Subject : Cognitive psychology

Topic : perception

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"Perception"

Introduction:

Human perception is the active reception and coordination of information received through our sensory systems in order to make sense of the environment and to behave effectively within it. In contrast with the direct and immediate sensations actually received and transmitted, perception is the transformation of that information into nerve cell activity that is transferred to the brain where further processing occurs. Our perceptual systems do not passively receive stimuli from the world, instead they actively select, organize, interpret, and sometimes distort sensory information. The real world then may not be the same as the one we perceive. Broadly, perception can be said to be the study of the human organism's relation to the physical world.

Definition of perception:

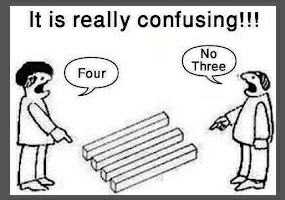
1.

the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses.

"the normal limits to human perception"

2.

the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted.



Depth perception:

This entails perceiving the three-dimensionality of the world and objects. This clearly involves more than the nature of images sent to the retina since the retina has a two dimensional surface and images projected onto it are two-dimensional.

In the 1800s researchers discovered that our binocular vision greatly aids depth perception. Binocular vision refers to having two eyes that are at slight distances from one another, so that each receives a slightly different perspective of the object or scene being focussed upon. It seems that these small differences in perspective greatly aid depth perception. The ears also use the slight differences in time between stimulation received to locate the source of sounds.

In addition, most environments have common patterns corresponding with varying distances that provide visual clues about space and depth. Such clues include blocking of a far object by a near one, increasing haze with increasing distance, perspective, and shadow.

In sum, binocular vision and environmental cues can account for many aspects of depth perception. In addition, based on research with animals and human infants too young to have had experience with depth perception, it appears that humans and various species of animals are born with some innate visual mechanism to perceive depth.

Illusions:

Illusions are misperceptions of stimuli, where what is perceived does not correspond to the actual dimensions or qualities of the physical stimulus. Geometrical illusions usually involve the misperception of the direction or size of parts of figures.

The mechanisms that produce many types of illusions are as yet not understood, but they seem to involve the misapplication of perceptual phenomena like constancy. Illusions are natural, occurring regularly and following regular rules. Illusions should not be confused with hallucinations which are responses in the absence of any external stimulus, or with delusions which are basically mistaken beliefs.

Over the last century a number of theories have been proposed to account for perception. Each theory, however, has encountered difficulties in accounting for some of the above-discussed phenomena of perception. And most perception researchers today do not adhere to one theory, instead they believe those aspects of the theories that have some experimental support, or that seem most logical and sound.

Classical theory:

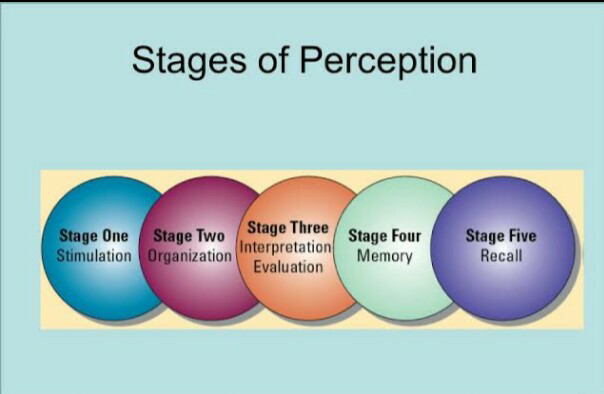
What is sometimes referred to as classical theory is usually associated with Hermann von Helmholtz who believed perception results from a process of unconscious inference about what the stimulus affecting the sense organs is most likely to be. He thought these unconscious inferences are formed by past experiences and learning, and they are unconscious because people are clearly not aware of making them.

Gestalt theory:

Probably the most well-known theory of perception, Gestalt theory, developed partly as a reaction against the view that perception could be broken into simpler elements and that it was the result of learned mental associations between simple sensations. This view, the basis of Helmholtz's theory, was also put forth without the process of unconscious inference by such famous psychologists as W. Wundt and E.B. Titchener. Gestalt theory, founded by K. Koffka, W. Köhler, and M. Wertheimer, argued that while simple sensations could be seen as making up organized perceptions, our nervous system is primed to perceive the organization of sensory stimuli over the individual sensory elements themselves. The process of organization is basic to perception, and the common saying, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," illustrates this important concept.

Moreover, while Gestalt theorists believe learning may play a role in perception, perceptual organization results from innate organizing processes in the brain itself. To Gestaltists then, studying perception was in effect studying the brain.

The 5 stages of Perception.



1. Stimulation:

The occurrence of sensory stimulation basically this part of perception process involves in contact with a particular stimulus. The world is full of stimuli that can attract our attention through various senses. Thus we are able to describe systematically the sights, sound, smell and taste that populate our conscious experience. Stimulation includes selective attention and selective exposure. Selective attention occurs by anticipating fulfill needs and prove enjoyable.

For example, friends talking to you but you were daydreaming. You won’t hear what they are saying until they called out your name. Selective exposure occurs by exposing information that will confirm an existing beliefs, contributing to objectives and having a state of satisfaction. As we are not able to percept everything that is happening around us simultaneously, we tend to engage in selective perception; perceiving only positive things. For example, after buying a laptop, one’s tend to read more online or asked people around that the product one’s bought is good because we want to tell ourselves that we make the right decision and avoid negative feedback.

2.organization:

The capacity to identify and recognize objects and events is crucial for normal perception. Without that capacity, people cannot effectively use their senses. Perception which organized by rules, schemata and scripts. Organized by rules, people perceive things that are physically close together constitute a unit. People developed schemata from actual experiences as well as vicarious experience from daily activities or from television, reading.

