

Learned Behaviour

Those behaviours which an animal learns during its lifetime by experience are known as learned behaviours. All learned behaviours may be condensed into seven types:

* 1. Habituation :- Habituation may be considered as the simplest form of learning. It is found in all animals having nervous system. Habituation may be defined as "the reduction of responsiveness which are of no use or harm to the life of the animal". Habituation involves not only the acquisition of new responses but also the loss of old ones.

* Example :- A snail moving across a sheet of glass retracts its body into its shell when the glass is tapped. After a short pause it emerges and continues crawling. Next tap also causes retraction but it emerges quickly. Tapping is continued for many times and it is observed that the snail's response decreases gradually and finally ceases. This reduction and finally disappearance of responsiveness is called habituation.

* 2. Imprinting :- Form of learning in the early period of life is called imprinting. This phenomenon has been observed in many birds and mammals. It is concerned

with behaviours elicited by particular visual, auditory, olfactory or tactile stimuli. It was Lorenz who introduced this topic by experiments with geese. He found that broods of geese follow the object it looks or hears just after hatching. It will do so, completely ignoring anything else. Lorenz kept the mother geese away from hatching broods of gosling (young geese) and kept himself standing there. He got broods of gosling to follow him even if it sees its mother along the way. Heinroth has also found the same result with chick. A good work on imprinting has been carried out using those birds which have precocial young.

* 3. Conditioned Reflex :- Reflexes developed by training and learning (experience) are called conditioned or acquired reflex. Conditioned ~~or~~ reflex was first demonstrated by Pavlov (1930) in dogs.

Pavlov placed a hungry dog on a stand, restrained by a harness. The placing of food in dog's mouth causes it to salivate. He arranged a long narrow pipe from the salivary duct through the cheek so that the drops of saliva could be measured. He blew meat powder into the dog's mouth and recorded the amount of saliva

things by trial and error. Learning begins when animal associates certain movements with favourable or unfavourable results. Thus, experimentally, trial and error learning involves either 'reward' or 'punishment' or both. Birds learn to avoid the black and ~~orange~~ orange caterpillars of the cinnabar moth after one or two trials which reveal their evil taste. Bees do not just learn to associate a flower colour with the nectar reward, they also learn the position of the group of flowers with respect to their hives. They also learn by trial and error that at what time of day the nectar secretion is highest.

* 5. Latent Learning :- According to those latent learning is "the association of different stimuli or

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Situations without patent reward or punishment". By this he means that the actual process may involve associative learning, but there is lack of any obvious at that time viz., ~~no~~ learning remains latent or hidden. This hidden or latent learning is used in future when needed by the same animal.

6. Insight learning :- Knowledge of insight learning is also the contribution of great psychologists. Köhler and Koffka (1912) proposed the idea of insight learning. Insight learning may be defined as "the ability of animals to solve complex problems demanding something more than trial and error and latent learning".

Power of insight is perhaps confined to apes and Homosapiens in animal kingdom. Apes and man have ability to develop concept to act in a quite new situation in a flash quite independently. We may be aware that at many occasions solution to a problems (not faced previously) has "come in a flash". Insight may be climax or result of many previous learnings drawn by concentrated thinking of several minutes or seconds.

7. Reasoning :- Reasoning is considered as highest evolved form of animal behaviour found only in apes

and man. The reasoning is the "mental process of drawing inferences from two or more than two statements or happenings."

- * Conclusion :- A vast variety of behaviours in animal kingdom exists. All behaviours may be kept in two groups. Innate behaviours that are inborn and learnt behaviours which an animal learns during its life-time. Both behaviours may be recognised of seven types.

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