



Verbal Operants Overview

VERBAL BEHAVIOR

Basic Definition	Description	Who	Application/Example(s)
unique type of behavior because the reinforcement is mediated (gained) through another person specifically trained to do so (trained to reinforce that person's behavior)	characterizes functional approach to language rather than a structural approach to language; involves a 4-term contingency: 1. discriminative stimulus 2. establishing operation 3. response 4. consequence	B.F. Skinner , analyzed human behavior, published book <i>Verbal Behavior</i> in 1957	person A emits verbal response "open the door"----in the presence of a person B who knows how to open a door----- person B opens the door-----person A is reinforced by an opened door

VERBAL OPERANTS

Operant	AKA	Basic Definition	Application/Example(s)
Mand	Request	Vocally emitted or signed response that is evoked by motivation for a desired item, activity, or information	1. Patient says "cookie," mom gives him a cookie, patient eats cookie. "cookie" = the mand
			2. Patient says "I want to swing!" therapist provides access to swing and pushes patient. "I want to swing!" = mand
Tact	Label	vocally emitted or signed response that is evoked by a nonverbal stimulus that you can see, hear, smell, taste, or feel	1. Therapist asks "What is that?" (pointing to a ball) Patient says "ball." "ball" = the tact
			2. Mom says "What do you call this thing?" (pointing to a cookie) Patient says "cookie." "cookie" = tact in this example
Echoic	Echo/Repeat	verbal response that matches a verbal stimulus within 5 seconds	1. Therapist says "bu-bo" & patient says "bu-bo" 2 seconds after therapist.
			2. Dad says "Tie your shoes" & patient says "shoes" 1 second after dad.
Intraverbal	Conversation	vocally emitted or signed response that is evoked by a verbal stimulus, in which items are not present (there is no point-to-point correspondence with that verbal stimulus)	1. Mom asks patient "What did you eat at school today?" patient says "ham & cheese sandwich and an apple"
			2. Therapist sings "Twinkle, twinkle little star...how I wonder...[pauses]" patient says "what you are!"
Listener Responding	Receptive Language	following a given instruction, identifying an item, activity, event, or scene based off of details	1. Caregiver says "Go grab your coat and backpack" patient stands from couch, walks into utility room and grabs his coat and backpack
			2. Therapist puts 6 different items in front of patient and says "touch the one that is blue, bumpy, and round" patient touches the blue, bumpy ball
Imitation	Modeling	modeling own similar response within 2 seconds of a physical movement emitted by another person	1. Therapist asks patient "Can you do this like me? [claps]" patient immediately claps hands like therapist
			2. Caregiver instructs patient "Do this [folds wash rag]" patient folds another wash rag immediately after caregiver