

# USING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATIONAL FRAME THEORY TO INCREASE ITS UTILITY IN APPLIED BEHAVIOUR ANALYSES OF HUMAN LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND'S DIVISION OF BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS,  
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Dermot Barnes-Holmes



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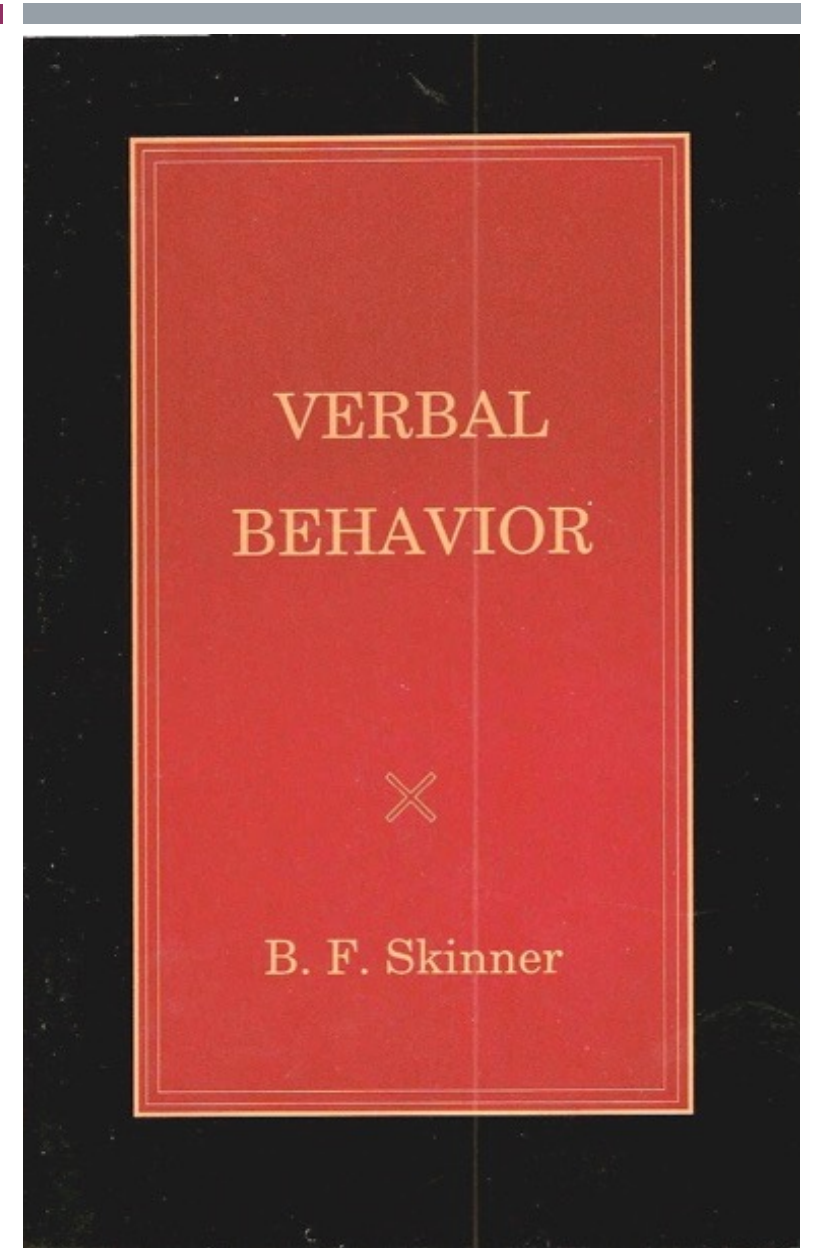
Joao H. de Almeida



Carolina Silveira

# WHAT IS RFT? A BRIEF HISTORY

- First major behaviour analytic treatise on human language
  - Largely a work of interpretation
  - Limited basic research but influential in remediating language deficits
  - Examples of derived relations appear but constrained by methodology and empirical work at that time



# A DECADE LATER...

- Skinner proposes the concept of rule-governed behavior
  - Rule-governed behavior distinguished from direct control by contingencies
  - Rules specify contingencies, which circumvents the need to contact contingencies directly
  - Produces many basic research studies, particularly related to “schedule insensitivity effects” in verbal humans

## An operant analysis of problem solving

B. F. Skinner

Department of Psychology and Social Sciences, Harvard University  
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

**Abstract.** Behavior that solves a problem is distinguished by the fact that it changes another part of the solver's behavior and is self-reinforcing when it does so. Behavior solving typically involves the construction of discriminative stimuli. Verbal responses produce especially useful stimuli, because they allow other people to construct discriminative stimuli (rules, programs, and so on), or sometimes behave more effectively without direct or proximal contact with the contingencies that maintain them. Behavior that solves problems for its maintainers, and thus is by construction the verbal discriminative stimuli called rules, programs, decisions, and the construction of words is one type of problem-solving behavior. Behavior that solves a problem may result from direct shaping by contingencies or from rules constructed either by the problem solver or by others. Because different controlling variables are involved, contingencies shape behavior in more complex but more general patterns. The distinction used in the present study of (1) a system which establishes certain contingencies of reinforcement, such as some part of the verbal discriminative stimuli or programs, as a verbal contingency; (2) the behavior shaped and maintained by these contingencies; (3) rules, derived from the contingencies, which specify discriminative stimuli, responses, and consequences, and (4) the behavior controlled by the rules.

