External Factors Influencing Learning and Motivation

Motivated Behavior

- Choice of behavior
- Level of activity and involvement
- Persistence and management of effort
- ~~Convincing use of w~~ords

Talk is cheap – look for actions!
Actions speak louder than words.

“To Be the Best”

What does it take to get to the top?

What does it take to stay at the top?

Focus on:

- Level of activity and involvement
- Persistence and management of effort

School and Classroom Factors

- Class size and make-up
  - Can or cannot hide out
  - Diversity
- Instructional methods
  - Collaboration or individual work
  - Constant or very rare feedback before final grade
  - Class graded on curve or not
- Instructor characteristics
  - Easy to access or distant
  - Enthusiastic or passive speaker

Basic theories of motivation

- Cognitive → Internal factors, person actively involved
- Behavioral → External factors, person a passive reactor

WATCH WHAT I CAN MAKE PAVLOV DO. AS SOON AS I DROOL, HE'LL SMILE AND WRITE IN HIS LITTLE BOOK.
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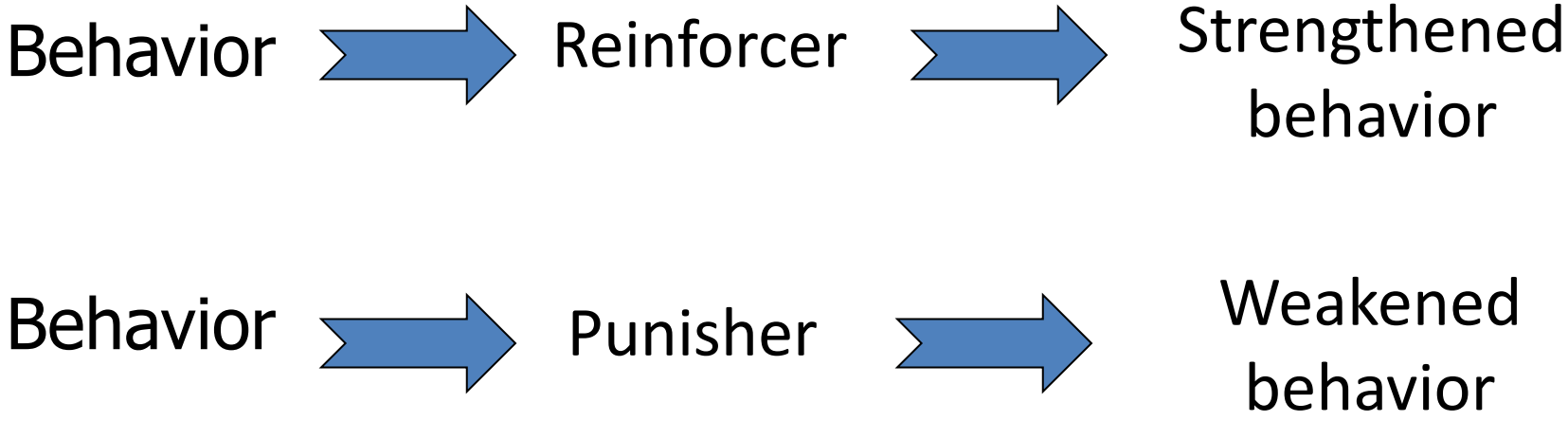
Behavioral Theory of Motivation

