

Lesson 24: Generic Extension (OA)



This lesson defines and provides examples of generic extension.

- ☰ Definition of Generic Extension
- ☰ Generic Extension Example #1
- ☰ Generic Extension Non-Example #1
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Definition of Generic Extension



00:29

Generic extension is an instance of verbal behavior in which the response form is a previously learned one and the stimulus is a novel one with all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response. Features irrelevant to generic extension include the type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response, the formal and dynamic characteristics of the response and stimulus, and whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement.

Generic Extension

An instance of verbal behavior with the following features:

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

- | | |
|---|--|
| • | The response form must be a previously learned one |
| • | The stimulus must be novel |
| | |

- The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES

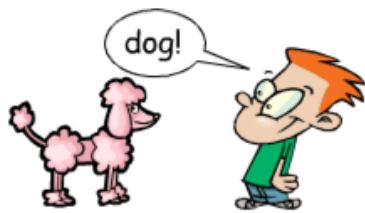
IRRELEVANT FEATURES

- | | |
|---|--|
| • | The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response |
| • | Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response |
| • | Formal or dynamic characteristics of the stimulus |
| • | Whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement |

Generic Extension Example #1



Generic extension results in classifying things into groups or categories. For example, if a child has been taught to say “dog” in the presence of the family poodle and also in the presence of his or her uncle’s collie, any tendency to say “dog” in the presence of a new dog (e.g., chihuahua) would be generic extension of the tact relationship.



→ reinforcement



→ reinforcement



= generic tact extension

Generic Extension

An instance of verbal behavior with the following features:

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

✓	The response form must be a previously learned one
✓	The stimulus must be novel
✓	The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

•	The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
•	Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response
•	Formal or dynamic characteristics of the stimulus
	Whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement

•

Generic Extension Non-Example #1



00:26

Once a response has been reinforced in the presence of a stimulus, the process of extension is not required to explain the occurrence of the same response in the presence of that stimulus at some point in the future. Extension requires a novel stimulus; therefore, if the child sees the same chihuahua the next day and again says “dog,” that is **not** generic extension because the stimulus is no longer novel.



= generic tact extension



NEXT DAY:
NOT generic tact extension

Generic Extension

An instance of verbal behavior with the following features:

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

✓	The response form must be a previously learned one
✗	The stimulus must be novel
✓	The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

•	The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
•	Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response
•	Formal or dynamic characteristics of the stimulus
	Whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement

•

Generic Extension Non-Example #2



If a child sees a badger and says “dog,” that is **not** generic extension because the novel stimulus (the badger) does not have all of the relevant features that must be present for the verbal community to provide reinforcement for the response “dog.” This is, however, a type of extension that is presented in the next lesson.



→ reinforcement



→ reinforcement



NOT generic tact extension

Generic Extension

An instance of verbal behavior with the following features:

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

✓	The response form must be a previously learned one
✓	The stimulus must be novel
✗	The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

•	The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
•	Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response
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	Whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement

•

Generic Extension Echoic Example



Generic extension also occurs in the other elementary relationships. In the **echoic** relationship, the response would have to be evoked by “the same word” but it would have to be novel in either its pitch or intensity or some other irrelevant feature. The novel components of stimuli that control generic extensions are irrelevant features.

Echoic

Reinforced Response	Generic Extension
Saying "fox" when someone screams "FOX!"	Saying "fox" when someone whispers "fox"

Generic Extension

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DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

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DEFINING FEATURES	IRRELEVANT FEATURES
--------------------------	----------------------------

•	The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
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•	Formal or dynamic characteristics of the stimulus
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Generic Extension Intraverbal Example



00:19

In the **intraverbal**, the novel stimulus may be a complex verbal description or definition. The appropriate verbal response may be the result of generic extension if all of the relevant descriptive or defining words are present that were also present when the response was acquired under the control of the original description.

Intraverbal

Reinforced Response	Generic Extension
Saying “fox” when someone asks “What is an awesome canine?”	Saying “fox” when someone asks “What is an awesome canine with large ears and a bushy tail?”

Generic Extension

An instance of verbal behavior with the following features:

DEFINING FEATURES**IRRELEVANT FEATURES**

✓	The response form must be a previously learned one
✓	The stimulus must be novel
✓	The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES**IRRELEVANT FEATURES**

•	The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
•	Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response
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Generic Extension and the Order of Words



00:29

A common **irrelevant** feature may be the order of the words. You may have learned to say “reinforcement,” for example, as a function of hearing “a stimulus change which increases the probability of the response it follows.” Now someone says, “What do we call it when a response is followed by a stimulus change and the probability of that response occurring under similar circumstances in the future is increased?” Saying “reinforcement” after hearing that would be an example of generic extension.

Generic Extension

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DEFINING FEATURES

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- The novel stimulus must have all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response

DEFINING FEATURES

IRRELEVANT FEATURES

- The type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response
- Formal and dynamic characteristics of the response
- Formal or dynamic characteristics of the stimulus
- Whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement

Knowledge Check

You will be presented a series of examples. Indicate whether or not each is an example of generic extension.

Question

01/05

A child learns to say “chair” in the presence of a straight-backed, wooden chair and then later says “chair” in the presence of a new, large, rounded, over-stuffed chair. Saying “chair” in the presence of the over-stuffed chair _____ an example of generic extension.

is

is not

Question

02/05

When someone learns to say “guitar” in the presence of a guitar and then later sees a banjo for the first time and says “guitar,” calling the banjo a “guitar” _____ an example of generic extension.

is

is not

Question

03/05

The first time a child goes to the zoo, he learns to make the response “zebra” in the presence of a zebra. Later when he returns to the zoo and sees the same animal, he again says “zebra.” Saying “zebra” on the return trip to the zoo _____ an example of generic extension.

- is
- is not

Question

04/05

The same child sees an animal (an aardvark) and asks his father what the name of the animal is. His father says “aardvark” and then as a result, the child says “aardvark.” The child’s response _____ an example of generic extension.

is

is not

Question

05/05

You have learned to say “verbal behavior” when you see the words in the font that you are reading now. Later you see the same words in a completely different font and still say “verbal behavior.” Saying “verbal behavior” even when the words are in a different font _____ an example of generic extension.

- is
- is not

Review



Generic extension is an instance of verbal behavior in which the response form is a previously learned one and the stimulus is a novel one with all of the relevant features of the stimulus that previously controlled the response.



Features **irrelevant** to generic extension include the type of elementary verbal relationship between the stimulus and the response, the formal and dynamic characteristics of the response and stimulus, and whether or not the current response is followed by reinforcement.

End of Lesson