

AP Psychology Vocabulary

- Ablation** purposely disabling or destroying part of the brain in order to study the functions of different areas of the brain
- Accommodation** The creation of new cognitive schemas when objects, experiences, or other information does not fit with existing schemas.
- Action Potential** The firing on a neuron. Occurs when the charge inside the neuron becomes more positive than the charge outside.
- Altruism** Behavior that is unselfish and may even be detrimental but which benefits others.
- Amnesia** Loss of memory. Usually only a partial loss such as for a period of time or biographical information.
- Analysis** See Psychoanalysis.
- Anxiety** The physiological and psychological reaction to an expected danger, whether real or imagined.
- Aphasia** The impairment of the ability to communicate either through oral or written discourse as a result of brain damage.
- Arousal Theory** The theory stating that we are motivated by our innate desire to maintain an optimal level of arousal.
- Assimilation** Incorporating objects, experiences, or information into existing schemas.
- Associations** The phenomenon in learning that states we are better able to remember information if it is paired with something we are familiar with or otherwise stands out.
- Attachment** The strong bond a child forms with his or her primary caregiver.
- Attribution** An idea or belief about the etiology of a certain behavior.
- Authoritarian [parents]** Parenting style focused on excessive rules, rigid belief systems, and the expectation of unquestioned obedience.
- Authoritative [parents]** Parenting style focused on setting reasonable rules and expectations while encouraging communication and independence.
- Availability Heuristic** A rule of thumb stating that information more readily available in our memory is more important than information not as easily accessible.
- Aversion Therapy** A type of behavioral treatment where an aversive stimuli is paired with a negative behavior in hopes that the behavior will change in the future to avoid the aversive stimuli.
- Axon** The tail-like part of the neuron through which information exits the cell.
- Behavior Modification** The application of behavioral theory to change a specific behavior.
- Behavior Therapy** The application of behavioral theory (e.g. conditioning, reinforcement) in the treatment of mental illness.
- Behaviorism** The school of psychology founded on the premise that behavior is measurable and can be changed through the application of various behavioral principles.
- Bisexuality** Being attracted to or aroused by members of both genders. See Sexual Orientation.
- Blind Study** As a way to avoid the placebo effect in research, this type of study is designed without the subject's knowledge of the anticipated results and sometimes even the nature of the study. The subjects are said to be 'blind' to the expected results.
- Broca's Aphasia** An aphasia associated with damage to the Broca's area of the brain, demonstrated by the impairment in producing understandable speech.
- Burnout** Changes in thoughts, emotions, and behavior as a result of extended job stress and unrewarded repetition of duties. Burnout is seen as extreme dissatisfaction, pessimism, lowered job satisfaction, and a desire to quit.

Cell Body The main part of a neuron where the information is processed.

Centration A young child's tendency to focus only on his or her own perspective of a specific object and a failure to understand that others may see things differently.

Chemical Imbalance A generic term for the idea that chemical in the brain are either too scarce or too abundant resulting in a mental disorder such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Classical Conditioning The behavioral technique of pairing a naturally occurring stimulus and response chain with a different stimulus in order to produce a response which is not naturally occurring.

Client Centered Therapy A humanistic therapy based on Carl Roger's beliefs that an individual has an unlimited capacity for psychological growth and will continue to grow unless barriers are placed in the way.

Coercive Power Power derived through the ability to punish.

Cognition The process of receiving, processing, storing, and using information.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Treatment involving the combination of behaviorism (based on the theories of learning) and cognitive therapy (based on the theory that our cognitions or thoughts control a large portion of our behaviors).

Cognitive Dissonance The realization of contradictions in one's own attitudes and behaviors.

Cognitive Therapy The treatment approach based on the theory that our cognitions or thoughts control a large part of our behaviors and emotions. Therefore, changing the way we think can result in positive changes in the way we act and feel.

Compulsion The physical act resulting from an obsession. Typically a compulsive act is done in an attempt to alleviate the discomfort created by an obsession.

Conditioned Response The response in a stimulus-response chain that is not naturally occurring, but rather has been learned through its pairing with a naturally occurring chain.

Conditioned Stimulus The stimulus in a stimulus-response chain that is not naturally occurring, but rather has been learned through its pairing with a naturally occurring chain.

Conditioning The process of learning new behaviors or responses as a result of their consequences.

