2.3 Human development

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS theory of mind • false belief • attachment • Strange Situation • secure attachment

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **human development** : **theory of mind** and how to measure it, and **attachment** , the Strange Situation and its use across cultures.

You must be able to:

- define theory of mind and describe the Sally–Anne study
- compare verbal, eye-gaze and looking-time measures of theory of mind
- describe the Strange Situation and the three attachment types
- explain cultural differences in attachment and the bias of the measure

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Theory of mind

Theory of mind: understanding that other people have beliefs, wishes and knowledge that can differ from your own. Most children show it by about age 4 or 5.

Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith (1985): the **Sally–Anne task**. Sally puts her marble in a basket and leaves; Anne moves it to a box; where will Sally look? 85 % of typical children (mean age about 4½) and 86 % of children with Down syndrome said "the basket"; only 20 % of autistic children did, although their mental age was higher.

exercises.lol exercises.com.cn

measure	strength	limit
verbal false-belief task (Sally–Anne)	simple, standard, easy to compare	needs language and memory; may underestimate young children
eye-gaze: where the child looks first (Clements and Perner, 1994)	children look at the right place before they can say it	looking is harder to interpret than an answer
looking time with infants (Onishi and Baillargeon, 2005)	15-month-olds looked longer when an actor searched in the "wrong" place	surprise must be inferred; other explanations possible

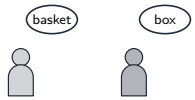
The age found depends on the measure: about 4 with the verbal task, earlier with non-verbal measures.

Attachment

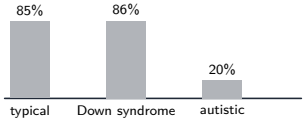
Attachment: the emotional bond between a child and a carer. Ainsworth's **Strange Situation** observes a one-year-old as the mother leaves and returns, and classifies the child as **secure**, **avoidant** or **resistant**. In her American sample about two thirds were secure. Van IJzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988), studies from eight countries: more avoidant children in Germany, more resistant children in Japan. A Japanese baby rarely left alone may be very upset for cultural reasons, so the measure may carry an American bias.

2 Practice

2.1 Define **theory of mind**. [2]



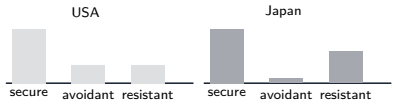
2.2 State the results of the Sally–Anne study (Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith, 1985) and the researchers' conclusion. [3]



2.3 *(Paper 1 Section A.)* Describe the Strange Situation as a way to measure attachment. [4]



2.4 *(Paper 1 Section B, human development.)* A nursery in Tokyo uses the Strange Situation to decide which children need extra support, and finds many "resistant" children. Explain why this result may be misleading. [6]



3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Paper 1 Section C.)* "How should we measure theory of mind?" Discuss with reference to the concept of **measurement**. [15]

verbal task | eye-gaze | looking time

exercises.lol exercises.com.cn

Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

understanding that other people have beliefs, wishes and knowledge; which can be different from your own / from reality

2.2

85 % of typical children and 86 % of children with Down syndrome passed; only 20 % of autistic children passed, although their mental age was higher; conclusion: autism involves a specific difficulty with theory of mind

2.3

Ainsworth's controlled observation of a one-year-old in a playroom; the mother leaves and returns, and a stranger comes in, in a fixed series of short episodes; observers record the child's distress when the mother leaves and behaviour when she returns; the child is classed as secure, avoidant or resistant; about two thirds of Ainsworth's American sample were secure

2.4

award up to [6]: the Strange Situation was developed with American children and carries American norms; van IJzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) found more resistant children in Japan; Japanese babies are rarely left alone, so separation may be unusually stressful; so high distress may reflect culture, not insecure attachment; measurement: the classification may lack validity in this culture; the nursery should use measures checked in Japan / observe children at home too before deciding

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] focused on the claim, accurate knowledge, evidence used to build an argument, the concept used to evaluate throughout, a supported conclusion; [10-12] mostly focused, evidence used, some evaluation through the concept; [7-9] relevant knowledge but mostly description; [4-6] limited knowledge, little evaluation; [1-3] little that is relevant. Points that may be included: the verbal false-belief task: Sally–Anne gives a clear pass or fail and is easy to compare across groups; Baron-Cohen et al. (1985) used it to show a specific difficulty in autistic children; but it needs language and memory, so it may underestimate young children; eye-gaze: Clements and Perner (1994) found children looked at the right place before they could say it; looking time: Onishi and Baillargeon (2005) found 15-month-olds looked longer at the "wrong" search; non-verbal measures need inference: longer looking may mean surprise or just novelty; different measures give different ages, so the answer depends on the measure; conclusion: use more than one measure (triangulation) and match it to the child's age and language

exercises.lol exercises.com.cn