



## Classic

Lev Vygotsky

## Contemporary

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2014



## In Brief

Lev Vygotsky's Theory of Sociocultural development is the foundation for much research about how learning takes place. Vygotsky posited that social and cultural factors have a profound effect on the ability to learn. What Vygotsky called ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) describes the gap between what it is possible to learn by one's self and what can be achieved with the influence of a MKO (More Knowledgeable Other). The MKO can provide scaffolding\* to allow the student to achieve tasks which they would find difficult or impossible to complete unaided. Vygotsky died in 1934 and much of his literature was banned until the 1950's when Stalin died. Indeed, his most influential work was published in 1978.

Tenenberg and Knobeldorf bring sociocultural theory up to date and look at supporting contemporary and historical evidence, but they also focus on Computer Science in their discussion by asking the question 'In what way might a clash between the different cultures of CS students and their teachers lead to learning difficulties in the CS classroom?'

\*NB Vygotsky never used the term 'scaffolding' - this was introduced by Wood, Bruner and Ross in 1976



## Important Literature Links

[Vygotsky, L.S. \(1962\) Thought and Language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.](#)

[Vygotsky, L.S. \(1978\) Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.](#)

[Tenenbergs, J. and Knobeldorf, M. \(2014\). Out of our minds: a review of sociocultural cognition theory. Computer Science Education, 24\(1\), pp.1-24. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/08993408.2013.869396.](#)