



PSYC1001

PSYCHOLOGY 1A: EXAM READY NOTES

Clinical Perspectives, Psychological
Perspectives, Social Psychology,
Cross-Cultural Psychology



Clinical Perspectives

Scientific Method

Thanks to studies, debriefing has been debunked. Policy makers are now turning to alternatives and testing them.

Post-Katrina Response

Policy makers realised that evidence needed to shape practice. New guidelines were written for all counsellors in the US. Being subjected to randomized controlled trials.

Black Saturday Fires

Governments wanting to learn how best to help survivors in short & long term.

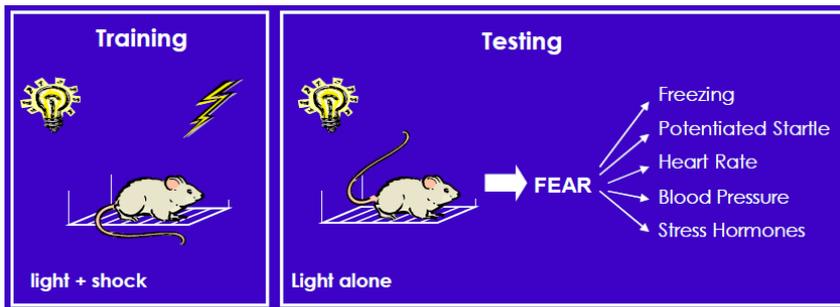
Based decisions on evidence resulting from psychological trials.

Randomized Controlled Trials

- Random allocation to groups
- Independent assessments
- Standardised assessments
- Strict protocols for interventions
- Checks that interventions are valid

Classical Conditioning

Classical Conditioning: Learning that certain environmental stimuli predict harmful events



Fear Conditioning Models

- Trauma= Electric Shock
- Fear=Rat's fear
- Reminders= Light
- Distress= Rat's fear to light

Animal Models

These models (called "*Fear Conditioning*") are shaping how we understand and treat traumatic stress disorders.

Extinction Learning

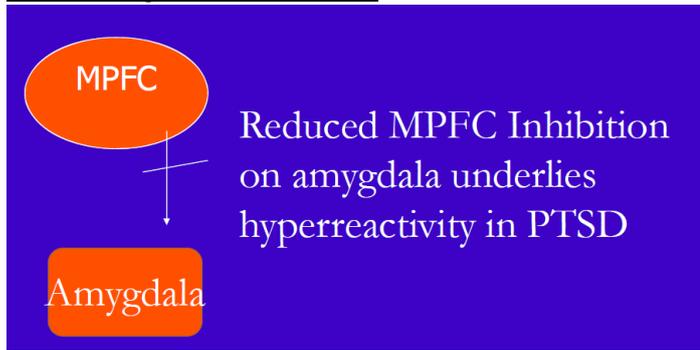
Extinction learning: New learning habits that inhibits initial fear conditioning.

Rats learn that the light is safe after repeatedly experiencing it without shock.

For most of us, we undergo extinction learning in the weeks/months after a trauma. We learn that the threat is over and we have new experiences that inhibit the initial fear responses.

Trajectory of PTSD

Neurobiological model of PTSD



MPFC= Medial Prefrontal Cortex; has reward related mechanisms

Amygdala= processes emotion, fear responses etc.

Brain Regions Predict Treatment Response

The same brain regions underpinning extinction in rats predict exposure therapy for fear in humans.

Extending from basic animal research is helping us understand how to treat people affected by trauma.

Neurotransmitters and Learning

Glutamate: The major excitatory neurotransmitter.

Animal studies show that glutamate is a neurotransmitter linked to emotional learning.

By increasing glutamate experimentally before extinction trials, we can increase extinction learning in rats.

Glutamate and Therapy

We can improve therapy for anxiety by increasing glutamate prior to therapy session.

This advance is a direct result of psychological models tested by animal research.

