

The results of these three experiments are discussed in terms of the Pearce-Hall (1980) model of conditioning, whereby the predictive accuracy of the first CS is seen as an important determinant of its associative strength

1. Collins, L., Young, D.B., Davies, K. and Pearce, J.M. (1983) Q. Jl. exp. Psychol., 35B, 275-290.
2. Pearce, J.M. and Hall, G. (1980) Psychol. Rev., 87, 532-552.

Conversation Analysis and the Empirical Study of Verbal Behaviour.

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From the standpoint of the experimental analysis of behaviour, B. F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior (1957) has been criticised for its failure to generate a significant ongoing programme of empirical research. The critique of Skinner's analysis (Place, 1981) suggests that this is due (a) to his failure to draw an effective distinction between words and sentences and (b) to the use of a taxonomy based on the antecedents rather than the consequences of verbal behaviour. The mand, however, is one concept introduced in Verbal Behavior which not only has to be interpreted as the utterance of a sentence, but is also defined in terms of its characteristic effect on the behaviour of the listener.

In Chapter 3 of Verbal Behavior 'a mand' is defined as a verbal operant whose emission by the speaker is reinforced by the listener's response in emitting the behaviour specified in the first speaker's mand. But since the listener's response cannot be relied upon, unless that too is reinforced, it follows that the mand is effectively defined in terms of its position in a three part verbal transaction consisting of (1) the speaker's mand, (2) the listener's response and (3) the first speaker's reinforcement of the listener's response. On pages 38-39 of Verbal Behavior three examples of such three part verbal transactions are presented in diagrammatic form.

Such three part verbal transactions are examples of what would be described in the terminology of Conversation Analysis as 'a three turn sequence' (Levinson 1983) consisting of an 'adjacency pair' (Schegloff

1968), the mand and the listener's response which it specifies, followed by a 'response token' (Schegloff 1982), the reinforcement of the listener's response by the first speaker. This remarkable parallel suggests that, despite the very different conceptual framework on which it is based, the rapidly expanding research programme in Conversation Analysis being developed by sociologists in the Ethnomethodological tradition (Heritage 1984) can be viewed as supplying the missing programme of research into verbal behaviour.

References

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THE STRENGTH OF THE ORIENTING RESPONSE DURING INHIBITORY CONDITIONING

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The strength of the orienting response (OR) to a discrete light was examined in three inhibitory conditioning experiments using rats. In Experiment 1 light presentations were negatively correlated with food; this retarded the decline in the strength of the OR to the light relative to a condition in which the light and food were presented randomly. In Experiments