

# LA: TBAT outline and evaluate the methodology used in the Learning Approach

Observations

Experiments – animals and humans

# What is an observation?

- When watching the behaviour is the main way of collecting data
- The Independent Variable is **not** manipulated
- Case studies can *include* observations – but the case study is the main research method
- Observations can be structured but are usually naturalistic
- Experiments can *include* observations of participants (e.g. Milgram)
- There are observation studies which can involve changing the situation (e.g. the Strange Situation by Mary Ainsworth)

# Structured Observations

- This is when participants are observed in a controlled setting – often through a one way mirror or camera
- The setting may use special apparatus and the whole process can be given some kind of fixed structure for the behaviour
- Most often used with children – e.g. look at attachment behaviour (attachment = emotional bond between parent and child)

# Recording observation data

- **Tallying** – counting the number of times specific behaviour occurs – this produces **quantitative data**
- **Writing down** quotes from participants/telling story of what is happening – produces **qualitative data**

*Structured observation practice – Strange Situation*

# Naturalistic observations

- Take place in a natural setting – e.g. at home/school/hospital – you want to see the behaviour that participants would usually show
- Options in naturalistic observations:
  - **non-participant** observations (where the observer is *not* part of the situation)
  - **Participant** observations (where the observer *is* part of the situation)
  - **Overt** observations – participants know they are being observed (e.g. a lesson observation at school)
  - **Covert** observations – participants don't know they are being observed (e.g. watching people in a high street to see how they interact in specific way)

# Setting up observations

1. Decide on the type of observation
2. Get access/permission as needed

**observations are one method where you *might not need/be able to get consent / do a debriefing / give the right to withdraw***

1. Decide (e.g. by watching a sample) what behaviours you want to tally/record

**This is the difficult bit – if you want to record aggressive behaviour – what do you mean by aggression specifically?**

4. Create a behavioural checklist

Observation checklist of a student when the teacher leaves the room							
Carries on working	Uses mobile phone	Talks to another student	Listens to music	Leaves the room	Reads a magazine	Falls asleep	Eats

4. Train your observers on the check
5. Run the observation!

time sampling = record every 30s (e.g.)

event sampling = record each time behaviour happens

# Quiz on the observational method

1. Name the type of observation in which the participants *don't know* they are being observed.
2. Name the type of observation in which the participants *do know* they are being observed.
3. What is a naturalistic observation?
4. What is a structured observation?
5. Give two ethical 'rules' that observations might have to 'break'
6. What are the two ways of recording observations? Bonus bunny points: what kind of data does each recording method produce?
7. In what kind of observation is the observer a part of the situation?
8. In what kind of observation is the observer **not** a part of the situation?
9. What is a behavioural checklist?
10. What is 'time sampling'?
11. What is 'event sampling'?

## Q 12 Last question – put this process into the right order

1. Create a behavioural checklist
2. Train your observers on the checklist
3. Get access/permission as needed
4. Decide (e.g. by watching a sample) what behaviours you want to tally/record
5. Run the observation!
6. Decide on the type of observation



# Quiz on the observational method (answers)

1. Name the type of observation in which the participants *don't know* they are being observed. **covert**
2. Name the type of observation in which the participants *do know* they are being observed. **overt**
3. What is a naturalistic observation? **Done in the setting where the behaviour would naturally occur**
4. What is a structured observation? **Done in a laboratory – often with manipulation of the situation**
5. Give two ethical 'rules' that observations might have to 'break' **informed consent, debrief**
6. What are the two ways of recording observations? Bonus bunny points: what kind of data does each recording method produce? **Tally charts (quantitative), content analysis (qualitative)**
7. In what kind of observation is the observer a part of the situation? **participant**
8. In what kind of observation is the observer **not** a part of the situation? **Non-participant**
9. What is a behavioural checklist? **List of behaviours that are being looked for previously agreed**
10. What is 'time sampling'? **Recording behaviour on the checklist every x seconds**
11. What is 'event sampling'? **Recording behaviour on the checklist when it happens**

## Q 12 Last question – put this process into the right order

1. Create a behavioural checklist
2. Train your observers on the checklist
3. Get access/permission as needed
4. Decide (e.g. by watching a sample) what behaviours you want to tally/record
5. Run the observation!
6. Decide on the type of observation

