Social Cognitive Theory

CD 446
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Background

- Social learning theory, social cognitive theory and constructivist theory
- Social learning theory and social cognitive theory, an evolution
- Social interactions and context as contributors to learning processes
- The processes and the content of learning
Social Learning and Social Cognitive Theory

- Bandura – from behavioral learning theory to social learning theory; explaining prosocial and deviant behavior
- What is the role of observation and modeling in learning?
  - Distinction between knowledge acquired (learning) and performance (behavior)
  - The importance of performance context
  - “Internal standards and self-evaluative reactions” – Bandura, 1986
Types of Learning

- **Enactive** – do and experience consequences as information
- **Vicarious** – learning through observation (in the absence of behavior)
- **Latent** – learning through exposure displayed later
Theories of Imitation

- Instinctual
- Developmentally limited (a point of disagreement within Developmental Psych.)
- Conditioned – a class of learned behavior
- Instrumental – “matched-dependent”
Functions of Modeling

- Facilitates responses which can then be reinforced – two edged sword!
- Creates expectations which reinforce inhibition or disinhibition
- Provides instructional vehicle for observational learning
Observational Learning

- Includes behavior, context and consequences (ideally – watch out for perceptual capture and foreclosure)
- Attention, retention, production and motivation
- *Cognitive Modeling and Self-Instruction
Attention

- Focus, key elements – relationship to Ausebel
- Perspective – are they seeing what you want them to see, culture and experience impacts
- Relationships and closure – sequences and attending all the way to the end; how do you know when you’re done?
Retention

- Mental representations – connect to information processing and memory: verbal and visual images, rehearsal, practice, mnemonics
- Developmental characteristics of memory; intelligence and style characteristics
Production

- Practice in the same context
- Feedback and coaching
- Individualization of production
- From imitation to true production
Motivation and Reinforcement

- Anticipating reinforcement as a motivator for attention, retention and production
- Reinforcement as essential to maintenance of learning
- Three types of consequences: direct, vicarious and self-managed (note applies to both Retention & Production)
*Cognitive Modeling

- Utilizes model explanation and demonstration along with verbalization of model’s thinking and reasons for performing particular acts
- Build in “errors” and “corrections” to provide self-talk model
- Build in self-reinforcing and self-efficacy statements
*Self-instruction

- Cognitive modeling, overt guidance, overt self-guidance, faded overt self-guidance, covert self-instruction
- Can help children with pacing and self-regulation
- Build in checks for accuracy and completion; assists all children (strategy helpful to those experiencing ADD, ADHD and LD)
An important side comment -

- Cognitive shaping of behavior
- Self-talk as a self-regulation, guidance and therapeutic tool
- We are what we think we are…? 
- Experience and the creation of personal narrative
*Rule Learning*

- Language common example
- Model provides examples of the rule, keeps the rule constant while varying non-relevant elements (e.g. quantities in an equation, sides on a geometric figure)
- Verbalized description of process increases transfer
Factors Influencing Observational Learning

- Developmental characteristics of learner
- Prestige and competence of model (beware self-deprecation, self-doubt and pessimism)
- Vicarious consequences
- Outcome expectations
- Goal setting
- Self-efficacy - *Accessibility of model (Woolfolk, pp. 318-319)
Self-Efficacy and Self-Concept

- Self-concept, self-image and self-esteem
- Self-efficacy – beliefs about specific capabilities and ability to make a difference/change things
- Self-efficacy is a key concept in engagement with learning and performance of behaviors
Triadic Reciprocal Model

Reciprocal Determinism

Person \(\rightarrow\) Environment \(\rightarrow\) Behavior

Environment \(\rightarrow\) Person

Interactive Context

“...human functioning is explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocality in which behavior, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other.

Bandura, 1986, p. 18
Complexity of Elements

- **Person** or Self-influences: expectations, attributions, goals, abilities, skills, self-regulatory characteristics, experience...
- **Environment**: classroom AND culture, home, community, interpersonal, linguistic, ...
- **Behavior**: achievement AND task, interpersonal, self-help, ...
Knowing Bodies (EM Chapt. 4)

- Embodiment of knowledge
  - In person
  - In context
  - In behavior

- Example:
  - Where is attention embodied?
  - Interactivity of the coming into being of embodied elements
Some Applications of Observational Learning

- Causes us to attend
- Provides guidance (cueing) for using and/or refining acquired behaviors
- Provides information influencing our ideas about appropriateness and consequences, “ripple effects”
- Suggests new behaviors and their use
- Arouses and attaches emotion
Self-modeling

- Observing one’s own behavior
- Recording accuracy
- Impact of errors and successes
- Use of “expert” feedback and/or interpretation
The Importance of Goals

- Modeled standards; normative and absolute
- Commitment
- Specificity
- Proximity – long and short term
- Difficulty – challenging but attainable
- Self-set goals
- Progress feedback and contracts
Components of Self-Regulation

- Self-observation
- Self-judgment
- Self-reaction

All operate in the context of learner goals and constitute an on-going interactive process.
**Self-Regulation** (Bandura, 1986)

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*Characteristics of Self-Regulation

- Levels of acquisition and engagement: observation, imitation, self-controlled, self-regulated
- Developmental variance (Kopp)
- Learned behavior
- Socially and culturally influenced
- Demonstrates “Triadic Reciprocal”
Back to Cognitive Shaping

- The influence of the triarchic dynamic on personal narrative
- Efficacy and self regulation as part of but also shapers of personal narrative
- What do I observe when I observe myself; attention as an element of self-efficacy and mental health
Social Cognitive Highlights

- Triadic Reciprocality; social and contextual nature of learning and behavior
- Separation of learning and performance
- Critical role of thinking about oneself
- Observational learning and motivation
- Impact of formative evaluations