

Chapter 3.2 Part 8

Skill Development Sequences: Shaping

Learning Objectives

- Define shaping.
- Identify the 2 behavioral principles involved in shaping.
- Identify the 5 dimensions of behavior that can be shaped.

What is Shaping?

(Cooper et al., 2007)

- **Shaping** is a procedure that uses reinforcement and extinction of successive approximations of a behavior, until the goal behavior is attained.
- **When to use shaping:**
 - When new skills need to be developed.
 - When modifying current skills.
 - Learning more complex skills not in the current skill level of the individual.

Example of Shaping

(Wolf, Risley, & Mees, 1964)

Desired Goal: Wearing eye glasses.

1. Touching glasses.
2. Picking up glasses.
3. Putting glasses up to face.
4. Placing glasses in their proper position.



Shaping in Instruction

(Cooper et al., 2007)

- Shaping is a very powerful teaching tool that can be used across all dimensions of behavior:
 - Topography
 - Frequency
 - Duration
 - Latency
 - Amplitude/Magnitude

Example of Shaping Topography

(O'Neil & Gardner, 1983.)

- **Desired Goal:** Getting Jackie to walk independently after injuring her hip.
- At first, Jackie will use two parallel bars to help support her while she walks.
- Next, Jackie will use a walker to help support her while she walks.
- Jackie will then use crutches to help support her while she walks.
- Finally, Jackie will be walking independently.

Example of Shaping Frequency

(Howie & Woods, 1982)

- **Desired Goal:** Increase the number of words spoken per minute for an individual who stutters.
- At first, individual was reinforced for saying 10 words per minute.
- Then, the person was reinforced for saying 20 words per minute.
- Finally, reinforcement was only provided for saying 30 words per minute.

Example of Shaping Duration

(O'Neil & Gardner, 1983)

- **Desired Goal:** Increase the amount of time between bathroom visits.
- Betty had to wait 60 minutes before using the bathroom.
- Next, Betty waited 70 minutes before using the bathroom.
- End goal: Betty waited 90 minutes before using the bathroom.

Example of Shaping Latency

- **Desired Goal:** Make bed within 2 minutes of an adult request to do so.
- Joey is reinforced when he begins making his bed 4 minutes after the request is made.
- He is then reinforced when he makes his bed within 3 minutes of being asked.
- Finally, he is reinforced when he makes his bed within 2 minutes of being asked.

Example of Shaping Magnitude

(Jackson & Wallace, 1974)

- **Desired Goal:** Speech loud enough to be considered at normal volume.
- A socially withdrawn girl's speech can barely be heard.
- Praise is given for her louder volume of speech at each trial.
- Whisper, Quiet voice, Normal speaking voice
- At end of treatment, the girl speaks at a normal volume.