

THE COGNITIVE APPROACH



OVERVIEW OF THE COGNITIVE APPROACH

This is concerned with the study of mental processes such as memory, language production, thinking & reasoning and perception.

- **Assumptions:**

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OVERVIEW OF THE COGNITIVE APPROACH

This is concerned with the study of mental processes such as memory, language production, thinking & reasoning and perception.

- **Assumptions:**

1. All behaviour is determined by **mental processes** within the brain such as memory, language & problem solving. These processes can not be directly observed & have to be inferred by scientific measurement.
2. Our minds work like computers: they are **information processors**. The brain inputs, stores and outputs information, and this is the best way of explaining our thinking and behaviour.



COGNITIVE EXPLANATIONS FOR BEHAVIOUR:

How can cognitive psychology explain the behaviour in each of these core studies?

- **Loftus & Palmer:** (Language & Memory):

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- **Baron-Cohen et al** (Autism & Theory of Mind):

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- **Savage-Rumbaugh et al** (Apes & Language):

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EVALUATING THE COGNITIVE APPROACH:

Give an example of each strength & weakness from one cognitive study

- **Strengths:**

- Cognitive studies have **useful practical applications** in everyday life:

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- Studies provide **objective evidence** through controlled scientific study:

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EVALUATING THE COGNITIVE APPROACH

- **Weaknesses:**

- The computer analogy is **reductionist**: it gives a simplified view of behaviour & causes.

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- Studies may **lack ecological validity** (laboratory experiments are often used)

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