**Keywords:** contingencies-shaped behavior, behavior, discriminative stimuli, heuristics, behavior, model building, operant analysis, problem solving, reinforcement contingencies, rule-governed behavior, verbal behavior

Behavior which solves a problem is distinguished by the fact that it changes another part of the solver's behavior and is self-reinforcing when it does so. Two stages are usually identified in a typical problem-solving process. First, a problem is recognized and analyzed. The response previously conditioned with food to solve it no longer changes the situation until the change is properly called problem solving and the response it produces a solution. It is possible for which there is at the moment no answer to solve a problem. It may be evident that problem-solving contingencies, by controlling a behavior, work, or by solving in any way which leads to a reward, a punishment, or some other consequence. There is no possibility of behavior and program which is not related to the solving of some problem, or whatever analysis of behavior would coincide with an analysis of behavior as a whole.

### Contingencies of reinforcement

When a response occurs and is reinforced, the probability that it will occur again in the presence of similar stimuli is increased. The process no longer operates on great problems for which responses are contingent, but problems solve when contingencies are contingent. For example, in Thorndike's experiment the probability that the rat would turn the lever was at first quite low. The low reward conditioned and unconditioned reflex behavior, that of it is inseparable with turning the lever, and reinforced responses which may have made the lever turning when it was eventually reached. The learned performance which satisfied the contingencies was a

class of responses consisting toward and approaching the lever, reaching and turning the lever, entering toward and passing through the opening door, and approaching and raising the lever. Some trials in the chain may have been reinforced by the food and others by escape from the box, but some could be reinforced only after other behaviors had been conditioned. For those and other reasons the box presented a problem—the lever the rat had to solve.

Thorndike thought he solved his problem by using the reinforced rat food and escape behavior. The response is self-reinforcing. The rat's escape from the box is already being affected by reinforcement when it is a "wrong response" / escape in behavior which behavior has been selected in the condition of the species because it has brought escape from comparable situations or has been reinforced by escape from previous situations during the life of the rat. The term "wrong" does not describe behavior. It gives judgment on it. The rat's escape from the box is being shaped by Thorndike and every other rat not exposed to the verbal properties of behavior — controls not a single problem-solving problem solving. The changes which contribute to such a system include the acquisition and extinction of operant responses, the conditioning of unconditioned, and the extinction of unconditioned responses. Just conditioning leads to an increase in the probability of the reinforced response in conditionally obtained.

Even in Thorndike's rather crude apparatus it should be possible to obtain the changes resulting from reinforcement. We could begin by adjusting the rat to the box with reinforced responses when it was hungry. By giving the food repeatedly before turning the lever the rat

# A DECADE LATER...

- Skinner proposes the concept of rule-governed behavior
  - Also many studies on the impact of rules per se (e.g., rules that specify the contingencies versus performance)
  - Recognized that rule-governed behavior may be beneficial in problem solving but may come at a cost
  - Also, some researchers asked how do rules specify contingencies?

## An operant analysis of problem solving

B. F. Skinner

Department of Psychology and Social Studies, Harvard University  
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

**Abstract.** Behavior that solves a problem is distinguished by the fact that it changes another part of the solver's behavior and is self-reinforcing when it does so. Studies using typically human subjects have shown that verbal responses produce especially useful results, because they allow other people to evaluate themselves against them, to practice themselves against them, to practice them before other individuals without direct or prolonged contact with the contingencies that maintain them. The verbal solver problems for its maintainers, and does so by transmitting the verbal contingencies that maintain them. Verbal behavior, and the transmission of verbal contingencies, are the main ways in which a problem solver may teach himself to solve the problem. The verbal solver's behavior is distinguished from other rule-governed behavior in that it is self-reinforcing. The distinction and the amount of self-reinforcement are contingent on the verbal solver's performance. The behavior is shaped and maintained by these contingencies. It is a verbal contingency, and the behavior is shaped and maintained by these contingencies. It is a verbal contingency, which specifies the contingencies that maintain it, and the behavior is shaped and maintained by these contingencies.

**Keywords:** contingency-shaped behavior, behavior, discrimination, stimulus, feedback, behavior, model building, operant analysis, problem solving, reinforcement contingencies, rule-governed behavior, verbal behavior.

Behavior which solves a problem is distinguished by the fact that it changes another part of the solver's behavior and is self-reinforcing when it does so. Two stages are usually identified in a typical problem-solving process. First, the solver brings up a problem. Second, the solver searches for a solution. The behavior which brings about the change in the solver's behavior is, by and large, the behavior which produces a solution. It is a verbal contingency, and the behavior is shaped and maintained by these contingencies. It is a verbal contingency, which specifies the contingencies that maintain it, and the behavior is shaped and maintained by these contingencies.

