

# Young Children's Understanding of the Essence of Life Being: Underlying Structure, Innate Potential and the Constancy of Identity

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This study explored the naive biology among 3-to 6-year-olds and examined their understanding of the underlying structure, innate potential and the constant identity of life being. Through the investigation of current research design of the developmental psychology, researcher traced the reasoning mechanism of the different conceptions among seventy-two 3-to 6-year-old children more deeply. The results showed that young children's ability of causal thinking was beyond the estimation of previous researches and 3-to 4-year-olds had an emerging understanding of life being: (1) 3-year-olds were able to predict the underlying structure of life being and to understand the difference of internal structure among animals, plants and machines effectively. Until 5 years of age, this ability were getting mature. (2) 4-year-olds appeared to be aware of innate potential of life being and were able to predict the development of baby life being. It was not until age 6 that children demonstrated a better understanding of the developmental tendency of seeds. (3) 3-year-olds were beginning to realize the constant identity of life being regardless of the operation and deforming. Until around age 6, children's understanding was then mature. Conclusively, young children employed psychological essentialism in an abstract to concrete shift while doing causal reasoning of biological phenomena.

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