



Learning through Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

Glossary of Terms related to Applied Behaviour Analysis in Education

Abative Effect in relation to Motivating Operations	Decrease in the current frequency of behaviour due to a decrease in the value of the reinforcer (due to food ingestion, satiation).
ABC Recording or Anecdotal Observation	A type of direct measurement where the observer records the antecedent, and the consequence, when the target behaviour is observed within the natural environment.
Abolishing Operation	A type of motivating operations wherein there is a decrease in the effectiveness of a stimulus as a reinforcer. See abative effect.
Antecedent	Instruction or cue or setting event or signal in the environment that occurs prior to the target behaviour.
Antecedent Intervention	The manipulation of antecedent variables or stimuli as a behaviour change strategy.
Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)	A branch of Behaviour Analysis, which is an evidence-based applied science, that deals with socially significant behaviours as the phenomena of study. ABA utilizes the principles of behaviourism and methods of science for the technology to improve behaviours.
Aversive Stimulus	Unpleasant or undesired stimulus.
Back-up reinforcers	Tangible objects or activities or privileges that can be availed using tokens within the Token Economy as a behavioural contingency. See Token Economy.
Backward Chaining	A teaching procedure wherein the teacher prompts or helps the learner complete all steps or tasks in the chain, with the last step independently evoked by the learner is reinforced. The sequence of teaching and reinforcing in a backward manner is continued until the learner completes all the tasks in the chain correctly and independently.
Backward Chaining with leaps ahead	Similar to backward chaining, but some tasks or steps are skipped if there is evidence that the learner knows these steps. See backward chaining.

Baseline	A condition where the independent variable (manipulation of independent variable/s, teaching, instruction or intervention) is not present. Data collected during the baseline helps in understanding the effects of the Independent Variable to the Dependent Variable.
Behaviour	An activity by a living organism, that is a dynamic by-product of the living organism's interaction with the environment.
Behaviour-altering effect in relation to Motivating Operations	An alteration of the current frequency of the behaviour because of motivation, drive or passion, in that moment.
Behaviour Chain	Set of responses in sequence
Behaviour Change Procedures	Technological and systematic procedures of improving behaviours.
Behaviour Checklist	An indirect form of assessment that provides a description of the skills or skills areas with reference to the learner's profile.
Behavioural Assessment	Assessments may be indirect or direct which provide the description of skills or behavioural repertoire of the learners.
Behaviour Contrast	The difference in the rate of responding in different circumstance or settings.
Behavioural Cusp	A behaviour that when learned expands the learner's application of his or her repertoire to new states or environments.
Behavioural Momentum	An infusion of high probability responses with a low probability response, usually the behaviour or skills that are still being learned. See high-probability response sequence.
Behaviourism	The Philosophy of the science of behaviour
Chaining	Various procedures of teaching behaviour chains: backward, backward with leaps ahead, forward, total task presentation.
Concept Formation	The ability to gain complex forms of stimulus control, knowing when and what behaviours to evoke or emit, through generality and discrimination.
Confounding Variable	An uncontrolled factor that influences the dependent variable.
Consequence	A stimulus that follows after the behaviour and affects the future frequency of the behaviour. See Punishment, Reinforcement and Extinction.

Contingency	The relations between the behaviour and the antecedent and consequence. See contingency contract or three-term contingency.
Contingency Contract	Agreed between parties that specifies that the access to specific reinforcer is accessible after the completion of a specific behaviour.
Count	A simple tally of the number of times a behaviour has occurred.
Data	The results of quantifiable measurement.
Dependent Group Contingency	A contingency wherein the reinforcement of the members of the group is dependent upon the behaviour of one or some members of the group.
Dependent Variable	In ABA, the dependent variable represents some measure of the target behaviour or the behaviour that is socially significant.
Determinism	The presumption that the universe is lawful and orderly.
Differential Reinforcement	Reinforcing responses that meet the specific criterion.
Differential Reinforcement of Alternate Behaviour (DRA)	A procedure to reinforce appropriate behaviours to decrease maladaptive behaviours.
Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviour (DRI)	A procedure of reinforcing behaviours which are incompatible with the maladaptive behaviours, to decrease maladaptive behaviours.
Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviours (DRO) or Omission Training	A procedure to reinforce the absence of maladaptive behaviours during or at specific times.
Discrete Trial Teaching	Skills or behaviours to be learned are broken into small steps or tasks. These are taught within the context of the three-term contingency, prompting and shaping the behaviour until the correct response is independently evoked or emitted.
Discriminative Stimulus or SD	The presence of this stimulus brings or invokes the desired behaviour.
Duration	Total extent of time when the behaviour occurs.
Ecological Assessment	A form of assessment where the complex interaction between the behaviour and the variables in the environment is studied.