Order should be: **6,**

# Learning Approach: Experiments

- Most Classical Conditioning and Operant Conditioning studies use/used animals (e.g. Pavlov's dogs – CC, Thorndike's Cat Puzzlebox – OC)
- That means we have to consider the ethical / practical issues of using animals in research
- **THINK / PAIR / SHARE**  
**when would it be right (and when would it be wrong) to use animals in psychological research?**

# Using animals in lab experiments

## Ethical arguments summary

Arguments for	Arguments against
<p>Behaviourists (Skinner) → animal behaviour is the same as human behaviour so we can generalise</p> <p>We can test some complex behaviours (aggression) in animals → so perhaps we can generalise</p>	<p>The basic processes might be the same, but more complex behaviours such as addiction might not generalise from animals to humans</p>
<p>We can test behaviours that develop over generations of animals (shorter breeding cycles)</p>	
<p>We don't need informed consent and perhaps harm is more acceptable</p>	<p>If the benefits don't outweigh the harms we are causing animals the research may not be justifiable</p>
	<p>There arguments that the welfare protection laws don't effectively protect animals from harm or misuse in laboratory experiments</p>

# Using animals in lab experiments

## The laws/guidance

- The Animals Scientific Procedures Act (1986)
- Animal Welfare Act (2006)
- The BPS statement on research permission – you have to be able to demonstrate there is a **benefit** to doing the research
- The 3 Rs (Russell and Burch, 1959)
  - Replacing animals with non-sentient (non-aware) alternatives
  - Reducing the number of animals
  - Refining procedures to minimise suffering
- **Each** new research project using animals must be licensed under the ASPA and AWA legislation

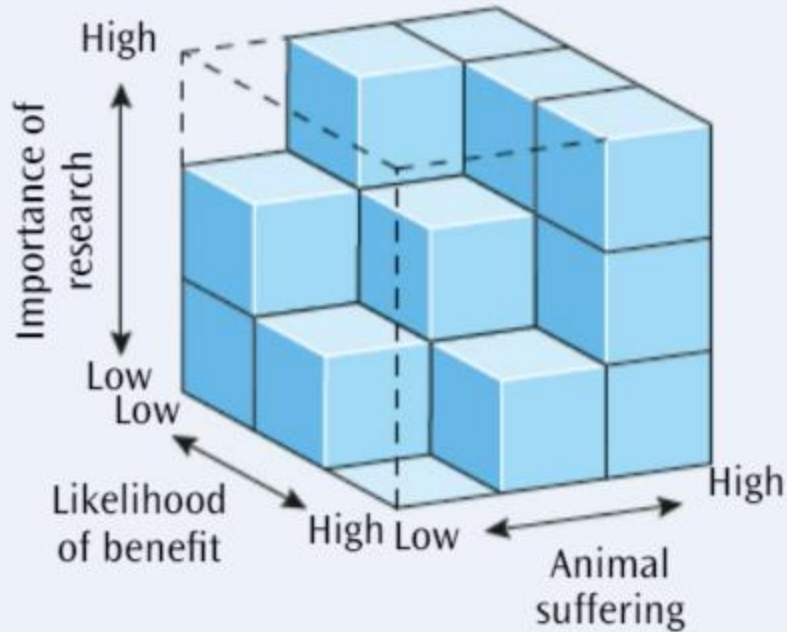
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# Using animals in lab experiments

## Bateson Cube



Patrick Bateson (1986) suggested that decisions about the rights and wrongs of animal research could be resolved by considering costs versus benefits. He proposed three main criteria:

- The degree of animal suffering.
- The quality/importance of the research.
- The likelihood of benefit.

# Evaluation of using animals (extension questions)

1. Why are rats heavily used in Psychological research?
2. Why do laboratory experiments with animals have internal validity?
3. Why might we have more control when using animals rather than humans?
4. What can we do to animals that we can't do to humans and why?
5. What contributions has animal research made?
6. Why can we link animal results to humans?
7. What is the utilitarian argument?
8. What's the problem with using animals in terms of credibility and ecological validity?
9. In what ways are animals and humans different?
10. What's the problem with allowing pain and discomfort in animal studies?
11. What's the problem with the utilitarian argument?



# Experiments with humans

- Social Learning Theory uses humans – e.g. Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment
- There is a study by Waddington in which researchers posed as demonstrators during the Miners' Strike of 1984
- THINK / Pair / Share:  
**What are the ethical/practical issues involved in doing observation research with humans?**