¡Oooooooh! La historia de Binet es buenísima!

Básicamente,en 1898 el gobierno francés le encomendó la tremebunda tarea de desarrollar un método que las autoridades educativas pudieran usar para distinguir entre los estudiantes que tienen algún tipo de problema para aprender al mismo ritmo y en la misma forma que sus compañeros (algo a lo que entonces se le refería como “retraso mental”) y aquellos estudiantes que obtienen malas calificaciones por desatender la escuela.

Es importante señalar que esto ocurre en una época donde la Psicofísica estaba en pleno auge. Es decir, mientras los psicofísicos de la época se preocupaban por estudiar la relación entre las cualidades reales de los estímulos y la sensación/experiencia reportada por los sujetos; Binet tuvo que ingeniárselas para enfrentar un problema inverso:

Unlike the earlier anthropometricians and psychophysicists with their measurement

and manipulation of simple physical quantities, Binet realized he had to measure a rather

complex variable that could be assumed to be “out there” but to which we have no direct

access. In short, something we now refer to as a latent variable.

Binet’s solution was innovative in several respects. First, he designed a large variety of

tasks supposed to be indicative of the major mental functions, such as memory, reasoning,

judgment, and abstraction, believed to be included in intelligence. The variety was

assumed to cover the “richness of intelligence” in his above quote. Second, he used these

tasks in what he became primarily known for—a fully standardized test. Everything in

it, the testing materials, administration, and scoring rules, was carefully protocolled. As a

result, each proctor independently administering the test had to produce exactly the same

results for the same students. But although Binet was the first to do so, the idea of standardization

was not original at all. It was entirely in agreement with the new methodological

tradition of the psychological experiment with its standardization and randomization,

which had psychology fully in its grip since Wundt opened his laboratory in Leipzig in

1897. Binet had been in communication with Wundt and had visited his laboratory.

Third, Binet wanted to scale his test items but realized there was no natural scale for the

measurement of intelligence. His solution was equally simple as ingenious; he chose to

use the chronological age of his students to determine scale values for his items. During

a pretest, he tried out all items with samples of students from each of the age groups 3–11

and assigned as scale value to each item the chronological age of the group for which it

appeared to be answered correctly by 75% of its students. These scale values were then

used to estimate the mental age at which each student actually performed. (Six years later,

William Stern proposed to use the ratio of mental and chronological age as intelligence

quotient [IQ]. A few more years later, Lewis Terman introduced the convention of multiplying

this IQ by 100. Ever since, the mean IQ for a population has invariably been set

at 100.)

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