

F R I
ABA
TERMINOLOGY
AND ACRONYMS
USED IN EVERYDAY
PRACTICE * PART 1

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ABA Terminology and Acronyms Used in Everyday Practice

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OUTLINE

Science Terminology	3
Experimentation	4
Behavior Basics	6
Functions of Behavior	8
Preference Assessments	9
Functional Assessments	10
SD/S ^{r+} /S ^{r-} /S ^{dp+} /S ^{dp-} /S ^Δ	11
Motivating Operations	13
Behavior Reduction	14
Differential Reinforcement	16
Interventions	17
ABA Terminology and Acronyms Used in Everyday Practice: Part 2	19

Science Terminology

Science Terminology

Term	Definition
Parsimony	requires that all simple, logical explanations for the phenomena under investigation be ruled out experimentally before more complex or abstract explanations are considered
Philosophic doubt	requires the scientist to continually question the truthfulness of what is regarded as fact. Scientific knowledge must always be viewed as tentative, and the scientist must constantly be willing to replace with new discoveries even those facts of which he is most certain
Behaviorism	the theory or doctrine that human or animal psychology can be accurately studied only through the examination and analysis of objectively observable and quantifiable behavioral events, in contrast with subjective mental states.
Radical behaviorism	a thoroughgoing form of behaviorism that attempts to understand all human behavior, including private events such as thoughts and feelings, terms of controlling variables in the history of the person (ontogeny) and the species (phylogeny)
Mentalism	an approach to explaining behavior that assumes that a mental, or "inner," dimension exists that differs from a behavioral dimension and that phenomena in this dimension either directly cause or at least mediate some forms of behavior, if not all
Explanatory fiction	a fictitious or hypothetical variable that often takes form of another name for the observed phenomenon it claims to explain and contributes nothing to a functional account or understanding of the phenomenon, such as "intelligence" or "cognitive awareness" as explanations for why an organism punches the lever when the light is on and food is available but does not push the lever when the light is off and no food is available.
Hypothetical construct	a presumed but unobserved process or entity. For example, Freud's mental device "ego" is a hypothetical construct.

Experimentation

Experimentation

Term	Definition
Experimental design	refers to the particular arrangement of conditions in a study so that meaningful comparisons of the effects for the presence, absence, or different values of the independent variable can be made. (Difference between an FBA and FA)
Correlation	can be used to predict the probability that one event will occur. Correlation is not causation.
Single-subject design	a wide variety of research designs that use a form of experimental reasoning called baseline logic to demonstrate the effects of the independent variable on the behavior of individual subjects. a wide variety of research designs that use a form of experimental reasoning called baseline logic to demonstrate the effects of the independent variable on the behavior of individual subjects
Baseline	a condition of an experiment in which the independent variable is not present; data obtained during baseline are the basis for determining the effects of the independent variable.
A-B design	a two-phase experimental design consisting of a pre-treatment baseline condition (A) followed by a treatment condition (B).
Reversal design / A-B-A design	any experimental design in which the researcher attempts to verify the effect of the independent variable by "reversing" responding to a level obtained in a previous condition: encompasses experimental designs in which the independent variable is withdrawn.
A-B-A-B design	an experiment reintroducing the B condition enables the replication of treatment effects, which strengthens the demonstration of experimental control
B-A-B design	begins with application of the independent variable: the treatment. Used in cases where treatment cannot be delayed.
Inter-observer agreement (IOA)	the degree to which two or more independent observers report the same observed values after measuring the same events

Experimentation

Independent variable	the variable that is systematically manipulated by the researcher in an experiment to see whether changes in the independent variable produce reliable changes in the dependent variable. In applied behavior analysis, it is usually an environmental even or condition antecedent or consequent to the dependent variable. Sometimes called the intervention or treatment variable.
Dependent variable	the variable in an experiment measured to determine if it changes as a result of manipulations of the independent variable; in applied behavior analysis, it represents some measure of a socially significant behavior.
Confounding variables	uncontrolled variables known or suspected to exert an influence one dependent variable.
Extraneous variables	any aspect of the experimental setting that must be held constant to prevent unplanned environmental variation
Multi-element design	the treatment design provides an experimentally sound and efficient method for comparing the effects of two or more treatments

