

According to Watson (1913), psychology is a “purely objective, experimental branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behaviour. Introspection forms no essential part of its method”

Problems with Classical and Operant conditioning explanations of learning

- a) Avoidance learning 1: according to classical conditioning, temporal contiguity is crucial and the type of UCS should not matter. In fact, it is found that rats can learn an association between a taste and nausea even if another stimulus (such as a loud noise or bright light) occurs after the taste and before the nausea. This should not occur.
- b) Avoidance learning 2: according to classical conditioning theorists, the animal will learn to avoid an electric shock because it develops an association between the UCS (pain) and the CS (tone). It is also possible that the animal uses the tone as a warning that a shock is about to occur: this means that the animal might actually have developed some kind of expectation about what will happen after the tone. Learning theorists do not allow for expectations.
- c) Cognitive theorists argue that animals (particularly higher species) are more intelligent than the behaviourists assume and can represent the world mentally and act on their mental representations rather than on the world itself. This fits in with the idea that animals can build up expectations and act on their expectations (which are, after all, mental representations of the world as it might be rather than as it actually is). The ideas of the cognitive theorists created what is called ***the cognitive shift*** in behaviourism.