Conformity Changing your attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, or behaviors in order to be more consistent with others.

Consciousness Awareness of yourself and the world around you.

Conservation The understanding, typically achieved in later childhood, that matter remains the same even when the shape changes (i.e., a pound of clay is still a pound of clay whether it is rolled in a ball or pounded flat).

Consolidation The physiological changes in the brain associated with memory storage.

Consolidation Failure The failure to store information in memory.

Context Dependent Memory The theory that information learned in a particular situation or place is better remembered when in that same situation or place.

Continuous Reinforcement The application of reinforcement every time a specific behavior occurs.

Control Group The group of subjects in an experiment that does not receive the independent variable.

Correlation Statistical representation of a relationship between two or more variables which does not determine cause and effect.

Critical Period A time frame deemed highly important in developing in a healthy manner; can be physically, emotionally, behaviorally, or cognitively.

Crowding The psychological and psychological response to the belief that there are too many people in a specified area.

Crystallized Intelligence The part of intelligence which involves the acquisition, as opposed to the use, of information.

Decay Theory which states that memory fades and/or disappears over time if it is not used or accessed.

Declarative Memory The part of long-term memory where factual information is stored, such as mathematical formulas, vocabulary, and life events.

Deductive Reasoning Decision making process in which ideas are processed from the general to the specific.

Defenses (Defense Mechanisms) Psychological forces which prevent undesirable or inappropriate impulses from entering consciousness (e.g., forgetting responsibilities that we really didn't want to do, projecting anger onto a spouse as opposed to your boss). Also called Defense Mechanisms, Defense System, or Ego Defenses.

Delusion False belief system (e.g., believing you are Napoleon, have magical powers, or the false belief that others are 'out to get you.').

Dependent Variable The variable in an experiment that is measured; the outcome of an experiment.

Developmental Psychology The area of psychology focused on how children grow psychologically to become who they are as adults.

Difference Threshold The smallest change in perception which is noticeable at least 50% of the time.

Discrimination In behavioral theory, the learned ability to differentiate between two similar objects or situations.

Disorientation Inability to recognize or be aware of who we are (person), what we are doing (situation), the time and date (time), or where we are in relation to our environment (place). To be considered a problem, it must be consistent, result in difficulty functioning, and not due to forgetting or being lost.

Displacement The pushing out of older information in short term memory to make room for new information.

Dissociation A separation from the self, with the most severe resulting in Dissociative Identity Disorder. Most of us experience this in very mild forms such as when we are driving long distance and lose time or find ourselves day dreaming longer than we thought.

Distinctiveness The phenomenon in memory that states we are better able to remember information if it is distinctive or different from other information.

Divergent Thinking The ability to use previously gained information to debate or discuss issues which have no agreed upon definitive resolution.

Double Blind Study Research method in which both the subjects and the experimenter are unaware or 'blind' to the anticipated results.

Drive An internal motivation to fulfill a need or reduce the negative aspects of an unpleasant situation.

Ego In Psychoanalytical theory, the part of the personality which maintains a balance between our impulses (id) and our conscience (superego).

Ellis, Albert A cognitive Psychologist who developed the concept of Rational-Emotive Therapy.

Emotion Feelings about a situation, person, or objects that involves changes in physiological arousal and cognitions.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) The awareness of and ability to manage one's emotions in a healthy and productive manner.

Encoding The transformation of information to be stored in memory.

Episodic Memory Subcategory of Declarative memory where information regarding life events are stored.

Etiology Causal relationships of diseases; theories regarding how the specific disease or disorder began.

Experimental Group In research, the group of subjects who receive the independent variable.

Experimental Method Research method using random assignment of subjects and the manipulation of variables in order to determine cause and effect.

Experimenter Bias Errors in a research study due to the predisposed notions or beliefs of the experimenter.

Expert Power Power derived through advanced knowledge or experience in a particular subject.

External Locus of Control The belief that the environment has more control over life circumstances than the individual does.

Extinction The reduction and eventual disappearance of a learned or conditioned response after it is no longer paired with the unconditioned stimulus-response chain.

Extrinsic Motivation The desire or push to perform a certain behavior based on the potential external rewards that may be received as a result.

Factor Analysis A statistical technique used to determine the number of components in a set of data. These components are then named according to their characteristics allowing a researcher to break down information into statistical groups.