### Contingencies of reinforcement

When a response occurs and is reinforced, the probability that it will occur again in the presence of similar stimuli is increased. The process by which generalization occurs is a problem for verbal responses or contingencies, but problems arise when contingencies are complex. For example, in Thorndike's experiment the probability that the rat would turn the lever was at first quite low. The low initial reinforcement and reinforcement were behaviorally neutral if it is impossible with turning the lever, and reinforced responses which may have made the lever turn. Following when it was eventually reached. The learned performance which satisfied the contingencies was a

class of responses consisting of turning toward and approaching the lever, reaching and turning the lever, entering toward and passing through the opening door, and approaching and turning the lever. Some trials in the class may have been reinforced by the food and others by escape from the box, but some could be reinforced only after other responses had been conditioned. For these and other reasons the box presented a problem—the lever did not turn.

Thorndike thought he solved his problem by using the reinforced rat food and escape from the box. The response is self-reinforcing. The response that a response has already been affected by reinforcement, it is not a "verbal response" / changes in behavior which others have been selected in the condition of the species because it has brought escape from comparable situations or has been reinforced by escape from aversive situations during the life of the rat. The term "verbal" does not describe behavior. It gives judgment on it. The verbal behavior is reinforced when shaped by Thorndike and other others do not represent any verbal property of behavior — control is not a single general verbal problem solving. The changes which contribute to such a verbal include the adaptation and extinction of contingent responses, the conditioning of responses, and the extinction of unconditioned responses. Any contribution made by an increase in the probability of the reinforced response is functionally obscured.

Even in Thorndike's rather crude apparatus it should be possible to make the change resulting from reinforcement. We could begin by adjusting the rat to the box and reinforced responses were as long as possible. By giving the lever repeatedly while making sure that the event

# FIVE YEARS LATER...



- Sidman offers an answer...
  - Equivalence relations provide a functional-analytic definition of symbolic relations (i.e., specification)
  - The importance of Sidman's discovery is recognized immediately, but the conceptual implications emerge gradually through the 1970's, culminating in the 1982 "primates fail symmetry tests" JEAB article
  - A series of written exchanges between Sidman and Willard Day reveal that the idea of equivalence relations as symbolic relations was controversial...

# DURING THE MID 80S



## RULE- GOVERNED BEHAVIOR

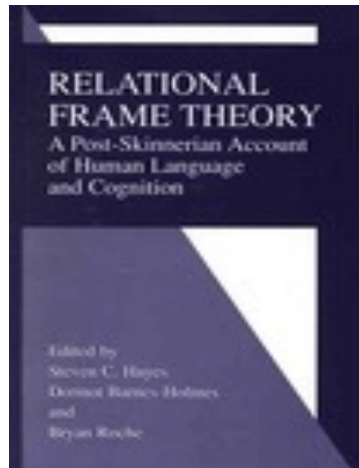
COGNITION,  
CONTINGENCIES,  
AND  
INSTRUCTIONAL  
CONTROL

Edited By  
Steven C. Hayes

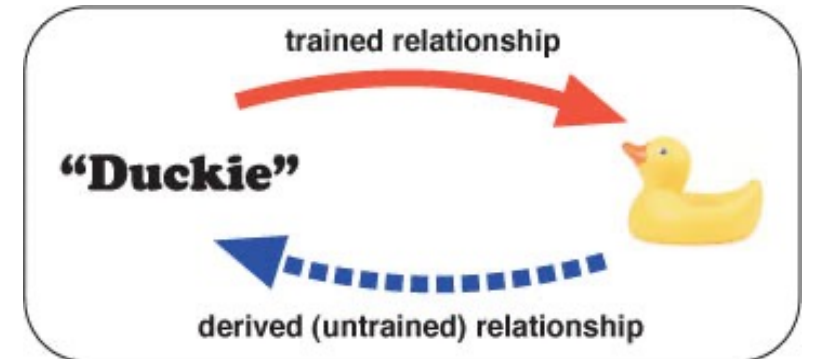
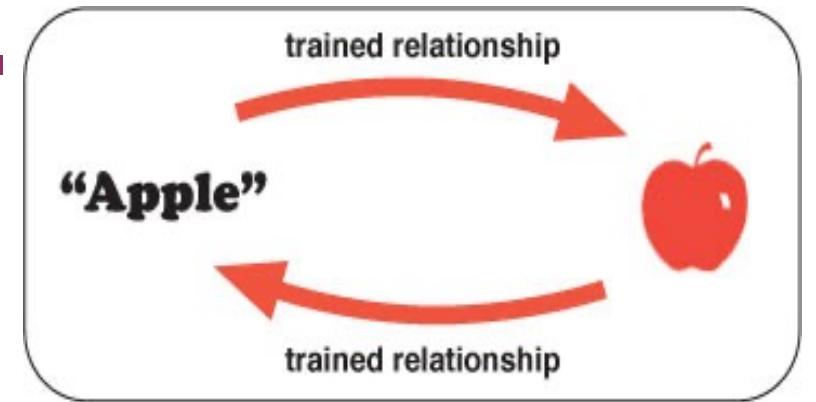
- Hayes argued that equivalence is a generalized relational operant
  - These operants are typically established through natural language interactions
  - Many such operants or “relational frames” are possible
  - Relational frames combine into networks of relations to form rules or instructions
  - Basic account presented across two chapters in 1989 book on Rule-Governed Behavior...