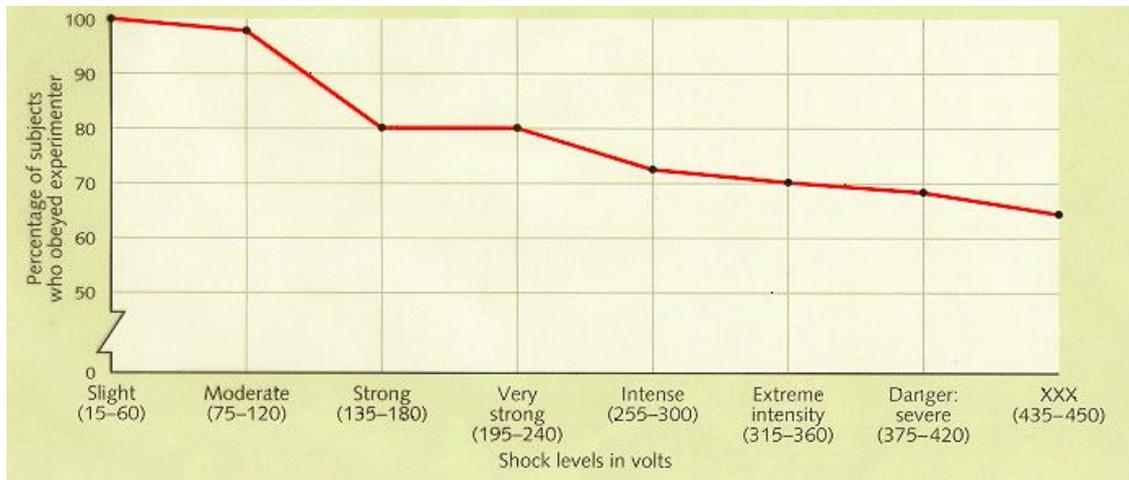
Psychological Perspectives

Change Blindness

Only 'remember' what we are paying attention to. Discount other information.

Milgram's Study of Obedience to Authority

- Volunteer asked to play role of 'teacher' in learning experiment (paired associate learning, eg. "bank"-"hat")
- Asked to administer electric shocks when learned responds incorrectly
- Aware of harm due to fake scale



Factors Affecting Obedience to Authority

1. Perceived authority of the person giving orders
2. Presence of a contradicting authority (the student says stop but the authority says to keep going)
3. Proximity of Victim (distance doesn't have to be a barrier)
4. Level of direct responsibility for the outcome

Blind obedience more likely to occur when people shift the responsibility for their actions onto someone or something else.

Psychology: Origins

- Parted from philosophy
- Psychology defined itself as an empirical science (about experimenting)

First Scientific Psychologists: Introspection

Wilhelm Wundt (Leipzig) trained people to report everything they saw; break everything down into component parts not the object; red, round etc.

Introspection failed because people's self-reports were unreliable (Don't know the process that was occurring in the brain).

Functionalism

William James emphasised the analysis of psychological processes in terms of their function.

Functionalism focuses on identifying the rules or steps by which a particular task is achieved, not the underlying mechanism.

Consistent with evolutionary framework

Behaviourism

Subjective experience could not be verified by an objective observer

Highly successful approach

Two variants: Radical Behaviourism

- Only the study of observable behaviour qualified as scientific
- “Internal states” (thoughts, emotions) unobservable and therefore not part of scientific psychology
- Radical- set of rules
- B. F. Skinner, John Watson

Methodological Behaviourism

- Acceptable to study “Internal states” (thoughts, emotions) AS LONG as these can be linked to observable behaviours
- Still the approach that underlies much of modern Cognitive Psychology and Associative Learning.
- Edward Tolman

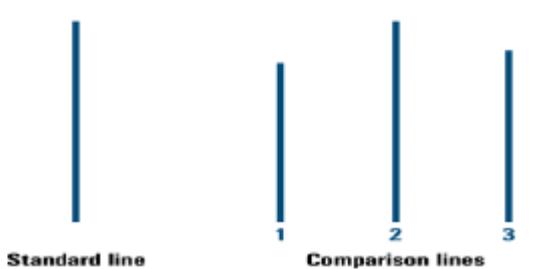
Social Psychology

Autokinetic effect (Sherif, 1935): When people converge to agree to a norm as they have been exposed to what other people are thinking.

We want to be like others even though there may be no explicit reason. Agreeing for the sake of agreeing.

Norm Maintenance (Jacobs & Campbell, 1961): People will maintain the norm. We don't change the norm even though we don't know where it has come from.

✂ **The Asch paradigm:** when the norms are clear. Judge length of lines. Alone: everyone correct.



Standard line 1 2 3
Comparison lines

conformity.
person who goes against the group.
correct answer.

- ✂ Over 35% conform but know they're wrong.
- ✂ Only 25% independent; felt crazy, stressed
- ✂ Influence of group size: 3+ people produces
- ✂ Influence of supporting confederate- another person who goes against the group.
- ✂ Influence of stimulus ambiguity- not clear

More ambiguous more conformity.

