

Cognitive approach

Description of the cognitive psychology

Cognitive psychologists carry out well controlled experiments to understand internal processes such as attention, perception, learning, memory, language, problem solving, reasoning and thinking.

Key characteristics

Neuropsychology — studying brain damaged patients in order to understand cognitive processes (for example short term and long term memory).

Cognitive neuroscience — brain imaging and behavioral measures are used to understand cognitive processes

Cognitive therapy is designed to replace dysfunctional thoughts with more accurate positive ones (snake phobic)

Strengths

- Cognitive psychology is effective in enhancing our understanding of human cognition.
- Well controlled experiments produce replicable findings
- Influenced other areas of the psychology (social psychology, developmental psychology and abnormal psychology)
- Cognitive therapy is generally effective

Weaknesses

- Laboratory experiments on cognitive psychology may lack ecological validity (to apply in everyday life)
- Measures provide indirect evidence about internal processes
- Psychologist often fail to take account that individuals cognitive system could be different
- Only internal factors are considered