Empiricism	A school of thought where objects or subjects under study are considered in factual and objective terms.
Environment	Setting event, surroundings, variables in the surroundings, where all behaviours occur.
Establishing Operation	A type of motivating operations wherein there is an increase in the effectiveness of a stimulus as a reinforcer. See evocative effect.
Event Recording	Obtaining a count of the number of times the behaviour occurs, used in behaviours that have concrete beginning and ending.
Evocative Effect in relation to Motivating Operations	Increase in the current frequency of behaviour due to an increase in the value of the reinforcer (due to deprivation, desire, drive).
Experiment or Experimentation	Manipulation of the independent variables, in control, to see measure and collect data about its effects on the target behaviour.
Extinction	Discontinuation of reinforcement of previously reinforced behaviour to eliminate that behaviour.
Extinction burst	Increase in the frequency of the behaviour when the extinction behaviour is implemented.
Fading	Changing or manipulating features of antecedents as variables, while the behaviour is being shaped.
Fixed Interval Schedule of Reinforcement	Reinforcement is delivered for the initial response evoked following a fixed duration of time (interval) since the last reinforced response or behaviour.
Fixed Ratio Schedule of Reinforcement	Requiring a fixed number of responses before delivering the reinforcer.
Forward Chaining	A teaching procedure wherein the teacher prompts or helps the learner complete all steps or tasks in the chain, but with the first step independently evoked by the learner is reinforced. The sequence of teaching and reinforcing in a forward manner is continued until the learner completes all the tasks in the chain correctly and independently.
Free Operant	Behaviours that are "freely" emitted, or at any time.
Frequency	Count of the behaviour relative to the observation time

Functional Analysis	Part of the Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) methods, this process is to know and analyze the function or cause of challenging behaviours, by testing each condition: attention or escape or access to tangible or alone or sensory.
Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA)	Methods of assessment to determine the function or causes of challenging behaviours. It can indirect, direct or through functional analysis.
Functional Communication Training	A type of antecedent intervention where appropriate communication or verbal behaviour is taught to replace challenging behaviours.
Generalization	Expansion of evoking or emitting behaviours or skills outside of the teaching setting, across persons, across exemplars
Generalized Conditioned Reinforcer	The stimulus or object has a reinforcing effect because it has been paired with another reinforcing stimulus or back-up reinforcers.
Graphs	Formats of displaying data gathered through experimentation, that is utilized in visual analysis. The kinds of graphs are bar graphs or histogram, line graph, standard celeration charts, etc.
Group Contingency	Reinforcement of the group is either dependent or independent or interdependent on the behaviours of one or some or all members of the group.
High-probability request sequence	A form of antecedent intervention where two to five easy tasks associated with "can do" skills are delivered in succession prior to the delivery or request for the task that may challenging.
Independent Group Contingency	A contingency wherein the reinforcement of a member of the group is independent upon the behaviour of one or some members of the group.
Indirect Assessments	Structured interviews, checklists, rating scales, questionnaires to gather information about the person and the target behaviours or skills.
Interdependent Group Contingency	A contingency wherein the reinforcement of all members of the group is dependent upon the behaviour of each member of the group.
Intermittent Schedule of Reinforcement	Not all occurrences of the behaviour produce reinforcement.

Inter-response time	The elapsed time between two responses in succession.
Maintenance	The learner continues to evoke the desired behaviour after the portion of or all the experimental condition is no longer in place.
Motivating Operations	Drive, passions, desires. An environmental variable that increases or decreases the value of the reinforcer and alters the behaviour in that moment.
Negative Punishment	A consequence when removed, decreases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Negative Reinforcement	A consequence when removed, increases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Non-contingent Reinforcement	Delivering a reinforcement unrelated to the occurrence of the behaviour.
Overcorrection	A positive punishment practice that requires the learner to put things on track, by repairing the environment back to its state before the maladaptive behaviour was evoked.
Pivotal Behaviour	A behaviour or skill that when learned produces a co-variation or derived to other untrained behaviours or skills.
Planned Activity Check (PLACHECK)	Measuring group behaviour through momentary time-sampling, wherein the observer records in that moment if each person in the group is engaged with the target behaviour.
Positive Punishment	A consequence when presented, decreases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Positive Reinforcement	A consequence when presented, increases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Punishment	A consequence that decreases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Repertoire	Behaviours that a person "can do".
Reinforcement	A consequence that increases the future frequency of the behaviour.
Response	A single instance of a type of behaviour.
Response Blocking	A form of intervention to prevent the maladaptive behaviour from occurring.
Response Cost	Loss of reinforcers previously earned because of emitting a maladaptive behaviour. This is a form of negative punishment.
Rule-governed behaviour	Behaviours governed by rules different from contingency-shaped behaviour (ABC). These behaviours are presented independent from the consequences.
Self-Management	Personal application of behaviour change procedures.
Shaping	While teaching, gradually reinforcing responses nearer to the desired behaviour.

Spontaneous Recovery	Behaviour that was put into extinction suddenly occurs, because of it was previously reinforced or part of the learning history.
Stimulus	Object or activity, or human beings, or anything that affects a living organism's behaviour.
Stimulus Control	The learner presents the appropriate responses either in the presence or absence of the stimulus as antecedent.
Stimulus Delta ($S\Delta$)	In the presence of this stimulus, the behaviour (if evoked) will not produce a consequence.
Task Analysis	Breaking down of the target behaviour to teach, into simple steps or teachable units.
Token Economy	Learners earn tokens or points when they evoke the target behaviour. Once a number of tokens are accumulated, these could be exchanged with the back-up reinforcers.
Topography	What the behaviour looks like in form and shape.
Total Task Chaining	A kind of forward chaining where the learner receives teaching on each step in the behaviour chain.
Variable Interval Schedule of Reinforcement	Reinforcement is delivered for the initial response evoked following a variable duration of time (interval) since the last reinforced response or behaviour.
Variable Ratio Schedule of Reinforcement	Requiring a variable number of responses before delivering the reinforcer.
Visual Analysis	Systematic analysis of the trend (direction), level (high, moderate or low) and variability (control) of the data collected during teaching or training to see the effectiveness of behavioural tactics and strategies.