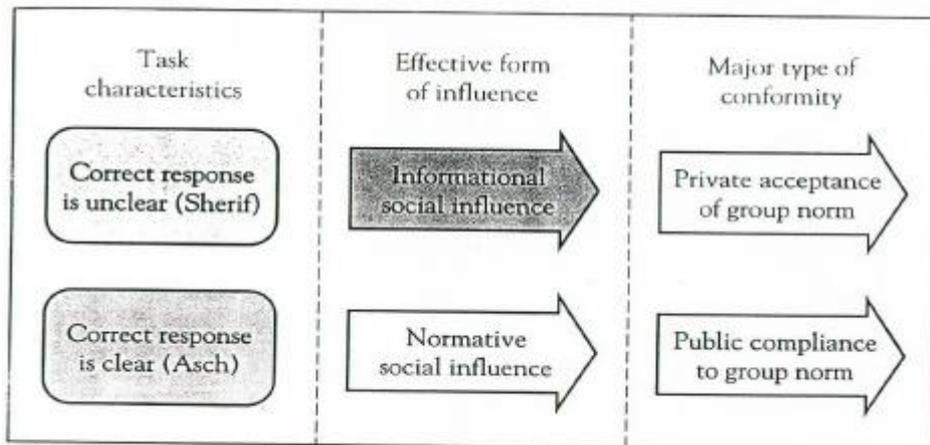
Breaking Conformity

We typically conform to others, even if they are obviously wrong. But, the power of conformity is challenged by the presence of a non-conformist (someone who rebels against the social norm).

Normative vs. Informational Conformity

Normative Conformity: Conform because don't want to upset the group

Informational Conformity: accept the information as valid



Unclear: Eg. Moving dots
Clear: Eg. Lines length

Situations that strengthen conformity

- When feeling incompetent or insecure- low self esteem
- Group has 3+ people
- Admiring the group- group is important
- No prior commitment to any presence- haven't thought about it before
- Being observed (absence of anonymity)
- Culture encourages shared norms (France vs. Normandy) (Different cultures; Norway: conformity is treasured. France: Individual is encourages)
- Group is unanimous
- More people- more conformity (Field experiments: Bus stops in Jerusalem and Israel)

Obedience

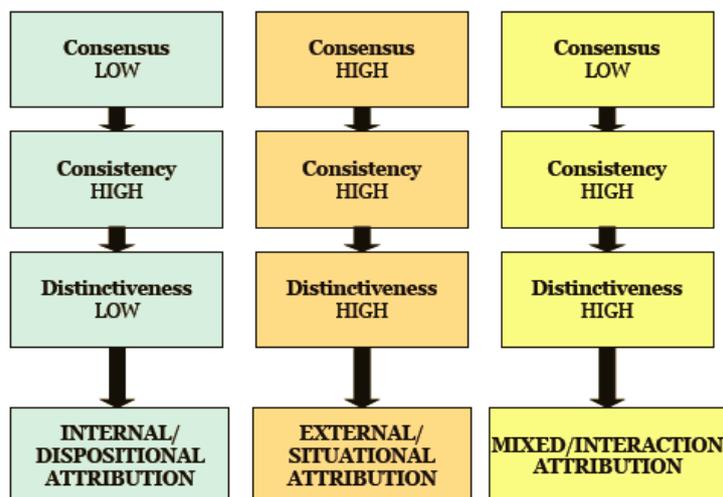
Obedience creates social structure. Behaviour change is produced by the commands of authority. Pressure is explicit, source is individual vs. group.

Obedience= told what you have to do. Vs. **conformity**= don't know what you have to do.

Attribution Process

There are 3 types of information that we consider when making dispositional or situational attribution (Kelley, 1967):

- 1) **Consensus** (others behave the same?)
The extent to which other people react to the same stimulus or event in the same way as the person we are considering.
'Do others regularly behave this way in this situation?'
- 2) **Consistency** (across time?)
The extent to which the person in question reacts to the stimulus or event in the same way on different occasions (ie. across time)
'Does this person regularly behave this way in this situation?'
- 3) **Distinctiveness** (other situations?)
The extent to which the person in question responds in the same manner to different stimuli or events.
'Does this person behave this way in many other situations?'

