

## Editorial <sup>1</sup>

This issue opens with an article by Héctor Martínez and Eder Espinoza Becerra, who offer a study on the effects of two oral alcohol self-administration procedures and maintenance of operant responding in rats. Procedures to induce alcohol consumption have been considered valuable in the pre-clinical evaluation of new compounds, as well as the study of the etiology of alcohol abuse and dependence. A total of nine Wistar rats were assigned to one of three groups and placed on a fixed ratio (FR 11) schedule of food reinforcement. The *Induction Group* (IG) was exposed to an alcohol solution of increasing concentration that reached 10% over 10 days. The *No-Induction* group (NG) received plain water during the same period. After the induction period, responding in both groups was reinforced with food during 10 days, while alcohol was freely accessible. This was followed by a 15-day period of food reinforcement while water was accessible. These two phases were alternated twice during the study. Body weight, and amount of consumed food and alcohol were measured. In the first case, the results suggest that calories provided by the alcohol self-administration could explain the rats' initial weight gain. Food functioned as reinforced for all subjects, and food intake for both experimental groups decreased during the alcohol phases. Regarding the intake of water and alcohol, contrary to other findings, these authors found that alcohol intake was higher during induction, when the concentrations were high. Only during the third phase was alcohol intake similar to water. These results show that subjects exposed to induction gained more weight, and that both groups decreased their food intake. Also, these results suggest differential effects of the induction procedure on alcohol intake. Although this study was conducted under conditions of food deprivation, the authors point to the need to study free-food conditions where alcohol intake is not motivated by caloric deficit, but by other variables that might be relevant to operant conditioning procedures.

Aldo Christian Toledo and Raúl Ávila offer a parametric extension to social discounting, defined as the decrease in an individual's disposition to confer a reward to another person, as social distance to that person increases. Social discounting has been proposed as a measure of altruism and selfishness; thus, altruism can be defined as behavior that favors a socially distant person (or group, PA+B) but not one that is socially closer (PA). On the other hand, selfishness can be defined as behavior that favors a socially close person (or group, PA) but not one that is socially more distant (PA+B). A novel aspect of this study is that, based on the concept of the socially extended self, social distance was expressed as physical distance instead of rank on a hypothetical proximity list. Specifically, in this study participants were asked to imagine some of the people in their list as being in a football field, and to assign a physical distance to each that expressed the degree of social proximity they felt toward them. The participants were 117 college students (91 women and 26 men), and the session lasted about 30 minutes. The task consisted of a series of choices between pairs of hypothetical rewards: a small reward for a socially close person (PA), and a large reward for a more socially distant person (PA+B). Throughout the assessment task, various social distances were randomly tested. The magnitude of the large reward was kept constant in every choice, but the size of the small reward was adjusted after every trial, based on the participant's preference. The main finding of the study was that, for every social distance between P0 and PA, the maximum amount of money that participants were willing to give up for PA in order to give a higher reward to PA+B decreased systematically as the social distance between PA and PA+B increased. The data were compared as hyperbolic discounting rates and area under the discounting curve for each of the four task conditions. Finally, the authors discuss the role played by the reward size and social distance.

Sign language for the deaf is a topic that has been studied within behavioral psychology. Julio Varela, Christian Huerta and Óscar Tello suggest that current theories of language are based on sound, as this is its

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natural component. For that reason, the authors suggest that none of these theories are useful in the analysis of sign language (SL), as its natural component is not auditory but visual. Thus, the authors argue that analyzing SG based on such theories is problematic. To support their arguments they provide a brief historical account of SL and dactylology (the use of fingers to spell words), both developed by hearing people. Evidence accumulated over the past 90 years consistently shows that the education level attained by the deaf is not greater than 4<sup>th</sup> grade, measured as reading level used to assess academic knowledge. The authors point out two important facts; first, that SL syntax is different from that of the language used in each region and second, that children of hearing parents –which are the majority- do not adopt SL as the first language in early infancy. Among the characteristics of research reported to date are: 1) it is conducted within the framework of linguistics or cognitive theory mostly in diagnosis studies, as opposed to intervention; 2) the selection and grouping of the participants is based on school grade or chronological age; 3) frequently, no distinction is made between deaf and individuals with limited hearing; 4) there is little or no attention paid to the amount of reading time; 5) many of the tests employed were developed for hearing people; 6) it is mainly directed toward reading short texts or isolated words; 7) only recently have bilingualism and biculturalism been considered and; 8) it was developed by trained or hired personnel. The basic analytical assumption has been the hypothesis of dual decoding, even though the evidence for it is contradictory or inconvenient. Since this code implies sound, the notion of visual phonology has been implicated; however, the validity of doing so is debatable in light of the fact that it involves sensory plasticity, given the absence of auditory sensation. The authors also argue that working memory is another concept ill-employed on assessment forms. As a theoretical alternative the authors propose the proto and meta postulates of a SL theory based on interbehaviorism that does not involve auditory elements, and whose objective is the study of the of the interaction between the person who signs and the one who sees. Based on the properties and differences that exist between signs and words, the linguistic modality of *signing* is proposed.

In his Notes on Two Meanings, Isaac Camacho offers a review from the perspective of interbehavioral psychology that is based on the concept of interaction and, more precisely, based on the concept of function which he defines as “the organization of relations of conditionality between representing elements of a field. In his review, the author considers Logan’s (1960) proposal that suggests an “aggregation rule” in the definition of a response, considering the difference between molar and molecular as a dichotomy. Also addressed are the work of Rachlin (1970) and Baum (1995), the first of whom views molarity as a general way to characterize behavior without considering simple units, and molecularity as a form in which explanations can derive from combination rules applied to small units. In turn, Baum focuses on the methodological treatment of the recording equipment, highlighting the feedback function between responding and reinforcement rate, in addition to the functional relation between reinforcement and response rate. Therefore, from a molar analysis, behavior and environment are not broken into discrete elements.

These perspectives are compared to Ribes’ (2010), who deems as incorrect the proposition that molar units of behavior occur successively in space. For Camacho, the discrepancy perhaps lies in a subtle difference involved in the expression “extended in time”, although other differences can be also noted. The conflict appears to lie in the separation of molar/molecular analysis in the contexts of analytical level and theoretical model.

Another historical perspective discussed is that of Kitchener (1977), who analyses the work of classical behaviorists. Among the many similarities, a difference is highlighted regarding the recent use of mathematical models in behavior analysis, although Camacho identifies two recent efforts of modelling within interbehavioral psychology.

Finally, Andrés García García and Jesús Gómez Bujedo offer a narrative of the VI SAVEEC Congress that took place on October 5 through 10 at the University of Seville; More than 100 attendees convened from Spain, Mexico, Portugal, the United States and France. A significant number of the presentations dealt with various aspects of professional psychology, offered by specialists affiliated with various governmental agencies, psychological centers, and hospitals from different cities in Spain. Students from various academic levels also attended the event. Because this was the sixth such meeting, in our view, it is fair to say that the Congress has laid an important foundation now recognized internationally.

Along the same line, Josué Camacho offer an account of the VII International Seminar on Behavior and Applications (SINCA) that took place at the University of Tlaxcala on November 14 -16. The event was attended by representatives of 29 institutions and two corporations from Spain and Mexico.