

Social Psychology and Personality

AP Psychology • Unit 4

AP Psychology



Social Psychology and Personality

What we will cover

- 1 Explaining Behaviour: Attribution
- 2 Attitudes and Attitude Change
- 3 Social Situations
- 4 Personality: Psychodynamic and Humanistic
- 5 Personality: Social-Cognitive and Trait
- 6 Motivation

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Explaining Behaviour: Attribution

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Explaining Behaviour: Attribution

Explaining Behaviour: Attribution

An explanation is either **dispositional** 内归因 (about the person's personality) or **situational** 外归因 (about the circumstances). People are not even-handed about which they choose:

- The **fundamental attribution error** 基本归因错误 is over-using dispositional explanations for *other* people's behaviour.
- The **actor-observer bias** 行动者-观察者偏差 is explaining your own behaviour situationally while explaining others' dispositionally.
- The **self-serving bias** 自利偏差 credits success to yourself and blames failure on the situation.
- The **just-world phenomenon** 公正世界现象 is the belief that people get what they deserve.

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Explaining Behaviour: Attribution

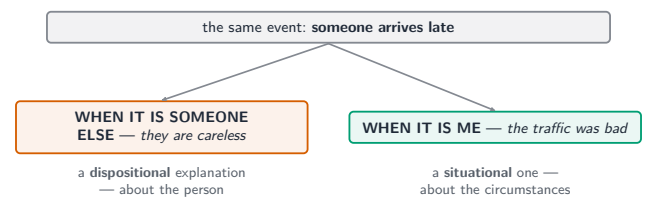
Explaining Behaviour: Attribution, continued

A person's **explanatory style** 解释风格 can be **optimistic** 乐观的 or **pessimistic** 悲观的, and this shapes how they respond to setbacks.

Social comparison 社会比较 is judging yourself against others, either **upward** 向上比较 or **downward** 向下比较.

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Explaining Behaviour: Attribution

The attribution asymmetry



Nothing about the **behaviour** changed — only who is explaining it. That asymmetry is the error, and it is what a scenario question shows you

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Attitudes and Attitude Change

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Attitudes and Attitude Change

A **stereotype** 刻板印象 is a generalised idea about a group; it reduces mental effort but can be inaccurate and harmful. **Prejudice** 偏见 is an attitude, and **discrimination** 歧视 is the behaviour. **Implicit attitudes** 内隐态度 are held without full awareness.

Confirmation bias 确认偏差 is seeking evidence that fits what you already believe.

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Social Situations

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Social Situations

- **Conformity** 从众 is adjusting behaviour to match a group. It rises with group size (up to a point), unanimity, and ambiguity, and falls when even one other person dissents.
- **Obedience** 服从 is following an instruction from an authority. It rises with the authority's perceived legitimacy and closeness, and falls when the victim is close or the authority is distant.
- **Normative social influence** 规范性社会影响 is conforming to be accepted; **informational social influence** 信息性社会影响 is conforming because you think others know better.

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Conformity and obedience

CONFORMITY — matching a group

rises with group size, up to a point
rises when the group is unanimous
falls sharply with one ally who dissents
rises when the answer is ambiguous

OBEDIENCE — following an authority

rises with the authority's legitimacy
rises with distance from the consequence
falls when someone else refuses first
falls when responsibility is made personal

One dissenter is the strongest single factor on **both** sides — which is why the scenario nearly always varies that

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Personality: Psychodynamic and Humanistic

Four accounts of where personality comes from

	Psychodynamic	Humanistic	Social-cognitive	Trait
What drives personality	unconscious conflict	drive towards growth	other: interaction and environment + learning	inborn characteristics
Key ideas	defense mechanisms, repression, ego, superego and id	unconditional positive regard, self-actualisation	reciprocal determinism, self-efficacy, locus of control	the Big Five personality dimensions, self-concept, attribution
How it is assessed	projective tests (e.g. Rorschach)	interviews, self-report	observational studies	self-report inventories

all four describe the SAME person from different angles

The **psychodynamic** 精神动力学 approach holds that **unconscious** 无意识 processes drive personality.