Behavior Basics



Behavior Basics

Term	Definition
Behavior	the activity of living organisms, includes everything that people do. That portion of an organism's interaction with its environment that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of the environment. Must pass the “dead man’s test”.
Functional analysis of behavior	an analysis of behavior in terms of its products or consequences. Focuses on experimental design, and purposeful manipulation of stimuli to observe changes in behavior.
Target behavior	the response class selected for intervention; can be defined either functionally or topographically
Pivotal behavior	a behavior that, when learned, produces corresponding modifications or co-variation in other untrained behaviors
Social validity	refers to the extent to which target behaviors are appropriate, intervention procedures are acceptable, and important to the client and client community
Operational definition	the product of breaking down a broad concept, such as "aggressiveness," into its observable and reliably measurable component behaviors. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a title or brief description of the behavior• the topography (physical movements involved) of the behavior• frequency of the behavior• length or duration of the behavior• description of the behavior's intensity

Behavior Basics

Function the function of behavior is the reason people behave in a certain way.

Topography the physical form or shape of a behavior

Rule-governed behavior behavior controlled by a rule; enables human behavior to come under the indirect control of temporally remote or improbable but potentially significant consequences.

Pairing a common term that ABA professionals often use to describe the process of building or maintaining rapport with a client. Pairing themselves with reinforcers

Functions of Behavior

Functions of Behavior

Term	Definition
Functions of behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• escape/avoidance: the individual behaves in order to get out of doing something he/she does not want to do.• attention: the individual behaves to get focused attention from parents, teachers, siblings, peers, or other people that are around them.• access to tangibles: the individual behaves in order to get a preferred item or participate in an enjoyable activity.• automatic /sensory stimulation: the individual behaves in a specific way because it feels good to them.
Socially mediated functions of behavior	socially mediated means "requiring the involvement of another person": attention, escape from demand, access to tangibles
Automatic functions of behavior	automatic means that a behavior creates an outcome without the involvement of another person

Preference Assessments

Preference Assessments

Term	Definition
Stimulus preference assessment	<p>refers to a variety of procedures to determine a) stimulus that a person prefers b) the relative preference values (high v low) of those stimuli and c) the conditions under which those preference values remain in effect, and their presumed value as reinforcers. Types of SPAs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single stimulus • free operant observations • paired stimulus • multiple stimulus with replacement (MSW) • multiple stimulus without replacement (MSWO)
Single stimulus preference assessment /Free operant observations	<p>a stimulus is presented and a person's reaction to it is noted. May best be suited for individuals with trouble selecting from two or more stimuli- duration based</p>
Paired choice preference assessment	<p>each trial in the paired choice preference assessment consists of the simultaneous presentation of two stimuli. Each stimulus is matched with all other stimuli in the set. The observer notes which stimulus the earner chooses. The stimuli are rank-ordered in terms of high, medium, and low preference based on how many times a stimulus is chosen. AKA: Forced Choice.</p>
Multiple stimuli preference assessment with replacement (MSW)	<p>multiple stimuli are presented and the learner chooses a stimulus and it is replaced back and the items not chosen are replaced with new ones.</p>
Multiple stimuli preference assessment without replacement (MSWO)	<p>multiple stimuli are presented and the learner chooses a stimulus and it is not replaced and the remaining stimuli are rearranged and the next trial begins. The items are ranked based on preference of which was selected first, second, third, etc.</p>
Reinforcer assessment	<p>refers to a variety of direct, empirical methods for representing one or more stimuli contingent on a target response and measuring their effectiveness as reinforcers</p>