Some familiarity represented in mind will be some kind of schema. This would help one’s perception to categories into number of categories. However, it may cause perception errors as it influences one’s to perceive non existence things or miss seeing things in presence. A script is a form of schema that focuses on action, event or procedure. It is a process of how we behaved and how we organized it with our own action which organized by a pattern.

3. Interpretation-evalution:

In this interpretation-evaluation stage it is two process of stimuli by individual experiences, needs, wants, values, expectations, physical and emotional state, gender and beliefs meaning based on by individual’s rules, schemata and scripts. For example meeting a new person who is a doctor, one’s tend to view this person as someone serious, successful, health conscious, academic strong. In other words, evaluating individuals depending on one’s own script the way individual behave and perform the action appropriate or inappropriate.

4.Memory:

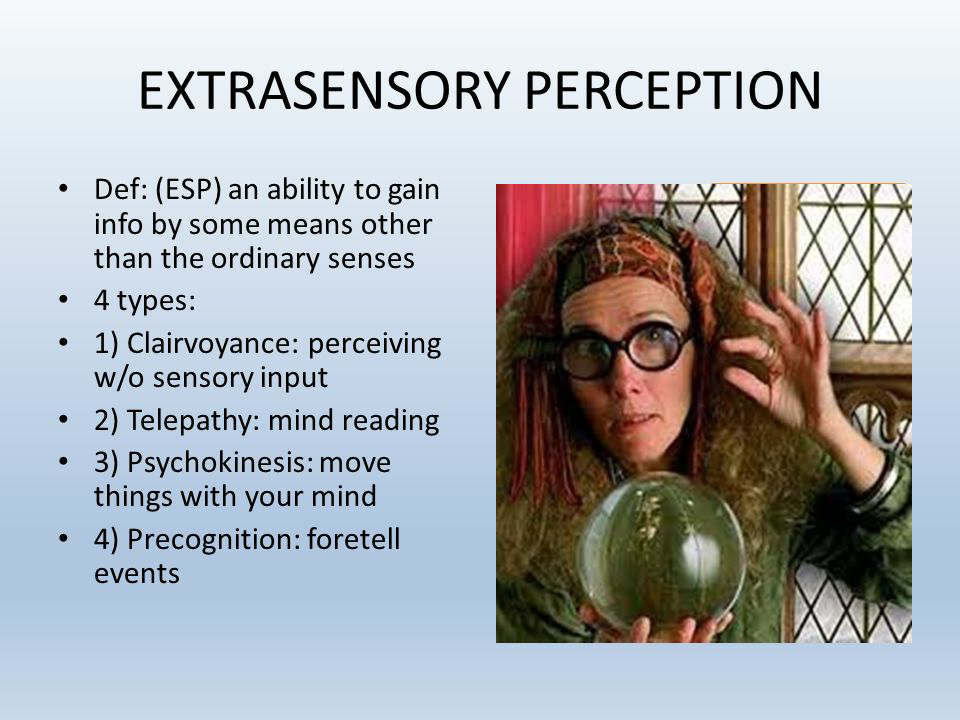
After undergoing the stages of stimulation, organization and interpretation-evaluation, this leads us to another stage called memory. It is a storage of both perception and interpretation-evaluation that are kept according to scripts and schemas Events or experiences is not the objective of recollection but is more likely heavily influenced by individuals preconceptions and individuals schemata.

5.Recall:

After some time, the memory that are stored individuals want to recall certain information. Recall stage reconstruct what individual heard in a way that are meaningful. Recall information that consistent with schemas. However failure to do so, it is inconsistent with schemas. Recall information drastically contradicts one’s schema because it forces individual to think or even rethink.

The four types of perception :

The four types of extrasensory perception include clairvoyance, psychokinesis, telepathy and precognition.



1.Clairvoyance:

Clairvoyance is the capability to acquire information about a particular object, scenario, physical event or location using extrasensory means. The term is a combination of two French words "clair" which means "clear" and "voyant" which means "seeing". Clairvoyants are people who allegedly have this ability.

For over 130 years, researchers had tried to conduct scientific studies on clairvoyance. One study revealed a 32% success rate versus the 25% chance rate of self-proclaimed clairvoyants being able to transmit one of four given images to "receivers" who were placed in another room, deprived of any related sensation. However, succeeding studies failed to replicate this finding, which shows that the hypothesis has poor validity. Several self-proclaimed clairvoyants include Sylvia Browne, John Edwards, and Rudolf Steiner.

1. Psychokinesis:

Publisher Henry Holt created the term "psychokinesis" to describe the direct effect of the mind on a physical object or scene without the application of any physical energy. The term comes from the two Greek words "psyche" (breath, or mind, soul, or heart), and "kinesis" (movement or motion). A related purported ability is telekinesis, which literally means "distant movement". Many references use the terms psychokinesis and telekinesis interchangeably.

1. Precognition:

Another form of ESP, precognition refers to the ability to achieve and perceive information about locations, scenarios, and events before they actually occur. The term comes from the two Latin words "pre" (prior to) and "cognitio" (getting to know). Scientific research on precognition revealed non-existence of this phenomenon.

1. Telepathy:

Telepathy is the purported ability to perform direct communication between two or more minds without the use of speech, body language, writings, or any other extrapersonal means. Out of the four types of extrasensory perception, telepathy is the most researched and popularized by the media and related industries.

John Arthur Hill, a physical researcher, summarized the current research on telepathy by writing," No physical theory of telepathy has been worked out — there are no "brain-waves" known, and no receiving stations yet discovered inside our skulls." Popular self-professed telepaths include Alice Bailey and Vinko Rajic.