Family Therapy Treatment involving family members which seeks to change the unhealthy familial patterns and interactions.

Fixation In Freud's theory of psychosexual development, the failure to complete a stage successfully which results in a continuation of that stage into later adulthood.

Fixed Interval Schedule A schedule in which the reinforcement is presented after a specific period of time.

Fixed Ratio Schedule A schedule in which the reinforcement is presented after a specific number of responses.

Fetish A condition in which arousal and/or sexual gratification is attained through inanimate objects (shoes, pantyhose) or non-sexual body parts (feet, hair). Is considered a problem when the object is needed in order to obtain arousal or gratification and the individual can not complete a sexual act without this object present.

Frequency Effect The phenomenon in memory which states that we tend to remember information better if it is repeated.

Freud, Sigmund Dr. Freud is often referred to as the father of clinical psychology. His extensive theory of personality development (psychoanalytical theory) is the cornerstone for modern psychological thought, and consists of (1) the psychosexual stages of development, (2) the structural model of personality (id, ego, superego), and (3) levels of consciousness (conscious, subconscious, and unconscious). See Psychoanalysis.

Flooding A behavioral technique used to treat phobias in which the client is presented with the feared stimulus until the associated anxiety disappears.

Fluid Intelligence The part of intelligence which involves the use, as opposed to the acquisition, of information.

Framing Presenting information either positively or negatively in order to change the influence it has on an individual or group.

Free Association The psychoanalytic technique of allowing a patient to talk without direction or input in order to analyze current issues of the client.

Frontal Lobe The lobe at the front of the brain associated with movement, speech, and impulsive behavior.

Frustration The feelings, thoughts, and behaviors associated with not achieving a particular goal or the belief that a goal has been prematurely interrupted.

Fundamental Attribution Error The tendency to over estimate the internal attributes of another person's actions.

Gender Identity The internal sense of being either male or female. Usually congruent with biological gender, but not always as in Gender Identity Disorder.

Gender Role The accepted behaviors, thoughts, and emotions of a specific gender based upon the views of a particular society or culture.

Gender Typing The process of developing the behaviors, thoughts, and emotions associated with a particular gender.

Generalization The tendency to associate stimuli, and therefore respond similarly to, due to their closeness on some variable such as size, shape, color, or meaning.

Gestalt German word typically translated as meaning 'whole' or 'form.'

Gestalt Therapy Treatment focusing on the awareness and understanding of one's feelings.

Group Polarization The tendency for members of a cohesive group to make more extreme decisions due to the lack of opposing views.

Group Therapy Psychotherapy conducted with at least three or four non-related individuals who are similar in some way, such as gender, age, mental illness, or presenting problem.

Group Think The tendency for members of a cohesive group to reach decisions without weighing all the facts, especially those contradicting the majority opinion.

Gustation Sense of taste.

Habituation The decrease in response to a stimulus due to repetition (e.g., not hearing the ticking of a clock after getting used to it)

Hallucination False perception of reality (e.g., hearing voices that aren't there or seeing people who do not exist) [auditory (hearing); visual (sight); olfactory (smell); tactile (touch); and taste]

Halo Effect The tendency to assign generally positive or generally negative traits to a person after observing one specific positive or negative trait, respectively.

Health Psychology The specific field in psychology concerned with psychology's impact on health, physical well being, and illness.

Heterosexuality Being attracted to or aroused by members of the opposite gender. See Sexual Orientation.

Heuristic A rule of thumb based on experience used to make decisions.

Hierarchy of Needs Maslow's Theory of Motivation which states that we must achieve lower level needs, such as food, shelter, and safety before we can achieve higher level needs, such as belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.

Higher Order Conditioning Pairing a second conditioned stimulus with the first conditioned stimulus in order to produce a second conditioned response

Homeostasis The tendency of the body (and the mind) to naturally gravitate toward a state of equilibrium or balance.

Homophobia An irrational hostility, hatred, or fear of homosexuals.

Homosexuality Being attracted to or aroused by members of the same gender. See Sexual Orientation.

Humanistic Psychology A theoretical view of human nature which stresses a positive view of human nature and the strong belief in psychological homeostasis.

Humanistic Therapy Treatment focused on increasing awareness of one's self concept.

Hypnosis A deep state of relaxation where an individual is more susceptible to suggestions.