Functional Behavior Assessment

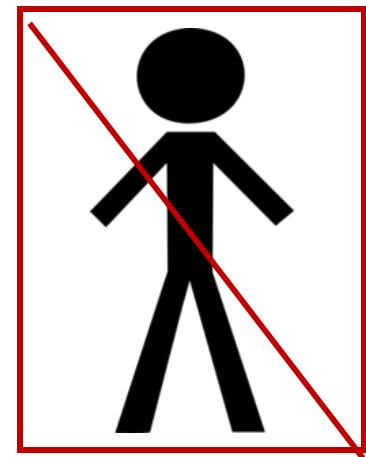
Functional Assessments

Term	Definition
Functional behavior assessment	FBA methods can be classified into three types—functional (experimental) analysis, descriptive analysis, and indirect assessment.
Indirect functional assessment	structured interviews, checklists, rating scales, or questionnaires used to obtain information from people who are familiar with the person exhibiting the problem behavior.
Descriptive functional behavior assessment	direct observation of problem behavior and the antecedent and consequent events under naturally occurring conditions. Anecdotal observation a form of direct, continuous observation in which the observer records a descriptive, temporally sequenced account of all behavior(s) of interest and the antecedent conditions and consequences for those behaviors as those events occur in the client's natural environment
ABC recording	the preferred method to use for behavioral assessment to determine which behavior to target for change.
Functional analysis	an analysis of the purposes (functions) of problem behavior, wherein antecedents and consequences representing those in the person's natural routines are arranged within an experimental design so that their separate effects on problem behavior can be observed and measured. The four conditions typically tested in a functional analysis are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• escape from demand• attention• access to tangibles• automatic / sensory
Ecological assessment	an assessment protocol that acknowledges complex interrelationships between environment and behavior - a method for obtaining data across multiple settings and persons

SD/S^{r+/r-}/S^{dp+/dp-}/S^Δ

Term	Definition
Discriminative stimulus	a stimulus in the presence of which responses of some type have been reinforced and in the absence of which the same type of responses have occurred and not been reinforced.
SD	Discriminative Stimulus.
Sr+/Sr-/Sdp+/Sdp-/SΔ	SD-stimulus can become associated with another event when it is followed by either reinforcement or punishment. Then it is considered a discriminative stimulus (Sd). In other words, when that stimulus is present, it indicates the availability or possibility of reinforcement Sr or punishment Sdp. S-Delta-a stimulus is associated with the unavailability of reinforcement; it is called an S-Delta condition.
Reinforcement	this term is one of the most important principle of behavior and a key element of most behavior change programs. Occurs when a stimulus change immediately follows a response and increases the future frequency of that type of behavior in similar conditions.
Punishment	occurs when stimulus change immediately follows a response and decreases the future frequency of that type of behavior in similar conditions.
Positive reinforcement	occurs when a behavior is followed immediately by the presentation of a stimulus that increases the future frequency of the behavior in similar conditions- contrast with negative reinforcement.
Negative reinforcement	the occurrence of a response produces the removal, termination, reduction, or postponement of a stimulus, which leads to an increase in the future occurrence of that response.
Positive Punishment	a behavior is followed immediately by the presentation of a stimulus that decreases the future frequency of the behavior. Sometimes called Type I punishment.
Negative punishment	a response behavior is followed immediately by the removal of a stimulus (or a decrease in the intensity of the stimulus), that decreases the future frequency of similar responses under similar conditions. Sometimes called Type II punishment

SD/S ^Δ	+ Add to Environment	- Remove from Environment
Increase Behavior 	Positive Reinforcement S^{r+}	Negative Reinforcement S^{r-}
Decrease Behavior 	Positive Punishment S^{dp+}	Negative Punishment S^{dp-}

