



Principles of teaching and learning

SJIE40006

Classical Conditioning

Associate an involuntary
response and a stimulus

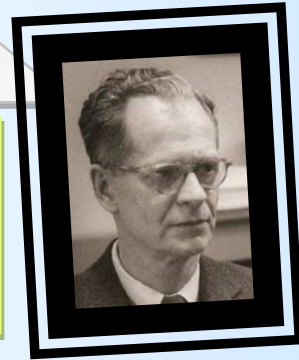


Operant Conditioning

Associate a voluntary behavior
and a consequence



Operant Conditioning



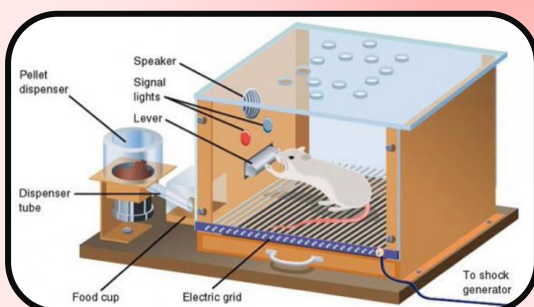
The first theory I will discuss is the operant conditioning theory. I will discuss different techniques that are used in the school setting. The school setting I will talk about is a special school with pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

A method of learning known as Operant Conditioning occurs through punishments and rewards for behaviours. Skinner states *“Through operant conditioning, an individual makes an association between a particular behaviour and a consequence (Skinner, 1938)”* (SimplyPsychology.org) Skinner believed the way to understand behaviour is to find the root and cause for behaviours and look at the consequences.

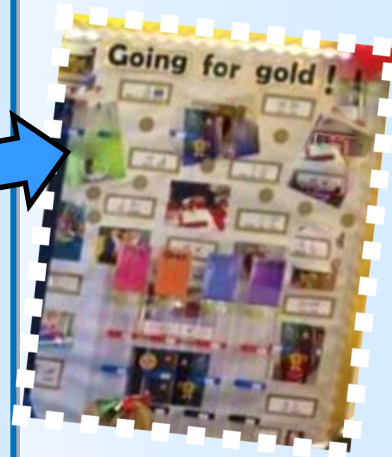
B. F. Skinner experimented this theory with rats and used food as a reward.

- ♦ *“The rat was placed in a box*
- ♦ *Over the course of a few days, food was occasionally delivered through an automatic dispenser*
- ♦ *Before long, the rat approached the food tray as soon as the sound of the dispenser was heard, clearly anticipating the arrival of food”* (kidsdevelopment.co.uk, 2019)

Following these actions, the researchers placed a small lever in the box to which the rat learnt that if it touched the lever, the food would dispense. This is the same system as Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). The child shows good behaviour or completes small actions and is rewarded. *“When previous behaviours have been rewarded, children are likely to repeat those behaviours happily and willingly”* (kidsdevelopment.co.uk, 2019) This theory is used in school by using ABA which encourages positive and good behaviours and aims to eliminate the negative behaviours. Skinner states that reinforcers are *“responses from the environment that increase the probability of a behaviour being repeated.”* (simplypsychology.org) ABA is a behavioural approach that uses motivators as reinforcers. The teacher must find an instant motivator for the pupil which will encourage them to want to receive a reward. These motivators may be a sweet or a small toy and these enable the teacher to use these as instant rewards for good behaviours. This will encourage the child to repeat the good behaviours they're being rewarded for.



Putting this theory into practice, a reward chart and gold coin system is put in place to support and encourage pupils with additional learning needs. These reward systems help them to remain focussed and aim towards achievement. The reward chart which is used in class is also called token economy. The pupil receives tokens for; good sitting, completing work sheets and tasks or just completing small actions asked by the teacher. The token economy is personalised to the pupil in which the number of tokens depend on their ability to work towards the reward and depending on their level of understanding. The reward is chosen by the pupil which makes it more exciting for them to achieve it. The gold coin system is a whole school reward system. The gold coins are achieved at the end of work sessions and are contributed towards a team prize. These rewards encourage pupils to repeat good behaviour and work tasks. *"When teachers give out gold stars for good schoolwork or parents put children in time-out, they are applying the principles of operant conditioning"* (Saunders, 2006, p.74)

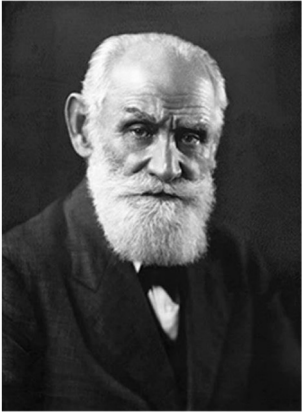


Another reward system is the First/Then boards. These are used as a more instant reward chart for pupils who find it difficult to work towards a reward throughout the day. The pupils who may not enjoy completing work tasks are often showed these as a constant reminder during work time. The pupil first chooses what they would like to have or do after they complete their work. The pupil is then asked to complete and is supported during work time and is shown these boards as a reminder that first 'work' then they receive their reward.

