BCBA® CHEAT SHEET · ACROSS THE OUTLINE · 17 OUTLINE TASKS

Commonly confused BCBA terms

When two answers both look right, one question usually decides the pair.

CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Respondent vs. operant B.3

Does the behavior change when its consequences change? Paired with a stimulus and now set off by it: respondent (CS). Reinforced when a stimulus is present: operant (SD).

Motivating operation vs. SD B.17

Value or availability? An MO changes what the reinforcer is worth now; an SD signals it is available. Both evoke.

S-delta vs. SDp B.12

What happened to the response in that stimulus's presence? Reinforcement withheld: S-delta. The response punished: SDp.

Discrimination vs. generalization B.13

Does responding differ across the stimuli, with a history of differential reinforcement? The same responding across similar stimuli is generalization.

Stimulus vs. response generalization vs. maintenance B.14

What is new? A new antecedent with the same behavior: stimulus. A new form doing the same job: response. Nothing new, months later: maintenance.

Response generalization vs. extinction-induced variability B.14

Is the trained response still reinforced? New forms alongside it: generalization. New forms only after it stopped paying off: variability.

Conditioned vs. generalized conditioned B.7

One backup: conditioned. Many varied backups, so no single MO controls its value: generalized.

Rule-governed vs. contingency-shaped B.18

Has the person contacted the outcome? Responding to a stated contingency they never experienced is rule-governed.

Imitation vs. observational learning B.24

Immediate copying because of the model is imitation. A later change because of what happened to the model is observational learning.

EXTINCTION AND RELAPSE

Extinction burst vs. spontaneous recovery B.11

Timing. A rise soon after extinction begins is a burst. A brief return after responding had already dropped, often after a break, is recovery.

Operant vs. respondent extinction B.11

Response to consequence (operant), or stimulus to stimulus (respondent)? Procedure (arrangement) or process (change)?

Resurgence vs. renewal H.5

Reinforcement for the alternative behavior drops or stops: resurgence. Extinction still in place, but the context changes (setting, people): renewal.

MEASUREMENT AND DESIGN

IOA vs. accuracy C.8

IOA compares two observers; accuracy compares the record with the true value. Two observers can agree and both be wrong.

Reliability vs. accuracy vs. validity C.8

Right behavior and dimension (valid)? Matches the true value (accurate)? Repeats when measured again (reliable)?

Independent variable vs. confound D.1

Intent. The IV is what the analyst deliberately changed. Anything else that changed then, like a new medication, is a confound.

Ineffective procedure vs. low integrity D.1

Was it delivered as designed? Check integrity data before judging the procedure.

Internal vs. external validity D.2

Could something else explain the results (internal), or do they apply to new people and settings (external)?

Direct vs. systematic replication D.2

Same procedures repeated: direct. Setting, behavior, implementer or participant changed on purpose: systematic.

Verification vs. replication D.4

Verification checks the baseline prediction. Replication repeats the intervention's effect.

SCHEDULES AND PROCEDURES

Multiple vs. chained schedule B.10

What ends each component? In a chain, meeting one requirement produces the next stimulus and the reinforcer waits for the last link. A multiple schedule switches components, each with its own reinforcement.

Multiple vs. mixed schedule B.10

Is each component signaled? Signaled: multiple. Unsignaled: mixed.

Fixed time vs. fixed interval G.3

Is a response needed once the time is up? "Every 5 minutes, whatever the person does" is FT. "The first response after 5 minutes" is FI.

Fixed time (NCR) vs. DRO G.3

Can problem behavior cancel or delay the reinforcer? Yes in DRO. On FT it arrives on time anyway.

Independent vs. interdependent vs. dependent group contingency G.14

Whose behavior decides each person's reward? Their own: independent. The whole group's: interdependent. One person or a few: dependent.

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