Description and Reflection

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Description:

My concept map follows a hierarchical structure. The root node is Memory, the general topic of the module I had chosen. As you traverse down the map, the topics become less general and inclusive, which allows for a logical and coherent flow of information since more general topics and ideas will have more child topics. The leaf nodes of the concept map are the core learning ideas from each lesson. Arrows connect each topic/idea in a logical way, indicating a parent/child relationship. Some relationships have a description that indicates that the child is not just a subtopic of the parent. Thus, as you explore the concept map and follow the relationships between topics, you will be delving deeper into the intricacies of a specific portion of a lesson presented in Module 1.

I coloured the topics in a way that made the content more digestible for me. Similar to chunking in short term memory, I group subtopics into larger, more general topics. Each colour falls under the category of its root. So for example, Conditioning would be the parent topic for all the pink coloured topics.

Reflection:

Conditioning is a form of implicit memory that affects our everyday life. It helps us perform actions and respond to situations unconsciously and automatically, which is imperative for learning and growing as an individual. A personal experience that exemplifies this is with skiing. When I was younger, I would frequently ski during the winter, either with family or with friends during weekend trips to Blue Mountain, or a nearby ski resort like Mt. St Louis Moonstone. However, for the past several years, due to a plethora of reasons, I have not gone skiing. From Module 1, we learn about the concept of Decay, where memories fade due to the passage of time. Last winter, I was invited to go skiing with some friends, but I was afraid I would not remember how to ski anymore due to the long break from the sport. To my pleasant surprise, after testing the waters with a simple slope, I was able to ski at a level relative to what I had done in the past. The reason I was able to adapt so quickly and remember how to ski is due to my experiences with the activity in my childhood. Through operant conditioning, the law of effect states that reinforcers and punishers lead to operant behaviours. In this case, the muscle memory of skiing that I had stored in my long-term memory is a form of implicit memory that formed through operant learning. Reinforcers, such as completing a slope or succeeding with a jump, and punishers such as falling lead to a strong foundation in my long-term memory that helped me “re-learn” how to ski extremely quickly.

My methods of studying have also changed since reading Module 1. Previously, I had a bad habit of procrastinating which led to me studying in large chunks near the due date. This caused my grades to drop, despite studying incredibly hard for long hours. In the lesson on memory retrieval, I learned that retroactive interference occurs when new information interferes with our ability to retrieve old information, and that distributed practice is superior to massed practice as a result. Moreover, using enrichment techniques introduced in the memory encoding lesson, similar to the concept map, I’ve started using elaboration to help me encode information better by connecting new information with existing information. I’ve found that not only does this help me encode new information more efficiently, it also assists with storing information as semantic memory.