# RFT BOOK IN 2001

- RFT presented as a behaviour-analytic account of human language and cognition (not just rules)



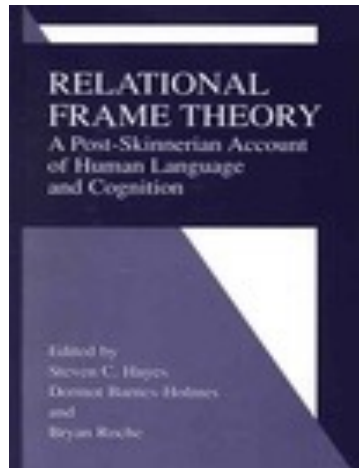
- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of **mutually entailed relations...**



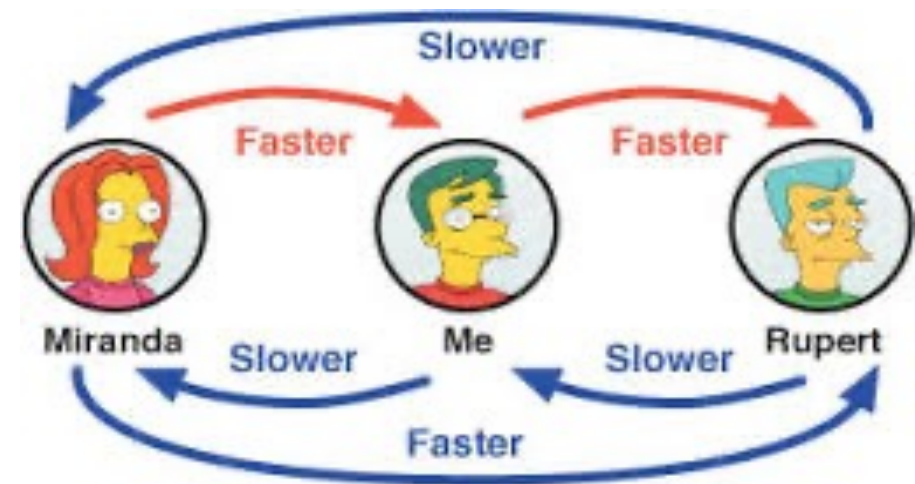
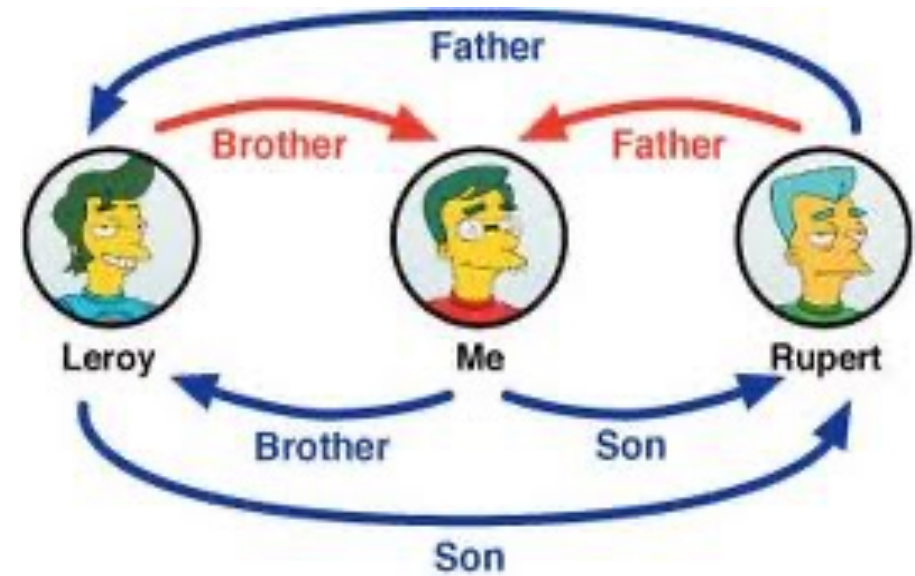


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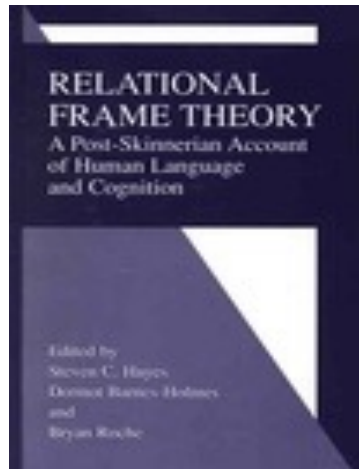


- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of **relational frames**...