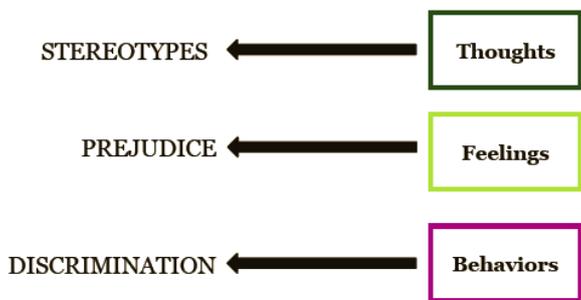


Attributional Biases

1. **The Fundamental Attribution Error** (Attribute to dispositions not situation)
Underestimate the impact of the situation. Overestimate the impact of dispositions.
Why?
 - We tend to focus more on *people* not the *situation*
 - Notice situational cues but give them less weight in our attributions
 - Assume that the actions of others reflect their underlying characteristics
2. **The Actor-Observer Bias** (Own behaviour=situational attributes, others behaviour=dispositional attributes)
The tendency to attribute own behaviour mainly to *external* (situational) causes but the behaviour of others mainly to *internal* (dispositional) causes.
Why?
 - We are more aware of how the situation affects our behaviour.
 - When we see others perform an action, we concentrate on the actor, not the situation.

Stereotypes

Based on any kind of group membership.



Stereotypes (Cognitive): A generalization about a group of people in which identical characteristics are designed to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation among the group.

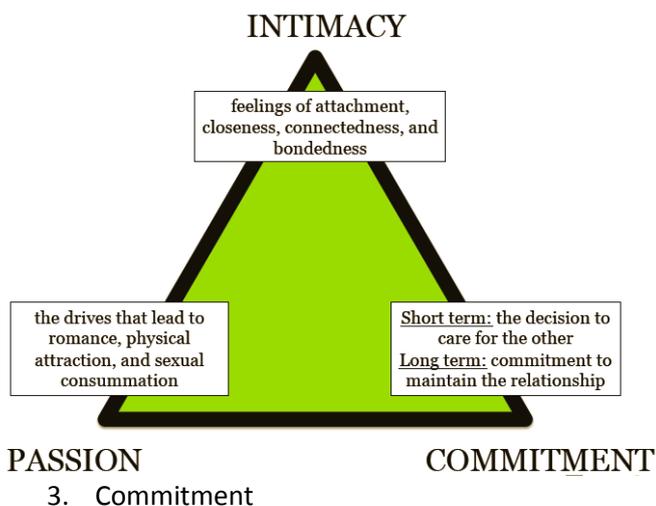
Prejudice (Affective): Hostile or negative *feelings* toward a distinguishable group of people, based solely on their membership in the group.

Discrimination (behavioural): Unjustified negative or harmful *action* towards a member of a group, simply because of a membership in that group.

Studying Stereotypes

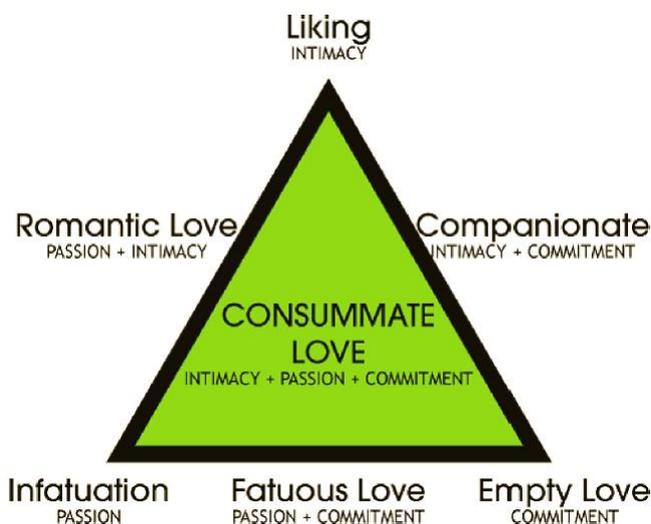
3 levels of stereotypes:

Triangular Theory of Love (Robert Sternberg, 1988)



Three components of love:

1. Intimacy
2. Passion



Liking=close friendship

Romantic love= summer relationship

Companionate= family member, good friends

Infatuation= 'love at first sight'

Fatuous love= Whirlwind romance

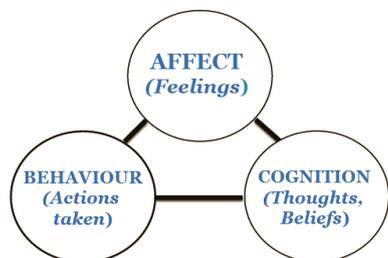
Empty love= stagnant relationships, arranged marriages

Consummative love= lover is best friend

Prosocial Behaviour

Prosocial Behaviour: Actions intended to benefit others.