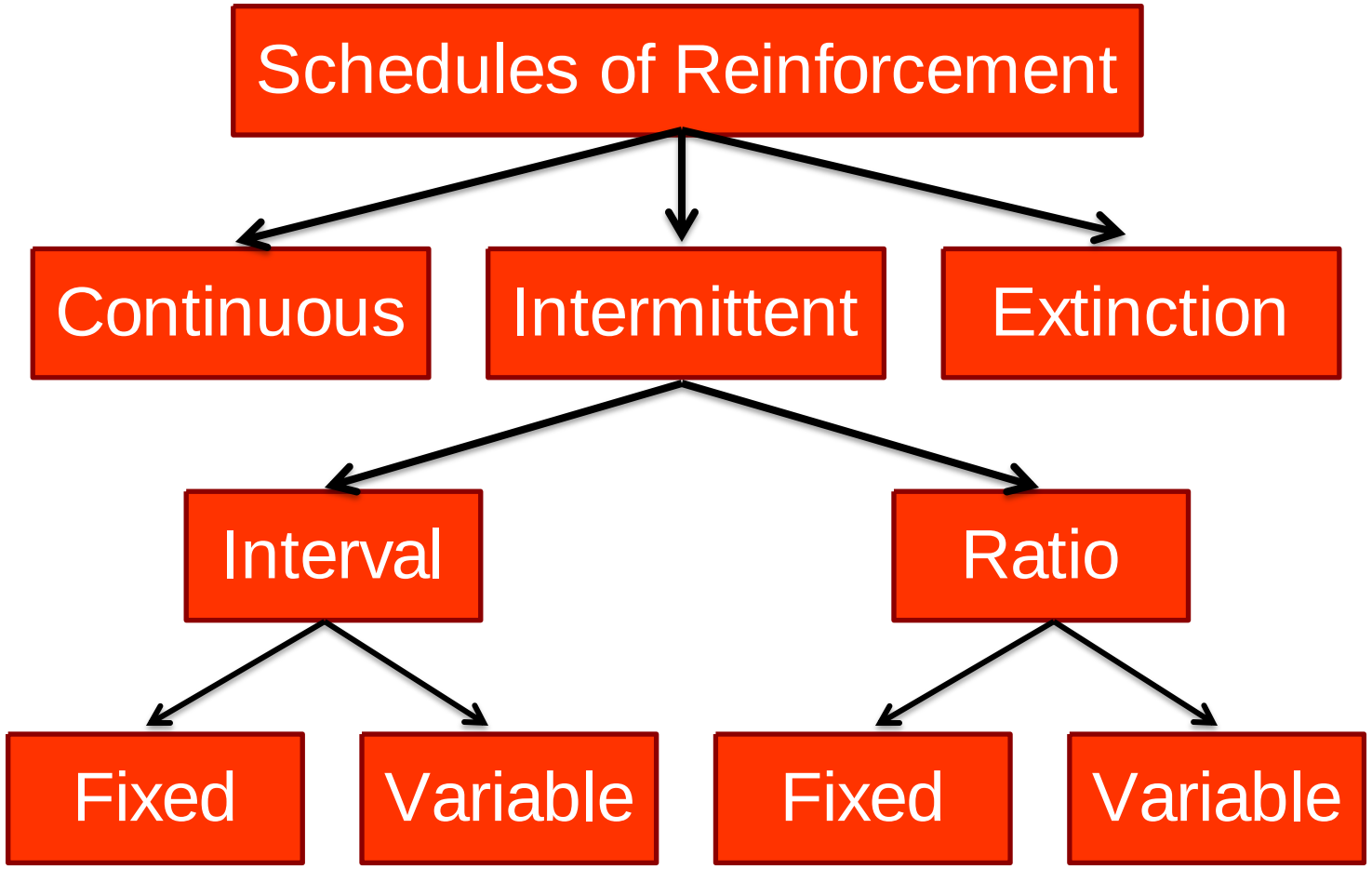
All behavior is learned from having
been externally reinforced or punished, and can be explained
without referring to internal factors.



How have we externally controlled and perhaps changed your behavior?

Reinforcement Schedules

- Continuous ← Especially useful while learning a new behavior
- Intermittent ← Once a behavior has been learned – the intention is to reinforce it
  - Ratio
  - Interval


Schedules of Reinforcement
Continuous
Intermittent
Extinction
Interval
Ratio
Fixed
Variable
Fixed
Variable

Ratio Schedules

- A certain *number* (or an unpredictable number) of responses must be provided in order to receive a reinforcer.

Ratio Schedules

- Fixed Ratio: every nth response is reinforced

b b **B** b b **B** b b **B** b b **B** b b **B**

- Variable Ratio: a response is reinforced after an unpredictable number of responses

b **B** b b b **B** b b **B** **B** b b b **B** b

Interval Schedules

- A certain (or an unpredictable) *amount of time* must pass in order to receive a reinforcer, no matter how many or how few responses have occurred.

Interval Schedules

- *Fixed Interval*: the time interval is specified exactly
  - a reinforcer is presented every 5 minutes, as long as the desired behavior has occurred at least once during that time

- *Variable Interval:* a response is reinforced after an unpredictable amount of time has passed.