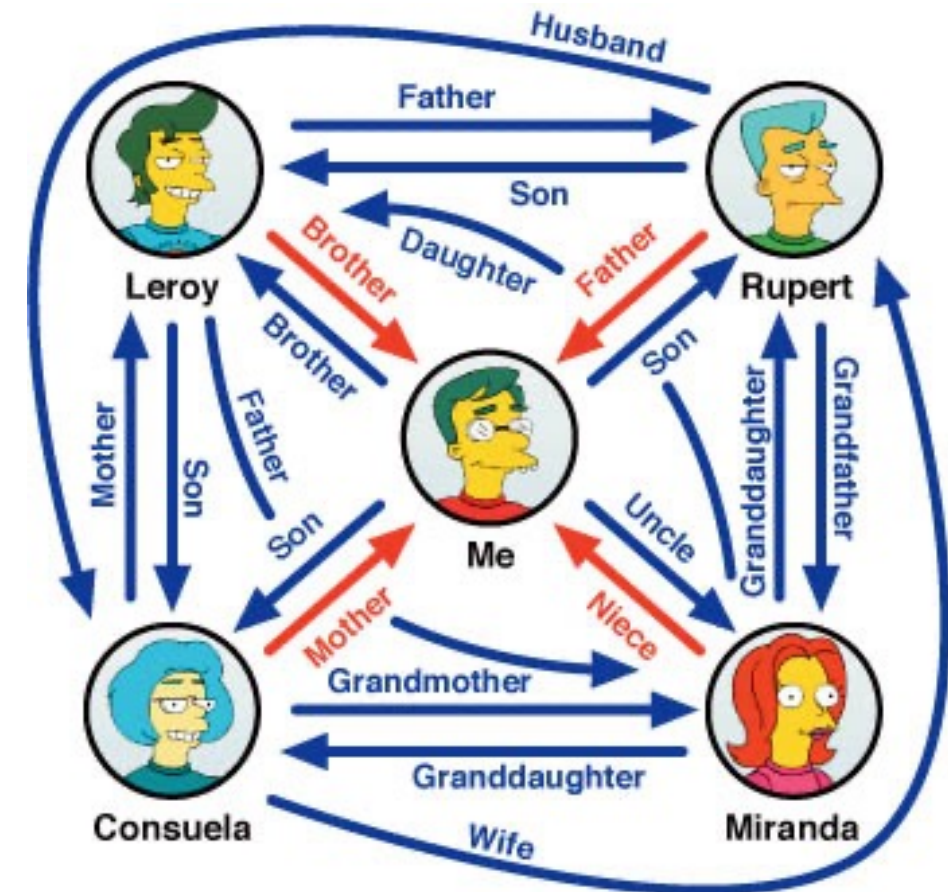


# RFT BOOK IN 2001

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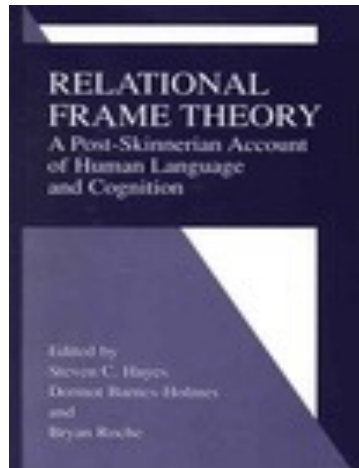


- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of (complex) **relational networks...**



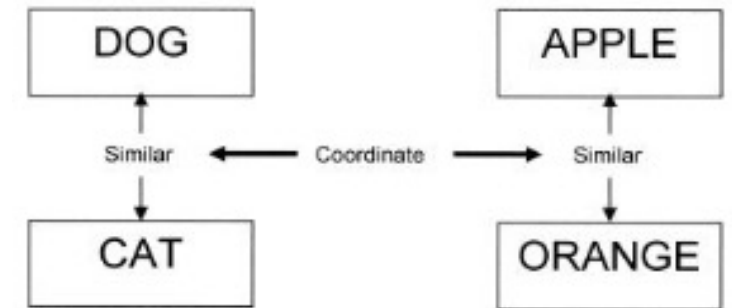
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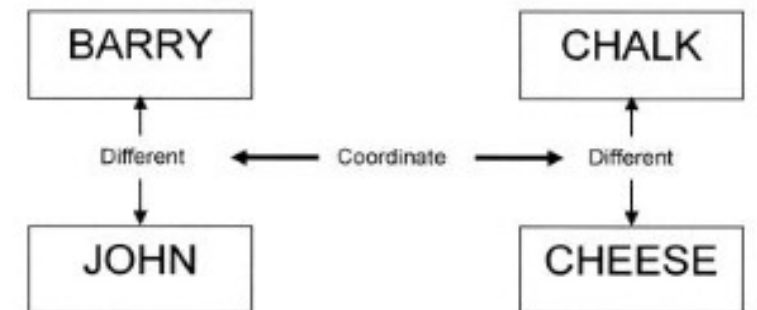


- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of **relating relations...**

