name writing sample on the left was completed independently, he did not need any help from another person, or one of the scaffolds available (name cards, name puzzle, tracing etc.). Maia has mastered this skill. Clayton, in the middle, can write his name if a little help is provided. In this instance he copied below each letter in his name, in the correct order, and with correct pencil grip and letter formation. For Clayton, if I were to take away this support he usually writes the letters Clytn, and although the letters are recognisable they are not formed correctly nor does he include all letters in the correct order. The final sample, by Haileigh, demonstrates that even when she was provided with her name card to trace and adult support she is unable to write her name. Although I have used three different children to illustrate this element of Lev's work, it is clear the ZPD is the little bit of help provided to a student to help them progress toward independent mastery of the skill.



The More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) is that person who supports the student's learning in the ZPD. This person is not always a teacher, but can be a parent, friend or even a younger child!

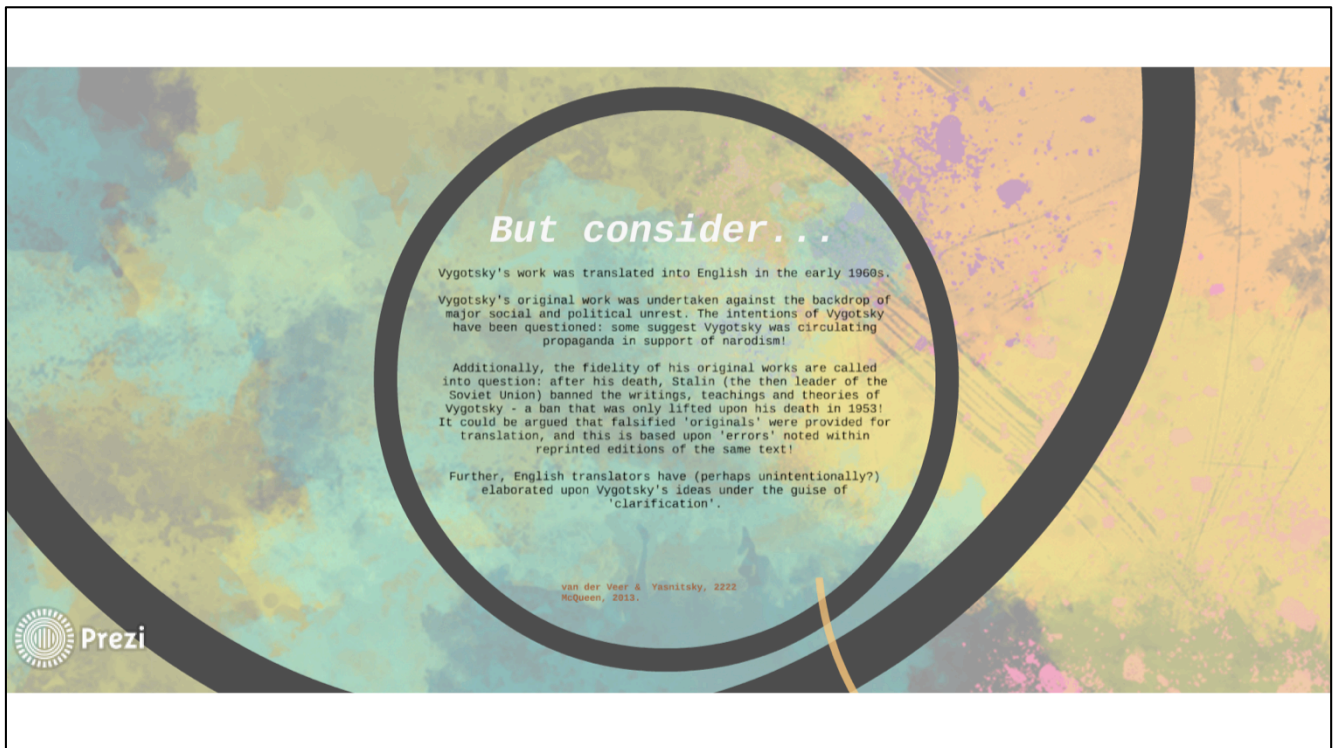


Lev is a social constructivist. He explained one's learning is controlled by inner psychological structures, and that the environment (specifically the social environment) is a great influence on challenging one to learning a new or different way of thinking. Further, Lev explained how language is a tool or learning.

*Oh, and keep this in mind further on when we discuss similarities between Lev and other constructivists



So in modern day society, what does this mean? Well in Education 101, students in teacher education programs open their textbooks and learn about social constructivists, and specifically Lev's, ZPD and MKO. These student teachers graduate and then work in classrooms, targeting learning within their students' ZPD to help them achieve that lightbulb moment and ascertain independent mastery of the skill.



However, for western society there are some big issues to consider: First, Vygotsky's original work was undertaken against the backdrop of major social and political unrest. The intentions of Vygotsky have been questioned: some suggest Vygotsky was circulating propaganda in support of narodism! Additionally, the fidelity of his original works are called into question: after his death, Stalin (the then leader of the Soviet Union) banned the writings, teachings and theories of Vygotsky - a ban that was only lifted upon his death in 1953! It could be argued that falsified 'originals' were provided for translation.

Vygotsky's work was translated into English in the early 1960s. Further, English translators have (perhaps unintentionally?) elaborated upon Vygotsky's ideas under the guise of 'clarification'.



