# Radical Behaviorism

In 1945, Burrhus Skinner published the book “The Operational Analysis of Psychological Terms”, as an attempt to respond to the internalist currents of behaviorism and also influenced by philosophical behaviorism. The publication of this book marked the origin of the behaviorist current called radical behaviorism, which was developed not as an area of ​​experimental research, but as a proposal for reflection on human behavior. Conducting empirical research forms the field of experimental behavior analysis, while practical implementation forms part of applied behavior analysis. In this sense, radical behaviorism is a philosophy of behavioral science.

Skinner was radically anti-mentalist, since he considered the internalist notions (mental elements as the origin of behavior) that make up the various existing psychological theories to be non-pragmatic. Despite this, Skinner never denied the existence of mental processes in his theory, he only defended that it is unproductive to look for the motivation of human attitudes in these variables.

According to Skinner's thinking, when analyzing a behavior (cognitive, emotional or motor) it is necessary to consider the context in which it occurs and the events involved in this conduct. Skinnerian behaviorism denies the scientific importance of mediational indicators, since for Skinner the human being is a single and uniform entity, opposing the idea of ​​man as a being composed of body and mind, since for him it is not possible to dissociate or distinguish human elements.

The principles of operant conditioning were elaborated by Skinner, in addition to having systematized the model of selection by consequences in order to explain a behavior. The theory of operant conditioning follows the principle that the occurrence of a stimulus called a discriminative stimulus increases the probability of occurrence of a response, and after the response a reinforcing stimulus follows, which may be a reinforcement (positive or negative) that stimulates the behavior (increasing its likelihood of occurrence), or a punishment that inhibits the behavior from occurring later in similar situations.

In addition to the above on human behavior, radical behaviorism proposes to explain animal behavior through the paradigm of selection by consequences. Radical behaviorism thus proposes a non-linear and statistical paradigm of conditioning, as opposed to the linear paradigm and reflection of previous theoretical lines of behaviorism. In short, Skinner argues that most human behavior is operantly conditioned.