To conclude on the operant conditioning approach, in my opinion I believe these techniques that are used in schools such as the token economy and reward systems are effective and work exceptionally well in school settings who have pupils with additional learning needs. These token and reward systems are easy to understand and are understood by pupils who are encouraged to achieve these rewards. These ideas come from Skinner's operant conditioning theory and work especially well with pupils with ALN who find it difficult to complete work tasks or have negative behaviours which can be replaced with good behaviour.

Classical Conditioning

The second theory I will discuss is the classical conditioning theory. I will explain how this is put into practice in my school setting and how it is used with pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).



Ivan Pavlov is the founder of the classical conditioning theory. Pavlov experimented with dogs in which he predicted that they will salivate in response to having food placed down in front of them. He noticed the dogs would start to salivate by the sounds of the footsteps of the person bringing the food. Pavlov discovered that the dogs learned to associate objects or events with food which would trigger them to salivate.

Classical Conditioning

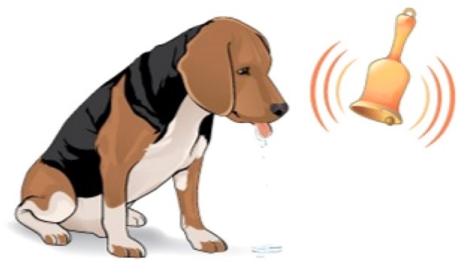
Unconditioned response: the dog salivates in response to seeing food.



Conditioning: every time the dog sees food, a bell is rung.



Conditioned response: the dog salivates in response to a bell being rung.



This is the same approach as schools have with regards to associating things. There are songs and work boxes that are used which help the pupils associate these with the lessons or with what time of the day it is.

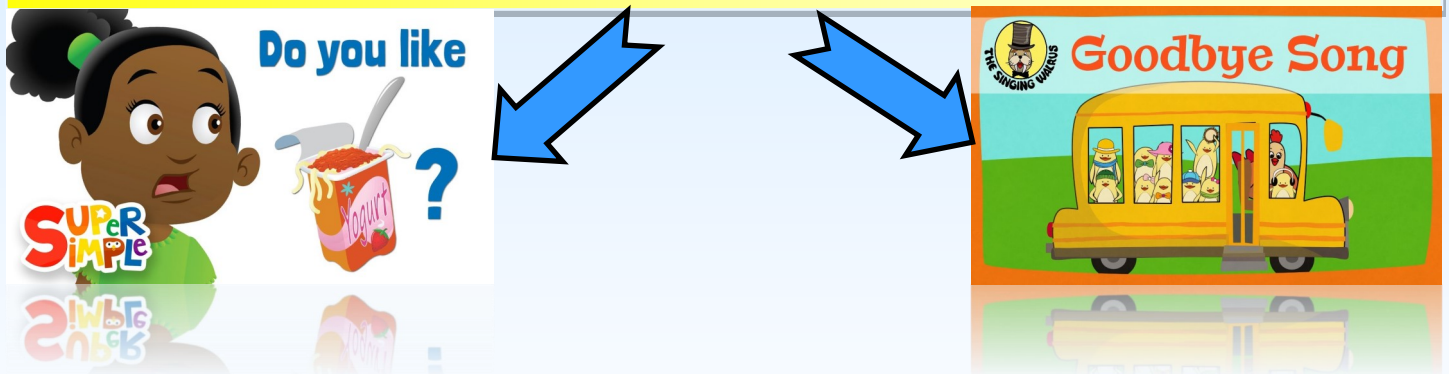
Ivan Pavlov



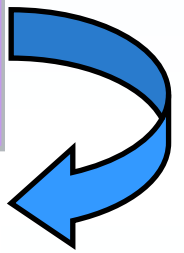
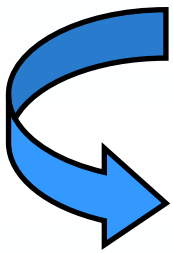
From the described experiment it is clear that the mere act of eating, the food even not reaching the stomach, determines the stimulation of the gastric glands.

AZ QUOTES

At my school setting, classical conditioning is put into practice when preparing pupils for what is about to happen next. At dinner time and home time the children listen to songs before going to the dinner hall or getting ready to go home. These songs let the pupils know what time of day it is. This strategy works exceptionally well with pupils with ALN as they may find it a difficult to follow the daily timetable or keep track of time.



This theory is also used when teaching lessons. At my school setting, there are certain boxes for each lesson. The pupils associate the boxes with the lesson e.g. music box and cookery box. By showing these boxes before sessions, the pupils will recognise them and are prepared for lesson time.



To conclude on the classical conditioning theory, I believe these strategies are a good way to prepare pupils for what's coming next. When they associate a song with a time of day or a box with a session, they then know and are ready for what comes next. These preparations work extremely well for pupils with ALN who may find it difficult to keep up with the daily timetable or keep track of time.

Looking at both approaches. I believe that both are important to use in school settings. Classical conditioning is based on associating things to get a response. I believe this is similar and links to the operant conditioning theory as pupils learn to associate reinforcements with behaviours.

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