Hypnotherapist A trained, and often licensed, therapist who utilizes the therapeutic technique of hypnosis as part of a treatment regimen.

Hypnotist An individual, most likely unlicensed, who uses hypnosis techniques or variations of these techniques for a variety of reasons, including treatment and/or entertainment.

Hypothesis A prediction about the relationship between two or more variables.

Id In Psychoanalytical theory, the part of the personality which contains our primitive impulses such as sex, anger, and hunger.

Illusion Misperception of reality (e.g., the illusion of a lake in the middle of a desert).

Imagery Utilizing the mind to create a mental representation of a sensory experience.

Inappropriate Affect Expressing contradictory behavior when describing or experiencing an emotion (e.g., smiling when discussing something sad; laughing when talking about the death of a loved one).

Independent Variable The variable in an experiment that is manipulated or compared.

Inductive Reasoning Decision making process in which ideas are processed from the specific to the general.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology The area or specialty in psychology focused on the application of psychological principles in the work force.

Innate Occurring without learning, inborn.

Insight The understanding of a relationship between current thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors and where these originated or how they are maintained.

Internal Locus of Control The belief that an individual has more control over life circumstances than the environment does.

Instinct A behavior we are born with and therefore does not need to be learned.

Intelligence The ability to adapt to one's environment.

Intelligence Quotient [IQ] The scores achieved on psychological tests aimed at quantifying intellectual ability.

Intrinsic Motivation The motivation or desire to do something based on the enjoyment of the behavior itself rather than relying on or requiring external reinforcement.

Introversion The tendency to focus energy inward resulting in decreased social interaction.

Just Noticeable Difference The smallest change in a sensory perception that is detectable 50% of the time.

Latent Learning Learning that occurs without apparent reinforcement but is not demonstrated until such time as reinforcement occurs.

Law of Effect Theory proposed by Thorndike stating that those responses that are followed by a positive consequence will be repeated more frequently than those that are not.

Learned Helplessness A condition that occurs after a period of negative consequences where the person begins to believe they have no control.

Learning Theory Based on the idea that changes in behavior result more from experience and less from our personality or how we think or feel about a situation.

Legitimate Power Power derived through one's position, such as a police officer or elected official.

Libido Sigmund Freud's terminology of sexual energy or sexual drive.

Locus of Control A belief about the amount of control a person has over situations in their life.

Long Term Memory Relatively permanent memory.

Lucid Dream A dream in which you are aware of dreaming and are sometimes able to manipulate the dream.

Maturation Changes due to the natural process of aging as determined by your genetics

Mean A method of determining an average where the sum of the scores are divided by the number of scores.

Measure of Central Tendency An average (see Mean, Median, and/or Mode)

Median A method of determining an average by using the score that falls in the middle of the distribution.

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, 2nd. Edition An Objective test utilizing 567 items which have been empirically derived to measure a variety of psychological concerns.

MMPI-2 See Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, 2nd. Edition.

Mode A method of determining an average by using the score(s) which occurs most frequently.

Motivation The process that energizes and/or maintains a behavior.

Naturalistic Observation A research method where the subject(s) is(are) observed without interruption under normal or natural circumstances.

Negative Correlation A correlation where as one variable increases, the other decreases.

Neurotransmitter A chemical found in animals that plays a role in our behavior, cognitions, and emotions.

Nightmare A frightening dream occurring in REM sleep.

Nondeclarative Memory A subsystem within Long term memory which consists of skills we acquire through repetition and practice (e.g., dance, playing the piano, driving a car)

Normal Curve A graphical interpretation of a population that is 'bell shaped' as it has the highest frequency in the middle and this frequency diminishes the farther you get from the center on either end.

Norm An expectation based on multiple observations.

Object Permanence The understanding that objects exist even when they are not directly observed.

Objective Techniques A generic term for the psychological procedures used to measure personality which rely on measurable or objective techniques such as the MMPI-2 and WAIS-III.

Obsession A persistent and seemingly uncontrollable thought.

Olfaction The sense of smell.

Operant Conditioning Learning that occurs due to the manipulation of the possible consequences.

Overlearning A technique used to improve memory where information is learned to the point that it can be repeated without mistake more than one time.

Panic Attack Period of extreme anxiety and physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, shakiness, dizziness, and racing thoughts. Initial attacks are often reported to feel like a heart attack due to the heart palpitations. A medical exam should be conducted to rule out any such condition.