**Socially
Mediated****Automatic**

Motivating Operations



Motivating Operations

Term	Definition
Motivating operation (MO/EO)	an environmental variable that (a) alters (increases or decreases) the reinforcing effectiveness of some stimulus, object, or event; and (b) alters (increases or decreases) the current frequency of all behavior that have been reinforced by that stimulus, object, or event.
Value-altering effect	an alteration in the reinforcing effectiveness of a stimulus, object, or event as a result of a motivating operation.
Function-altering effect	a relatively permanent change in an organism's repertoire of MO, stimulus, and response relations, caused by reinforcement, punishment, an extinction procedure, or a recovery from punishment procedure.
Behavior-altering effect	an alteration in the current frequency of behavior that has been reinforced by the stimulus that is altered in effectiveness by the same motivating operation.
Evocative effect / Establishing operation	an increase in the current frequency of behavior that has been reinforced by the stimulus that is increased in reinforcing effectiveness by the same motivating operation
Abative effect / Abolishing operation	a decrease in the current frequency of behavior that has been reinforced by the stimulus that is increased in reinforcing effectiveness by the same motivating operation
Satiation	a decrease in the frequency of operant behavior presumed to be the result of continued contact with or consumption of a reinforcer that has followed the behavior.
Deprivation	the state of an organism with respect to how much time has elapsed since it has consumed or contacted a particular type of reinforcer: also, refers to a procedure for increasing the effectiveness of a reinforcer.

Behavior Reduction

Behavior Reduction

Term	Definition
Functionally equivalent	serving the same function or purpose, producing the same consequences
Response cost	the contingent loss of reinforcers (e.g. a fine), producing a decrease of the frequency of behavior; a form of negative punishment
Extinction	the discontinuing of a reinforcement of a previously reinforced behavior; the primary effect is a decrease in the frequency of the behavior until it reaches a pre-reinforced level or ultimately ceases to occur.
Escape extinction	behaviors maintained with negative reinforcement are placed on escape extinction when those behaviors are not followed by termination of the aversive stimulus; emitting the target behavior does not enable the person to escape the aversive situation
Sensory extinction	the process by which behaviors maintained by automatic reinforcement are placed on extinction by masking or removing the sensory consequence.
Response blocking	a procedure in which the therapist physically intervenes as soon as the learner begins to emit a problem behavior to prevent completion of the targeted behavior.
Planned ignoring	a procedure for implementing time-out in which social reinforcers - usually attention, physical contact, and verbal interaction - are withheld for a brief period contingent on the occurrence of the target behavior.
Extinction burst	an increase in the frequency of responding when an extinction procedure is initially implemented.
Spontaneous recovery	a behavioral effect associated with extinction in which the behavior suddenly begins to occur after its frequency has decreased to its pre-reinforcement level or stopped entirely

Behavior Reduction

Time-out from positive reinforcement	the contingent withdrawal of the opportunity to earn positive reinforcement or the loss of access to positive reinforcers for a specified time; a form of negative punishment.
Exclusion time-out	a procedure for implementing time-out in which, contingent on the occurrence of a target behavior, the person is removed physically from the current environment for a specified period.
Non-exclusion time-out	a procedure for implementing time-out in which, contingent on the occurrence of the target behavior, the person remains within the setting, but does not have access to reinforcement, for a specified period.
Restitutional overcorrection / Positive practice	a form of overcorrection in which, contingent on the problem behavior, the learner is required to repair the damage or return the environment to its original state and then to engage in additional behavior to bring the environment to a condition vastly better than it was in prior to the misbehavior.
Behavioral contrast	the phenomenon in which a change in one component of a multiple schedule that increases or decreases the rate of responding on that component is accompanied by a change in the response rate in the opposite direction on the other, unaltered component of the schedule.

