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## PSYCHOLOGY

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At the end of this lesson, students are going to learn:

- Definition of psychology
- Psychologists and psychiatrists
- Aims of psychology
- Topics of psychology
- Influential pioneers in psychology
- Methods of Research in psychology
- Branches of psychology
- Characteristics of psychology
- The Importance of psychology for teachers & learners

### 1. Definition of Psychology :

It is an academic and applied discipline that involves the **scientific study of mental functions and behaviours**. From **Greek** roots meaning the study of the **psyche**, or **soul**, “: **the study of the soul**. The earliest known reference to the word psychology in English was by Steven Blankaart in 1694 in The Physical Dictionary. The professional practitioner in this field is called a **psychologist**.

According to the American Psychological Association, psychology is the study of the mind, how it works, and how it affects behaviour. The APA adds that it “embraces all aspects of the human experience, from the functions of the brain to the actions of nations, from child development to care for the aged.”

### 2. Psychologists and Psychiatrists:

Psychologists and psychiatrists work together to help people with mental health conditions, but they are not quite the same. A psychologist treats a patient through psychotherapy, helping to relieve symptoms through behavioural change. The role of the psychiatrist, who is a medical doctor, focuses more on prescribing medication and other interventions to manage mental health conditions.

### 3. Aims of Psychology

It has two main specific aims:

- Understanding individuals and groups by both establishing general principles and researching scientific cases.
- Look for people’s benefits; happiness, welfare, wisdom, etc.

And other aims like those of other sciences:

- To **describe**: After observing and measuring behaviour and mental processes
- To **explain** the meaning of data collected in the study by making theories and assumptions.

- To **predict** behaviour and mental processes by using a set of circumstances
- To **anticipate** what will happen next.
- To **use and apply** the knowledge gained through study to promote human welfare.

#### 4. Topics of Psychology :

Psychologists explore different concepts such as:

- Perception
- Attention
- Cognition
- Emotion
- Motivation
- Brain Functioning
- Personality
- Behaviour
- Interpersonal relationships...

#### 5. Influential Pioneers in Psychology :

- B.F. Skinner (1904-1990)
- Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)
- Albert Bandura (1925 -2021)
- Jean Piaget (1896-1980)
- Carl Rogers (1902-1987)
- Erik Erikson (1902-1994)
- Ivan Pavlov (1849 -1936)

#### 6. Methods of Research in Psychology:

Psychology examines people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours using **various approaches to evaluation**. Experimental and clinical psychologists use various research methods in psychology to develop therapy treatment plans, set outcome goals and apply behavioural strategies. Professionals often use various scientific methods to study mental processes to better develop treatment plans and strategies for behavioural therapy.

Research methods in psychology can have a quantitative or qualitative context, and they can focus on how people perceive the world, process information, make decisions and react to stimuli. Many psychology research methods also use statistical techniques to make conclusions about a population. Qualitative-based research methods in psychology use nonstatistical techniques to learn about the experiences of the individuals and communities they study

#### Here are some methods used by psychologists:

- **Naturalistic observation:** It involves observing or studying people in their natural habitats. For example, students are best studied in a classroom environment.
- **Case study:** With the purpose of generating a hypothesis, psychologists examine an individual's personal life, such as how a teacher plans a lesson.
- **Survey:** This method uses questionnaires administered to samples of people from what is referred to as a population to find out about attitudes and behaviour.

- **Correlational study:** Psychologists consider the relationship between two or more variables which can either be positive or negative. A correlation coefficient is computed to establish either a positive or negative relationship between the variables under study.
- **Experimentation:** Psychologists treat an object of study in a specific way and then observe the effects of that treatment. In experiments, psychologists study animals as well as people. Animals are studied either out of interest in animals themselves or as models for human behaviour.
- **Content analysis:** Content analysis involves analyzing text-based data to identify patterns, meanings and themes within a patient's written communication styles. Clinical psychologists can conduct a content analysis on any form of text, including full transcripts of patient interviews or monologues, business emails and hand-written letters.

## 7. Branches of Psychology :

- **Pure psychology:** It includes general psychology, abnormal psychology, social psychology, and others.
- **Applied psychology:** It is concerned with the application of theories, principles and techniques of psychology including clinical psychology, industrial psychology, legal psychology, political psychology, organizational psychology, educational psychology, etc.

## 8. Characteristics of Psychology

As it deals with the mind and personality of the individual, psychologists tend to **use more objective scientific methods to understand, explain and predict human behaviours**. Psychological studies are **highly structured; start with a hypothesis that is then empirically tested**. It focuses on the use of different psychological principles to solve real-world problems.

## 9. The Importance of Psychology for Language Teachers & Learners

A teacher acts as a guide and assistant to the students. He must know the growth and development of the child and his requirements at different levels. Educational psychology helps the teacher to study the ability, interests, intelligence, and needs and adopt different techniques of teaching for effective communication. The teacher can also:

- know the individual differences between learners;
- know the classroom teaching-learning process;
- Be Aware of the different effective methods and approaches of teaching;
- Develop curriculum for different levels of students in different subjects;
- Study the mental health of students;

In general, teaching in the English class is a profound and planned activity designed by the teacher to achieve specific goals. To achieve success in teaching, the teacher must have the necessary information and knowledge from the new educational theories and educational psychology. The study of educational psychology is very useful for teachers in planning, organizing and evaluating the teaching and learning activities in the class. The teachers must be good psychologists before they play the role of teacher. Attention to the teacher's role in the teaching process and its strengthening can be effective in learning the language. Teachers' awareness of the student's motivation and its relationship with the teaching process provides a framework by which the teacher can choose effective teaching methods to teach the English language to them. Logical education and principles are effective factors in the teaching process.