Perception The process of organizing and using information that is received through the senses.

Person Centered Therapy The therapeutic technique based on humanistic theory which is non-directive and empathic.

Personality The stable set of individual characteristics that make us unique.

Permissive [parents] Parenting style consisting of very few rules and allowing children to make most decisions and control their own behavior.

Persuasion The deliberate attempt to influence the thoughts, feelings or behaviors of another.

Phobia An intense fear of a specific object or situation. Most of us consider ourselves to have phobias, but to be diagnosable, the fear must significantly restrict our way of life.

Placebo A treatment condition used to control for the placebo effect where the treatment has no real effect on its own.

Placebo Effect The phenomenon in research where the subject's beliefs about the outcome can significantly effect the outcome without any other intervention.

Plasticity The ability of the brain, especially in our younger years to compensate for damage.

Pleasure Principle Freud's theory regarding the id's desire to maximize pleasure and minimize pain in order to achieve immediate gratification.

Population The entire group to which research is hoping to generalize (e.g., males, adults, U.S. citizens).

Positive Correlation A correlation where as one variable increases, the other also increases, or as one decreases so does the other.

Positive Reinforcement Something positive provided after a response in order to increase the probability of that response occurring in the future.

Prejudice Negative beliefs, attitudes, or feelings about a person's entire character based on only one characteristic. This belief is often based on faulty information.

Primacy Effect The tendency to remember the first bit of information in a series due to increased rehearsal.

Primary Reinforcer A reinforcer that meets our basic needs such as food or water.

Projection In Psychoanalytic Theory, the defense mechanism whereby we transfer or project our feelings about one person onto another.

Projective Techniques A generic term for the psychological procedures used to measure personality which rely on ambiguous stimuli.

Psychiatrist A medical doctor with training in mental illness.

Psychoanalysis Developed by Sigmund Freud, this type of therapy is known for long term treatment, typically several times per week, where the unresolved issues from the individual's childhood are analyzed and resolved. These issues are considered to be primarily unconscious in nature and are kept from consciousness through a complex defense system.

Psychodynamic Therapy A modern adaptation of psychoanalytic therapy which has made sometimes minor and sometimes major changes to Freud's original theories.

Psychology The study of emotion, cognition, and behavior, and their interaction.

Psychosis Break from reality, usually identified by hallucinations, delusions, and/or disorientation.

Punishment The adding of a negative stimulus in order to decrease a response (e.g., spanking a child to decrease negative behavior).

Random Assignment Assigning subjects to experimental groups based on chance.

Random Sample A group of subjects representing the population who are selected through chance.

Range A statistical term representing the difference between the highest score and the lowest score.

Rational Emotive Therapy A Cognitive Therapy based on Albert Ellis' theory that cognitions control our emotions and behaviors; therefore, changing the way we think about things will affect the way we feel and the way we behave.

Rationalization A defense mechanism where one believes or states an acceptable explanation for a behavior as opposed to the real explanation.

Reaction Formation A defense mechanism where unacceptable impulses are converted to their opposite.

Recency Effect The tendency to remember the last bit of information due to the shorter time available for forgetting.

Reconstruction Tendency to fill in the gaps in our memory and often believe these represent true memories.

Referent Power Power given to an individual due to respect and/or desire to be similar to that individual.

Rehearsal Repeating information in order to improve our recall of this information.

Reinforcer Anything that follows a behavior that increases the chances of that behavior occurring again.

Regression A defense mechanism where one reverts to an earlier stage of development.

Reliability A statistical measure of a tests consistency, or ability to result in similar scores if given repeatedly.

Representativeness Heuristic A rule of thumb where similarity to a prototype or similar situation dictates a decision.

Repression In Psychoanalytic Theory, the defense mechanism whereby our thoughts are pulled out of our consciousness and into our unconscious.

Retrieval The process of bringing material out of long term memory and into consciousness.

Reward Power Power derived through an ability to offer rewards.

Rogers, Carl A humanistic Psychologist who developed Client-Centered Therapy.

Rorschach Inkblot Test A projective technique utilizing ambiguous inkblots as stimuli.

Schema The cognitive structure utilized to make sense of the world.

Secondary Reinforcer A reinforcer other than one which meets our basic needs such as food or water (e.g., intellectual stimulation, money, praise).