Ego defense mechanisms 自我防御机制 protect the person from anxiety, and the examinable set is **denial** 否认, **displacement** 转移, **projection** 投射, **rationalization** 合理化, **reaction formation** 反向形成,....

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It emphasises **unconditional positive regard** 无条件积极关注 and **self-actualization** 自我实现 – becoming the fullest version of oneself.

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Personality: Social-Cognitive and Trait

Personality: Social-Cognitive and Trait

The **social-cognitive** 社会认知 approach explains personality through **reciprocal determinism** 交互决定论: the person, their behaviour, and the environment each influence the other two.

Self-efficacy 自我效能感 – belief in one's own ability to succeed at a task – is central, as is **locus of control** 控制点, which is **internal** 内控 or **external** 外控.

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Motivation

Motivation

Several theories explain what drives behaviour:

- **Drive-reduction theory** 驱力减少理论 says behaviour reduces a physical need to restore **homeostasis** 内稳态.
- **Arousal theory** 唤醒理论 says people seek an optimal level of arousal; the **Yerkes-Dodson law** 耶克斯-多德森定律 states that moderate arousal gives the best performance on most tasks.
- **Self-determination theory** 自我决定理论 separates **intrinsic motivation** 内在动机 (from within) from **extrinsic motivation** 外在动机 (from reward), and **incentive theory** 诱因理论 focuses on the pull of rewards.

Motivation: instincts and conflicts

- **Instincts** 本能 are innate fixed patterns, seen in non-human animals rather than in human behaviour.
- **Lewin's motivational conflicts** 勒温的动机冲突理论 names three: **approach-approach** 双趋冲突, **approach-avoidance** 趋避冲突, and **avoidance-avoidance** 双避冲突.

Motivation, continued

Eating shows physical and mental processes interacting.

Ghrelin and **leptin**, regulated by the hypothalamus, control hunger and fullness, while external factors – the sight of food, the time of day, a shared meal – change how much people eat.

7 Emotion

Emotion

Some facial expressions are recognised across cultures, but **display rules** 表达规则 – a culture's norms for showing emotion – and the events that trigger emotion both vary.

Exam tips

- **Fundamental attribution error** applies to explaining *others*. If the question is about explaining yourself, the answer is usually **self-serving bias**.
- **Social facilitation** improves *simple* tasks and harms difficult ones. Say which kind of task the scenario describes.
- Separate **conformity** (matching a group) from **obedience** (following an authority).
- For **cognitive dissonance**, name the conflict and say which side changed – usually the attitude, because the behaviour already happened.
- Learn the **Big Five** as a set; questions often ask you to place a described person on one named trait.
- With emotion theories, the difference is **order**: body first (James-Lange), together (Cannon-Bard), or arousal plus label (two-factor).

Three theories of emotion



The difference is **order**:

- **James-Lange** 詹姆斯-兰格理论 – the body responds first; emotion is the reading of that response
- **Cannon-Bard** 坎农-巴德理论 – arousal and emotion occur at once
- **two-factor** 两因素理论 (Schachter-Singer) – arousal plus a **cognitive label** 认知标签

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Recap

Unit 4 – key takeaways

1 Attribution

FAE for others; self-serving bias for yourself

2 Social

conformity matches a group; obedience follows authority

3 Dissonance

name the conflict; the attitude usually changes

4 Emotion

order: body / together / arousal+label

Check yourself

- 1 Explaining a stranger's crash as "they are careless": which bias?
- 2 Matching a group's wrong answer: conformity or obedience?
- 3 Body first, then emotion: which theory?
- 4 Name one Big Five trait.

Answers: fundamental attribution error ▪ conformity ▪ James-Lange ▪ e.g. conscientiousness