

Chapter One – Introduction to Cognitive Psychology

1. What is Cognitive Psychology? What is Cognition and Cognitive approach?

- a. Cognitive psychology (Pg. 2): A synonym for cognition; the theoretical approach to psychology that focuses on studying people's thought processes and knowledge
 - i. Sub-discipline of experimental psychology
 - ii. Investigates the mental processes of people that give rise to our perception and interpretation of the world around us – how people perceive, process, store, retrieve, interpret, etc.
- b. Cognition (Pg. 2): Mental activity, including the acquisition, storage, transformation, and use of knowledge
 - i. Collecting information, perceiving it, processing it, and then using it
- c. Cognitive approach (Pg. 2): theoretical orientation that emphasizes people's thought processes and knowledge

2. Why should learn about cognition (cognitive psychology)?

- a. Large part of human psychology – perceive, remember, using language, thinking
- b. Has a widespread influence on other areas of psychology, such as clinical, educational, and social
- c. “Owners manual”
 - i. Understanding cognition means to understand the abilities that provide you with a rich mental life, you understand your mind and others' minds (to some degree) if you understand cognition

3. How Cognitive Psychology can be applied to study of other psychological area (e.g. Clinical Psychology)

- a. Research and treatment of behavioral disorders
- b. Cognitive therapies
 - i. Ex → Depression
 1. People with depression tend to recall memories from their past in a very brief, undetailed, summarized manner, whereas people without depression tend to recall a memory as lasting more than one day and with explicit detail
 - a. “A memory for the past two summers”
 - i. Depression: Went to my grandparents house
 - ii. Non-depressed: drove to my grandparent's house in Arizona, the whole first day was the drive, it took hours and there wasn't enough room in the car. And then when we finally got there we were too tired to do anything but eat. The next though we...

2. Its theorized, that our cognitive assessment of events is what causes our distress, not the events themselves
 - a. The differences in recalling the memory, and how it was stored and perceived, between the two kinds of people, is a demonstration of cognitive differences

4. What are the origins of cognitive psychology?

- a. Birth of Psychology
 - i. Wilhelm Wundt – psychology as a discipline didn't emerge until the late 1800s, and most consider Wundt the founder (birth of psychology as a science)
 1. He proposed that psychology should study mental processes and advocated the use of introspection as a technique to do so
 - a. Introspection (Pg. 7): an early approach to studying mental activity, in which carefully trained observers systematically analyzed their own sensations and reported them as objectively as possible, under standardized conditions
 - i. Self reports of experience – “reaction to a specific chord of music”
 - ii. Structuralism – Edward Titchener, Wundt's Student
 1. Decided to try and discover the structural elements of the mind, the “cognitive” equivalent of finding the elements of nature (the periodic table)
 2. Used introspection – strongly encourage systematic data collection and the importance of empirical evidence
 - iii. Functionalism – William James
 1. Theorized about everyday psychological experiences – the “functions” of our thoughts and feelings and how they enable us to adapt, survive, and flourish
 2. Popularized the study of psychology and expanded its focus, mostly through his textbook *Principles of Psychology* (1890)
- b. Behaviorism (Pg. 9): an approach to psychology that focuses on objective, observable reactions to stimuli in the environment, rather than introspection
 - i. Came around because of the belief that introspection and mentalism of structuralism and functionalism were too unreliable, that they were too subjective and too speculative, that only human behavior was observable
 1. As a result, behaviorists didn't study concepts such as mental images, ideas, or thoughts, instead they focused heavily on the general laws of learning – particularly in quantifying the way that changes in an organisms environment caused changes in their behavior
 - ii. Watson and Skinner – Skinner's box
 1. Studied the learning behavior of an animal to help them better understand the learning behavior of humans

2. Watson

- a. Believed that science should be rooted in observation, and so psychology should be the science of behavior and not the mind
- b. Focus on stimulus-response
- c. Classical conditioning

3. Skinner

- a. Science should be rooted in observation
 - b. Operant conditioning
 - c. Rejected the cognitive revolution
- iii. Behaviorism helped understand how we learn about and improve psychology's scientific aspect

c. Cognitive Revolution

- i. Question 7

5. Know structuralism and functionalism. How do they differ from each other? Who were key figures in each movement? Know introspection and its limitation?

- a. ^ Question Four

6. Know why the behaviorists sought to change the focus of psychological research.

- a. In question four, but...
- b. Behaviorists believed that introspection is too subjective and mentalism is too speculative, and that only human behavior is observable
- c. Most behaviorists believed that it was inappropriate to theorize and speculate about unobservable components of mental life

7. Know what the cognitive revolution (beginning around the 1950s – 1960s) reintroduced to psychology.

- a. Psychologists were getting more and more upset with the behaviorist outlook, that it was too difficult to explain complex human behavior using concepts such as observable stimuli responses and reinforcements – and behaviorist approach didn't tell us anything about topics such as thoughts and strategies used to solve problems
- b. The "cognitive revolution" is the term used to describe the shift of focus away from behaviorism to the study of human's internal processes (thinking, and how topics such as memory and attention and language work along with that)
- c. Jean Piaget – children actively explore their world in order to understand important concepts
 - i. Children's thought processes, and then how that changes to adolescence, etc.
- d. Noam Chomsky – structure of language was too complex to be explained in behaviorist terms