Selection Bias Errors in the selection and placement of subjects into groups that results in differences between groups which could effect the results of an experiment.

Self Actualization The process of understanding oneself more completely and being aware of issues affecting one's life.

Self Efficacy One's belief in his or her own ability.

Self Serving Bias The tendency to assign internal attributes to successes and external factors to failures.

Semantic Memory The part of declarative memory that stores general information such as names and facts.

Sensation Information brought in through the senses.

Sensory Memory The brief storage of information brought in through the senses; typically only lasts up to a few seconds.

Sexual Orientation A feeling of attractedness or arousal associated with a particular gender. Sexual behavior can be a result of this but does not necessarily define a person's orientation.

Shaping Gradually molding a specific response by reinforcing responses that come close to the desired response.

Short Term Memory The stage of memory where information is stored for up to 30 seconds prior to either being forgotten or transferred to long term memory.

Skinner, B. F. Considered the father of behavioral therapy. He once stated that with the ability to control a child's environment, he could raise a child to become anything he wanted.

Social Facilitation The effect of other's presence on one's performance. Typically we perform simple or well-learned tasks better in front of others and difficult or novel tasks worse.

Social Loafing The tendency for people to work less on a task the greater the number of people are working on that task.

Social Psychology The branch of psychology which focuses on society and it's impact on the individual.

Social Roles Accepted behaviors associated with a particular position within a group.

Standard Deviation A statistical formula used to determine the amount of difference expected from one score to the next.

State A temporary internal characteristic (e.g., depressed, angry)

State Dependent Memory The theory that information learned in a particular state of mind (e.g., depressed, happy, somber) is more easily recalled when in that same state of mind.

Stimulus Anything in the environment to which one responds.

Storage The process of saving information in long term memory

Stress The physical and psychological result of internal or external pressure.

Stressor Anything, internal or external, which applies psychological pressure on an individual.

Sublimation A defense mechanism where undesired or unacceptable impulses are transformed into behaviors which are accepted by society.

Superego In Psychoanalytical theory, the part of the personality that represents the conscience.

Supertraits Hans Eysenck's term for his two distinct categories of personality traits. They include Introversion-Extroversion and Neuroticism. According to Eysenck, each of us fall on a continuum based on the degree of each supertraits.

Suppression The defense mechanism where we push unacceptable thoughts out of consciousness and into our unconscious.

Survey A research technique in which subjects respond to a series of questions.

Syllogism Aristotle's theory of reasoning where two true statements are followed by a single logical conclusion.

Systematic Desensitization A treatment technique where the client is exposed to gradually increasing anxiety provoking stimuli while relaxing; the goal is for the client to eventually confront a phobia or fear without the previously associated anxiety.

Tactile The sense of touch.

TAT See Thematic Apperception Test

Temperament A person's typical way of responding to his or her environment.

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) A subjective personality test where ambiguous pictures are shown to a subject and they are asked to tell a story related to them.

Theory A general idea about the relationship of two or more variables.

Trait A relatively permanent internal characteristic (e.g., friendly, outgoing)

Transference Intense feelings directed toward the therapist that many clients experience in the process of therapy.

Type A Personality A theory used to describe a person with a significant number of traits focused on urgency, impatience, success, and excessive competition.

Type B Personality A theory used to describe person with a significant number of traits focused on relaxation, lack of urgency, and normal or reduced competition.

Unconditional Positive Regard The nonjudgmental empathy and respect for another person.

Unconditioned Response The response in a stimulus-response chain that is naturally occurring as opposed to learned.

Unconditioned Stimulus The stimulus in a stimulus-response chain that is naturally occurring as opposed to learned.

Unconscious According to Freud, the area of the psyche where unknown wishes and needs are kept that play a significant role in our conscious behavior.

Validity Statistical technique used to determine if a test is actually measuring what it is intended to measure.

Variable Any factor which has the potential to influence another factor in a research study.

Variable Interval Schedule A schedule in which the reinforcement is presented after a varying amount of time.

Variable Ratio Schedule A schedule in which the reinforcement is presented after a varying number of responses.

WAIS-III See Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Third Edition.

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Third Edition An objective measure of intelligence. The Stanford-Binet test is also used, has very similar validity, but is not as popular.

Wernicke's Aphasia Aphasia resulting from damage to the Wernicke's area of the frontal lobe. Affects written and spoken language.