The Bystander Effect (Lanté& Darley, 1970): the presence of others inhibits helping; As the number of people involved increases, individuals feel less responsibility and help becomes much less likely.



The ABC's of Attitudes

1. Affect (feelings toward object/person/event)
2. Behaviour (action toward object/person/event)
3. Cognition (thoughts toward object/person/event)

Cross-Cultural Psychology

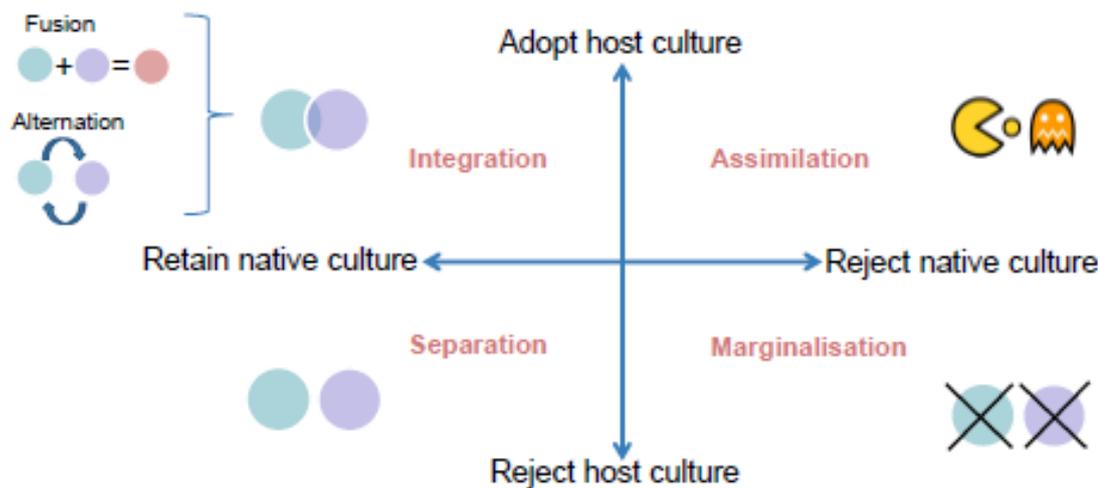
Support – Heritable attitudes (Tesser, 1993)

- Less amenable to social influence
- Therefore, less likely to cluster
 - E.g., Death penalty
 - E.g., Jazz music

Support – More communicable beliefs --> normative

- Memes (cultural genes)
 - Culture composed of tiny units of information that undergo variation, selection, and retention
- Based on truth?
- Oliver Wendell Holmes – “the best test of truth is the power of the thought itself to get accepted in the competition of the market”
- Dawkins – meme’s don’t compete solely based on truth
 - E.g., Chain letters that threaten doom if you don’t spread
 - E.g., McDonald’s rumours
- Health (2001) – selected based on emotions (disgust)

Acculturation



How do we measure Culture?

Hofstede's model

Individualism

- Preference to act independently vs. in a group
- Self-reliant, competitive, autonomous, uniqueness
- “I” & Immediate family

Collectivism

- Conformity, interdependence
- Preference for individual to contribute to family and family connections, “We”

Power-distance

- Extent to which individuals accept unequal distribution of power

Uncertainty avoidance

- Extent to which society feels threatened by uncertainty
 - Establish clear rules
 - Intolerant of deviant ideas & behaviours
 - Believing in absolute truths
 - Believing in the attainment of expertise
 - Not the same as risk avoidance

Masculinity (quantity of life)

- Assertive, financial focus, performance, success, competition

Femininity (quality of life)

- Friendly atmosphere, cooperation, care for the weak, solidarity
- (work – position security, physical conditions)

Confucian dynamism (aka pragmatism)

Describes societies time horizon

- Short-term orientation
 - Past-present orientation values
- Respect for tradition
- Fulfilling social obligations
- Long-term orientation
 - Future oriented values (persistence, thrift)

Indulgence vs. restraint

- The extent of control of desires and impulses