## Similar - Similar

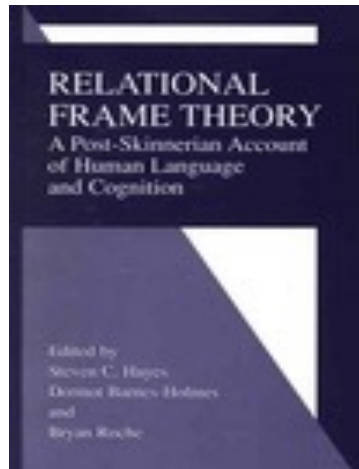


## Different - Different

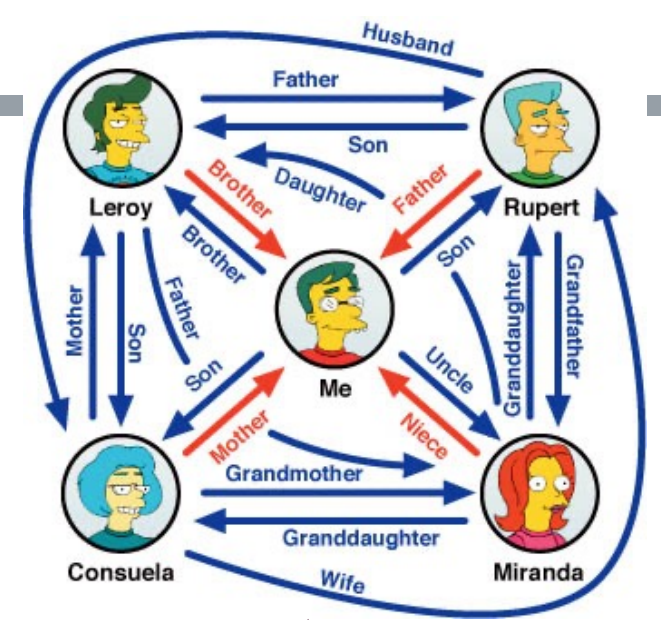


# RFT BOOK IN 2001

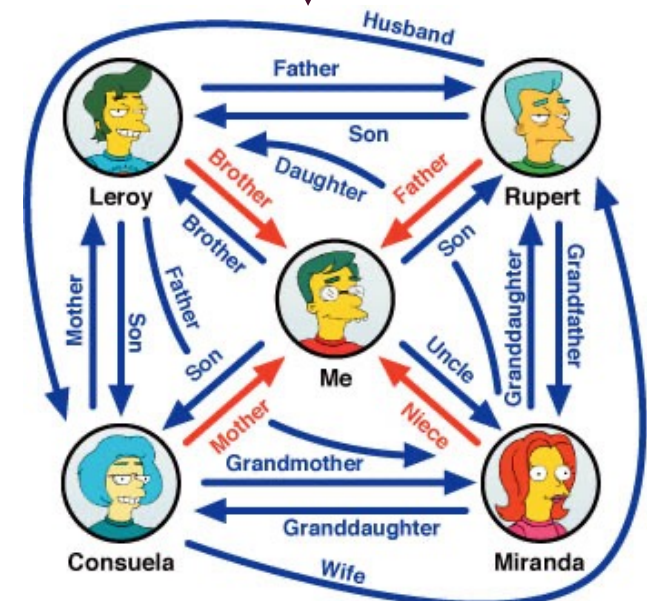
- RFT presented as a behaviour-analytic account of human language and cognition (not just rules)



- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of **relating relational networks...**

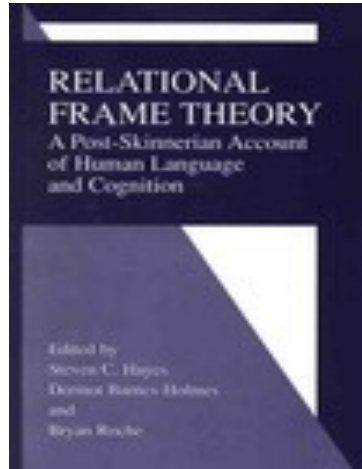


Coordinate



# RFT BOOK IN 2001...

- RFT presented as a behaviour-analytic account of human language and cognition (not just rules)

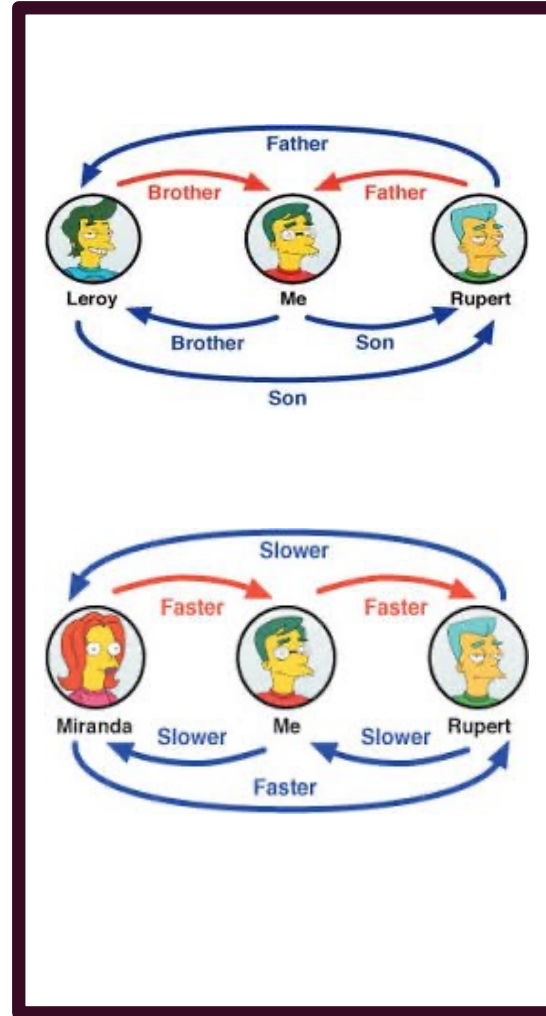


- Core operant process is named arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARR)
- AARR as a generalized operant is learned and consists of **relating relational networks of increasing complexity...**

