

Cognitive psychology is study of how people perceive, think, remember, speak and solve problems. It is rather new discipline in psychology, than the behavioral psychology. The main aim of Cognitive Approach is to explain people's behavior with reference to their internal mental processes.

Until the 1950s, behaviorism was the dominant school of thought in psychology. Between 1950 and 1970, the tide began to shift against behavioral psychology to focus on topics such as attention, memory, and problem solving. Often referred to as the cognitive revolution, this period generated considerable research including processing models, cognitive research methods and the first use of the term cognitive psychology.

Early psychologist in the 19th century, such as Wundt, used subjective methods to explain behavior. He believed that psychology was the science of conscious experience and that trained observers could accurately describe thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

Behaviorist as Watson and Skinner rejected his view, because for them the content and workings of the human mind were private and personal. It relies to the time they lived in, because it was not easy to conduct and understand the scientific work in cognition.

Later on the 1st half of 20th century cognitive psychology developed. New computer technology was introduced and this processing of information was proposed by cognitive psychologists. They explained behavior using computer concepts that describe how people process information in their mind.

This brought to cognitive revolution. Seeing the brain as being like a computer became extremely popular – the computer metaphor. Research in this field ultimately led to the growth of Cognitive science, where computer based aspects of cognitive psychology, information processing aspect of linguistic and research into computers and human-computer interaction merged into a same subject – Cognitive psychology.

Cognitive psychologists argue that events within a person are as important as environmental stimuli, in contrast to the Behaviorist approach – observation to the stimuli – response. These internal events are termed mediators, which

come between the stimuli and response. They are memory – the process of storing information people received via the senses; perception – the process by which we analyse and make sense of incoming sensory information; thinking – the process of generating ideas and using symbols /language/ to represent these ideas; attention – the process by which we focus on sensory information so that we are prepared to respond and language – a complex system of communication. This all is known as a Mediation Process.

In addition the Cognition is about how we process the information we received in order to build up our knowledge of the world. Cognition psychologists argue that people are not passive receptors of stimuli. People's mind actively process the information received and changes it into new forms – Active processing.

One study of Cognitive approach is the Cocktail Party Effect. Eysenck describes a test in which the participant is led to hear 2 different messages, one in each ear. The participant may be asked to concentrate on 1 message and ignore the other, or to pay attention on both at the same time. Depending on the differences between the instructions and a number of other factors, his study shows that subjects could pay attention to the 2 messages if they are required to do so.

Other study is the study of memory. Elizabeth Loftus has shown that eyewitness testimony is often unreliable, that false memories can be triggered in up to 25 percent of individuals merely by suggestion, and that memory can be interfered with and altered by simply giving incorrect post-event information. When the questions are asked wrong, could bring to planting information, which was not there at the first time.

However, the Cognitive psychology has a few limitations. It tends to omit emotional influences on behavior and does not take into account the environmental factors, such as family and education. Much of the work of Cognitive psychology is experimental and based in laboratories, which mean that participants behavior was ideological and with not ecological validity.

In today's society Elizabeth Loftus's study of memory is used from criminal departments. Because her work raises doubt about the validity of long-buried

memories of repeated trauma in particular--though it in no way disproves them--she has found herself asked to testify in some of the more famous trials of our time - the mass murderer Ted Bundy to accused child-killer George Franklin.

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