

# Definition Slides

# Learning

= a relatively permanent change in an organism's behavior due to experience.



# Habituation

= an organism's decreasing response to a stimulus with repeated exposure to it.



# Associative Learning

= learning that certain events occur together. The events may be two stimuli (as in classical conditioning) or a response and its consequence (as in operant conditioning).



# Classical Conditioning

= a type of learning in which one learns to link two or more stimuli and anticipate events.



# Behaviorism

= the view that psychology (1) should be an objective science that (2) studies behavior without reference to mental processes. Most research psychologists today agree with (1) but not with (2).



# Unconditioned Response (UR)

= in classical conditioning, the unlearned, naturally occurring response to the unconditioned stimulus (US), such as salivation when food is in the mouth.



# Unconditioned Stimulus (US)

= in classical conditioning, a stimulus that unconditionally - naturally and automatically - triggers a response.



# Conditioned Response (CR)

= in classical conditioning, the learned response to a previously neutral (but now conditioned) stimulus (CS).



# Conditioned Stimulus (CS)

= in classical conditioning, an originally irrelevant stimulus that, after association with an unconditioned stimulus (CS), comes to trigger a conditioned response.



# Acquisition

= in classical conditioning, the initial stage, when one links a neutral stimulus and an unconditioned stimulus so that the neutral stimulus begins triggering the conditioned response. In operant conditioning, the strengthening of a reinforced response.



# Higher-order Conditioning

= a procedure in which the conditioned stimulus in one conditioning experience is paired with a new neutral stimulus, creating a second (often weaker) conditioned stimulus. For example, an animal that has learned that a tone predicts food might then learn that a light predicts the tone and begin responding to the light alone. (Also called second-order conditioning.)



# Extinction

= the diminishing of a conditioned response; occurs in classical conditioning when an unconditioned stimulus (US) does not follow a conditioned stimulus (CS); occurs in operant conditioning when a response is no longer reinforced.



# Spontaneous Recovery

= the reappearance, after a pause, of an extinguished conditioned response.



# Generalization

= the tendency, once a response has been conditioned, for stimuli similar to the conditioned stimulus to elicit similar responses.



# Discrimination

= in classical conditioning, the learned ability to distinguish between a conditioned stimulus and stimuli that do not signal an unconditioned stimulus.



# Learned Helplessness

= the helplessness and passive resignation an animal or human learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events.



# Respondent Behavior

= behavior that occurs as an automatic response to some stimulus.



# Operant Conditioning

= a type of learning in which behavior is strengthened if followed by a reinforcer or diminished if followed by a punisher.



# Law of Effect

= Thorndike's principle that behaviors followed by favorable consequences become more likely, and that behaviors followed by unfavorable consequences become less likely.



# Operant Chamber

= in operant conditioning research, a chamber (also known as a Skinner Box) containing a bar or key that an animal can manipulate to obtain a food or water reinforcer; attached devices record the animal's rate of bar pressing or key pecking.



# Shaping

= an operant conditioning procedure in which reinforcers guide behavior toward closer and closer approximations of the desired behavior.



# Discriminative Stimulus

= in operant conditioning, a stimulus that elicits a response after association with reinforcement (in contrast to related stimuli not associated with reinforcement).



# Reinforcer

= in operant conditioning, any event that strengthens the behavior it follows.



# Positive Reinforcement

= increasing behaviors by presenting positive stimuli, such as food. A positive reinforcer is any stimulus that, when presented after a response, strengthens the response.



# Negative Reinforcement

= increases behaviors by stopping or reducing negative stimuli, such as shock. A negative reinforcer is any stimulus that, when removed after a response, strengthens the response (Note: negative reinforcement is NOT punishment).



# Primary Reinforcer

= an innately reinforcer stimulus, such as one that satisfies a biological need.



# Conditioned Reinforcer

= a stimulus that gains its reinforcing power through its association with a primary reinforcer; also known as a secondary reinforcer.



# Continuous Reinforcement

= reinforcing the desired response every time it occurs.



# Partial (intermittent) Reinforcement

= reinforcing a response only part of the time; results in slower acquisition of a response but much greater resistance to extinction than does continuous reinforcement.



# Fixed-ratio Schedule

= in operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response only after a specific number of responses.



# Variable-ratio Schedule

= in operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response after an unpredictable number of responses.



# Fixed-interval Schedule

= in operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response only after a specific time has elapsed.



# Variable-interval Schedule

= in operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response at unpredictable time intervals.



# Punishment

= an event that decreases the behavior that it follows.



# Cognitive Map

= a mental representation of the layout of one's environment. For example, after exploring a maze, rats act as if they have learned a cognitive map of it.



# Latent Learning

= learning that occurs but is not apparent until there is an incentive to demonstrate it.



# Insight

= a sudden and often novel realization of the solution to a problem.



# Intrinsic Motivation

= a desire to perform a behavior effectively for its own sake.



# Extrinsic Motivation

= a desire to perform a behavior to receive promised rewards or avoid threatened punishment.



# Observational Learning

= learning by observing others. Also called social learning.



# Modeling

= the process of observing and imitating a specific behavior.



# Mirror Neurons

= frontal lobe neurons that fire when performing certain actions or when observing another doing so. The brain's mirroring of another's action may enable imitation and empathy.



# Prosocial Behavior

= positive, constructive, helpful behavior. The opposite of antisocial behavior.