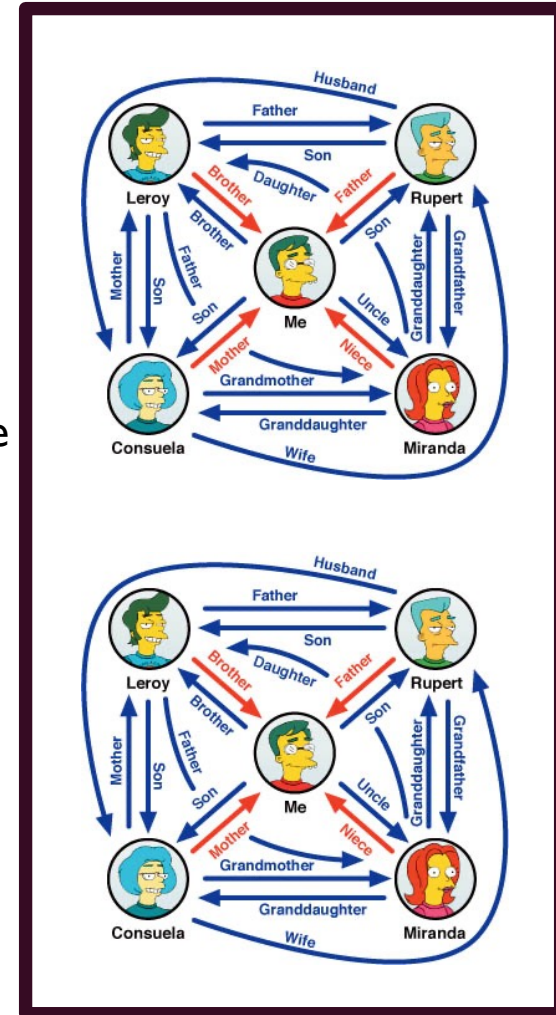
## A Hierarchical Network of Relational Networks

Small Networks

Large Networks



Comparative





Empirical Research

From the IRAP and REC model to a multi-dimensional multi-level framework for analyzing the dynamics of arbitrarily applicable relational responding\*



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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

**Keywords:**  
Relational frame theory  
Multi-dimensional  
Multi-level  
Dynamics  
Arbitrarily applicable relational responding

The article presents the beginnings of a conceptual framework for analyzing the dynamics of arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARRing). The framework focuses on the dimensions and levels of AARRing that have been the focus of empirical and conceptual analysis in the literature on relational frame theory over the past 30 years. The name of the framework is abbreviated the MDML, and the conceptual and empirical context from which it emerged is presented. The framework currently consists of four dimensions, (i) coherence, (ii) complexity, (iii) duration, and (iv) flexibility; and five levels of relational development, (i) mutual matching, (ii) relational framing, (iii) relational networking, (iv) relating relations, and (v) relating relational networks. Within the MDML, each of the dimensions intersects with each of the levels, yielding 20 potential units of behavioral analysis, defined as functional-analytic abstract relational quanta (abbreviated as FAARQs). Some of the conceptual and empirical implications of the MDML are considered, focusing in particular on how it highlights the dynamic properties of AARRing. Specific examples of how the MDML is (and may) impact upon research in relational frame theory are also presented.

A brief outline of the multi-dimensional multi-level framework for analyzing the dynamics of arbitrarily applicable relational responding (AARRing) was provided in a recent chapter, which functioned as an introduction to a section on relational frame theory (RFT) in the Wiley Handbook of Contextual Behavioral Science (Barnes-Holmes, Barnes-Holmes, Hursey, & Luciano, 2016). In that chapter, we argued that the proposed framework would provide a context for analyzing the dynamics of AARRing by conceptualizing such behavior in terms of multiple dimensions and multiple levels, and abbreviated the name of the framework, the MDML.<sup>1</sup> The key purpose of the current article is to present a more detailed or elaborate view of the MDML than was presented in the chapter of the recent handbook. In so doing, it should be clear that we are not seeking to replace RFT with something fundamentally new or different. Rather, we hope to focus on and extend those features of the original theory that appear to us to be the most important at the current time, but perhaps have remained somewhat underemphasized in much of the early work on RFT. What we present here,

therefore, is not an alternative to RFT as presented in the seminal volume (Hayes, Barnes-Holmes, & Roche, 2001), but an extension focusing on those features of the theory that seem to us to be most in need of emphasis as we move forward with the retinalating model of basic and applied science that serves to characterize contextual behavioral science itself (see Hayes, Barnes-Holmes et al., 2012).

