

## **No knowledge without Action? Lessons from Infant Research**

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For centuries infants have been treated as human beings that do not “think” or “know” anything until language comes into play. Starting with Piaget, this view has changed: More specifically, Piaget saw children of all ages as active “constructors” of their own knowledge – even at a preverbal stage. He introduced the term “sensorimotor intelligence” to highlight the relevance of motor actions during early stages of knowledge acquisition. In the meantime, an increasing number of studies indicate that motor action is not a necessary prerequisite for learning about the environment. Some researchers even believe that there might be something like “innate knowledge”. Others provide evidence indicating that infants learn a great deal via observation – hence remaining passive while watching the actions of others. In the present talk I will argue for a balanced view, differentiating between different kinds of “action” and different kinds of “knowledge” in early childhood development.