To consider Vygotsky as a social constructivist, well it's true we often group together theorists who have similar views. We will now look at Piaget, a constructivist Vygotsky is grouped with.

Piaget

Similarities

- constructivists
- learning is meaningful only when we 'own' it
- there is an "innate, sequential hierarchy of internal cognitive structures" that drive learning
- children and adults think differently

Differences

- individualised learning experiences (JP) v group learning experiences (LV)
- cognitive development makes social developments possible (JP) v social interactions cause cognitive development (LV)



Piaget and Vygotsky are names often said together. The key differences are that Piaget believed in the value of individualised learning experiences, and that cognitive development makes social interactions possible. That is, a child had to have reached a 'stage' to interact on a social plain. Whereas Vygotsky believed that social interactions cause cognitive development.



I cannot take credit for the script here, but I do commend my friend's son on his acting talents!

Montessori


- MM: there are a sequence of pre-programmed stages of human development one naturally transitions through.
- LV: interactions between children and their social context is what drives ones advancement to next 'stage'

MM: play not necessary
LV: play is important for later learning

Bodrova, 2003

Prezi

Montessori was an influence to Vygotsky. Although similar they were quite different Initially Montessori believed development to be a sequence of pre-programmed stages one naturally transitions through, whereas Vygotsky believed the social interactions between child and their environment is what drives the transition from one stage to the next.



Contemporary Education

*Educators in contemporary society are
influenced by Vygotsky and his works.
He is a seminal thinker.*

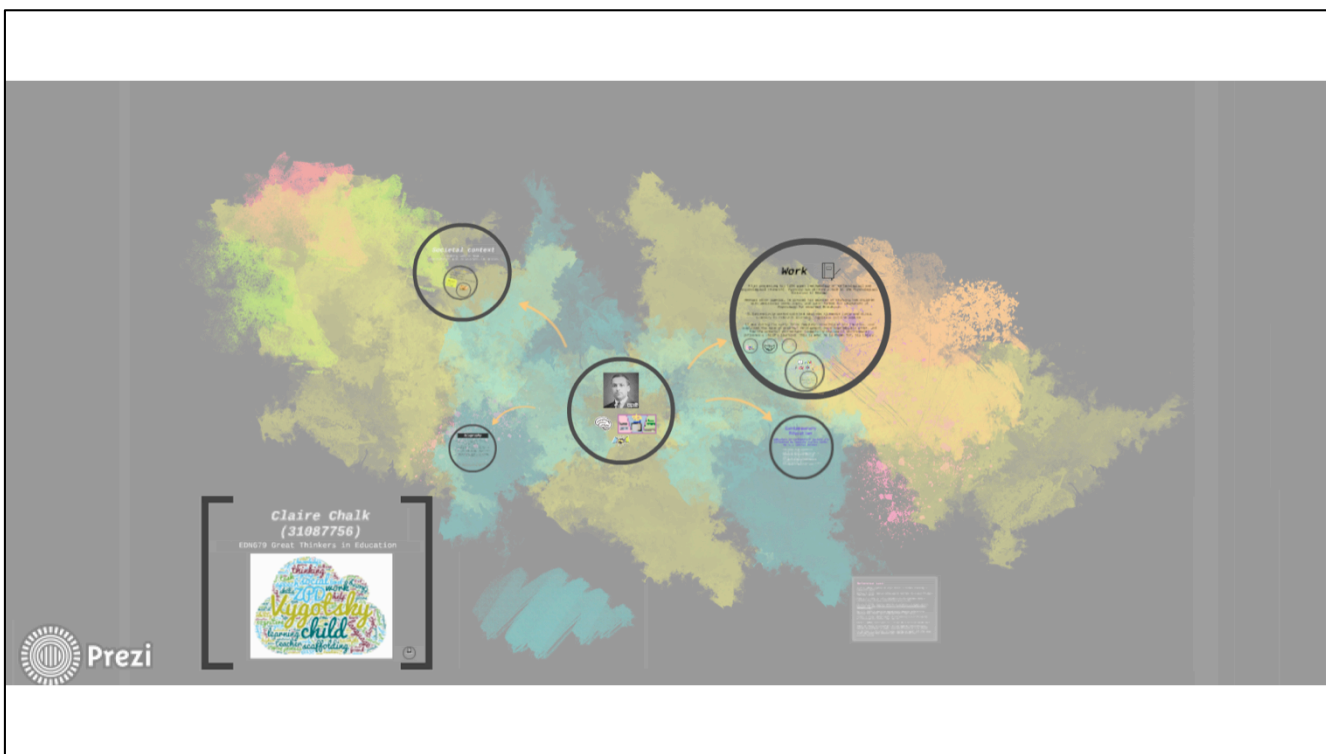
- What aspects of your practice are attributable to Vygotsky?
- What is the role of the educator? and what skills does the educator need to be successful in a Vygotskian setting?
- What is the role of the student?
- How should the learning environment be structured and set up?
- What equity/diversity concerns come to mind in a Vygotskian learning environment?



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EDM079 Great Thinkers in Education



Work

- The work of the child is the child's activity in the world.
- The work of the child is the child's activity in the world.
- The work of the child is the child's activity in the world.
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Context

- The context of the child's work is the child's environment.
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Theories

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Applications

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