Differential Reinforcement

Differential Reinforcement

Term	Definition
Differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO)	a procedure for decreasing problem behavior in which reinforcement is contingent on the absence of the problem behavior during or at specific times. Any behavior OTHER than the behavior targeted for reduction is reinforced.
Differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA)	a procedure for decreasing problem behavior in which reinforcement is delivered for a behavior that serves as a desirable alternative to the behavior targeted for reduction and withheld following instances of the problem behavior
Differential reinforcement of incompatible behavior (DRI)	a procedure for decreasing problem behavior in which reinforcement is delivered for a behavior that is topographically incompatible with the behavior targeted for reduction and withheld following instances of the problem behavior
Differential reinforcement of high rates (DRH)	schedule of reinforcement in which the reinforcement is provided at the end of a predetermined interval contingent on the number of responses emitted during the interval being greater than a gradually increasing criterion based on the individual's performance in previous intervals.
Differential reinforcement of low rates (DRL)	schedule of reinforcement in which the reinforcement a) follows each occurrence of the target behavior that is separated from the previous response by a minimum inter-response time or b) is contingent on the number of responses within a period of time not exceeding a predetermined criterion

Interventions



Interventions

Term	Definition
Contingent	describes reinforcement (or punishment) that is delivered only after the target behavior has occurred.
Naturally existing contingency	any contingency of reinforcement (or punishment) that operates independent of the behavior analyst's or practitioner's efforts; includes socially mediated contingencies contrived by other people and already in effect in the relevant setting.
Contrived contingency	any contingency of reinforcement (or punishment) designed and implemented by a behavior analyst or practitioner to achieve the acquisition, maintenance, and/or generalization of a targeted behavior change.
Antecedent intervention	a behavior change strategy that manipulates contingency-independent antecedent stimuli (motivating operation).
Consequence intervention	a behavior change strategy that delivers punishment after a behavior targeted for reduction has occurred.
Discrete trial	DTT is a structured ABA technique that breaks down skills into small, “discrete” components Steps of a discrete trial: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• antecedent• prompt• response• consequence for a correct response• consequence for an incorrect response• inter-trial interval
Task analysis	the process of breaking a complex skill or series of behaviors into smaller, teachable units
Natural environment teaching	teaches skills outside of a structured setting in the “natural environment” where the setting is related to the skill. Reinforcers are based on preferred items native to the learning environment, and “Natural consequences” contingencies are available.

Interventions



Generalization	the extent to which a learner is able to perform a learned skill across multiple environments, with multiple people.
Teaching sufficient examples	a strategy for promoting generalized behavior change that consists of teaching the learner to respond to a subset of all of the relevant stimulus and response examples and then assessing the learner's performance on untrained examples.
Teaching loosely	randomly varying functionally irrelevant stimuli within and across teaching sessions; promotes setting/situation generalization by reducing the likelihood that a single or small group of noncritical stimuli will acquire exclusive control over the target behavior
Maintenance	extent to which the learner continues to perform the target behavior after a portion or all of the intervention has been terminated
Behavioral momentum	a metaphor to describe a rate of responding and its resistance to change following an alteration in reinforcement conditions.
High-probability (high-p) request sequence	an antecedent intervention in which two to five easy tasks with a known history of learner compliance (the high-p requests) are presented in quick succession immediately before requesting the target task, the low-p request.
Premack principle	principle that states that making the opportunity to engage in a high-probability behavior contingent on the occurrence of a low-frequency behavior will function as reinforcement for the low-frequency behavior. Also known as “grandma’s law”.
Treatment integrity	the extent to which the independent variable is applied exactly as planned and described and no other unplanned variables are administered inadvertently along with the planned treatment
Treatment drift	an undesirable situation in which the independent variable of an experiment is applied differently during later stages than it was at the outset

ABA Terminology and Acronyms Used in Everyday Practice: Part 2

OBiGOBi

ABA Terminology and Acronyms Used in Everyday Practice: Part 2

Term	
Methods of measurement	frequency, duration, rate, magnitude, inter-response time (IRT), response latency discontinuous measurement, continuous measurement measurement by permanent product time sampling, Interval recording
Shaping, chaining, fading	forward chaining, backward chaining, whole task, backward chaining with leaps ahead shaping, terminal behavior, successive approximations fading, prompt fading
Reinforcement	types of reinforcement schedules of reinforcement (FR1, FI, VR, VI) token economies
Group contingencies	independent group contingency, dependent group contingency, interdependent group contingency, hero procedure
Verbal behavior	verbal operants