1. What is the MDML and what does it offer?

At this point in an earlier version of the current paper we first presented the historical background to the MDML before describing the framework itself and explaining why we think it may be a useful tool within contextual behavioral science and perhaps beyond. During the review process, however, it became clear that it was important to begin with a basic outline of the MDML and to provide at least one or two examples of the motivation behind its development. Adopting this strategy requires that the reader who is unfamiliar with the MDML

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\* Correspondence to: Department of Experimental, Clinical, and Health Psychology, Ghent University, Herestraat 49, 9000 Ghent, Belgium.  
E-mail address: Dermot.Barnes-Holmes@ugent.be (D. Barnes-Holmes).  
<sup>1</sup> As explained in greater detail later in the paper, the term “dimensional” refers to the ways in which the units of analysis, created by the intersections between the levels and dimensions specified within the MDML, interact with each other.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR RFT

## ■ 2017 and beyond: A multi-dimensional, multi-level (MDML) framework for analysing the dynamics of AARR

- On balance, the domain of human language and cognition is far from simple and behavior analysts have been grappling with it since the 1950s
- A single overarching framework that summarizes how RFT is approaching the experimental analysis of human language and cognition reveals the challenge we face...

# THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL, MULTI-LEVEL (MDML) FRAMEWORK

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>			
	<i>Coherence</i>	<i>Complexity</i>	<i>Derivation</i>	<i>Flexibility</i>
<i>Mutual Entailing</i>	Coh/Mut-Ent	Cpx/Mut-Ent	Dev/Mut-Ent	Flx/Mut-Ent
<i>Relational Framing</i>	Coh/Frame	Cpx/Frame	Dev/Frame	Flx/Frame
<i>Relational Networking</i>	Coh/Net	Cpx/Net	Dev/Net	Flx/Net
<i>Relating Relations</i>	Coh/Rel-Rel	Cpx/Rel-Rel	Dev/Rel-Rel	Flx/Rel-Rel
<i>Relating Relational Networks</i>	Coh/Rel-Net	Cpx/Rel-Net	Dev/Rel-Net	Flx/Rel-Net

# COHERENCE

- **Coherence** refers to the extent to which a pattern of derived relational responding coheres with previously established patterns of such responding.
  - For example, if an individual is told that stimulus A is larger than B, and is subsequently told that stimulus B is smaller than A, the latter statement would likely be deemed coherent with the former.
  - In this instance, coherence would be relatively high because the overall pattern ( $A > B = B < A$ ) coheres so consistently with the way in which such verbal relations have been established by the wider verbal community
  - I.e., there are few instances in which the statement, “if A is bigger than B, then B is bigger than A” would be reinforced, or not punished/corrected, by an English-speaking listener).



# COMPLEXITY

- **Complexity** refers to the intricacy or density of a pattern of derived relational responding including differing levels of complexity in contextual control
- For example, all things being equal;
  - if  $A = B$  then  $B = A$  involves only one relation,
  - $A > B$  then  $B < A$  involves two relations,
  - If  $A = B$  and  $B = A$  on the basis of color involves only one contextual dimension,
  - If  $A = B$  and  $B = A$  on the basis of color and shape involves two contextual dimensions,
  - If  $A = B$  and  $B = A$  on the basis of an arbitrary cue (e.g., “is a”) likely involves a more extensive (complex) history than (simple) non-arbitrary contextual control; note also that arbitrary cues require low levels of (simple) orienting responses.

# DERIVATION

- **Derivation** refers to the extent to which a particular pattern of derived relational responding has previously been emitted or “practiced.”
- Within the new framework, each time a relation is derived its level of derivation reduces because it acquires its own history that extends beyond the derivation that is made from the “baseline” relation;
  - If an individual learns that A is bigger than B, and thus derives that B is smaller than A, the first time that the  $B < A$  relation is derived it is derived “directly” from the  $A > B$  “baseline” relation.
  - However, if the individual subsequently continues to respond to B as smaller than A, that relational response gradually acquires its own history that renders it less and less derived from the original baseline relation (i.e., A bigger than B).

# FLEXIBILITY

- **Flexibility** refers to the extent to which a particular pattern of derived relational responding may be modified by a contextual variable.
- E.g., when playing a game of “**give me the wrong answer**” tell me what  $2 \times 2$  equals... (4) as quickly as you can?

# THE MDML FRAMEWORK

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>			
	<i>Coherence</i>	<i>Complexity</i>	<i>Derivation</i>	<i>Flexibility</i>
<i>Mutual Entailing</i>	Coh/Mut-Ent	Cpx/Mut-Ent	Dev/Mut-Ent	Flx/Mut-Ent
<i>Relational Framing</i>	Coh/Frame	Cpx/Frame	Dev/Frame	Flx/Frame
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<i>Relating Relational Networks</i>	Coh/Rel-Net	Cpx/Rel-Net	Dev/Rel-Net	Flx/Rel-Net



MAKING THE ABSTRACT  
MORE CONCRETE

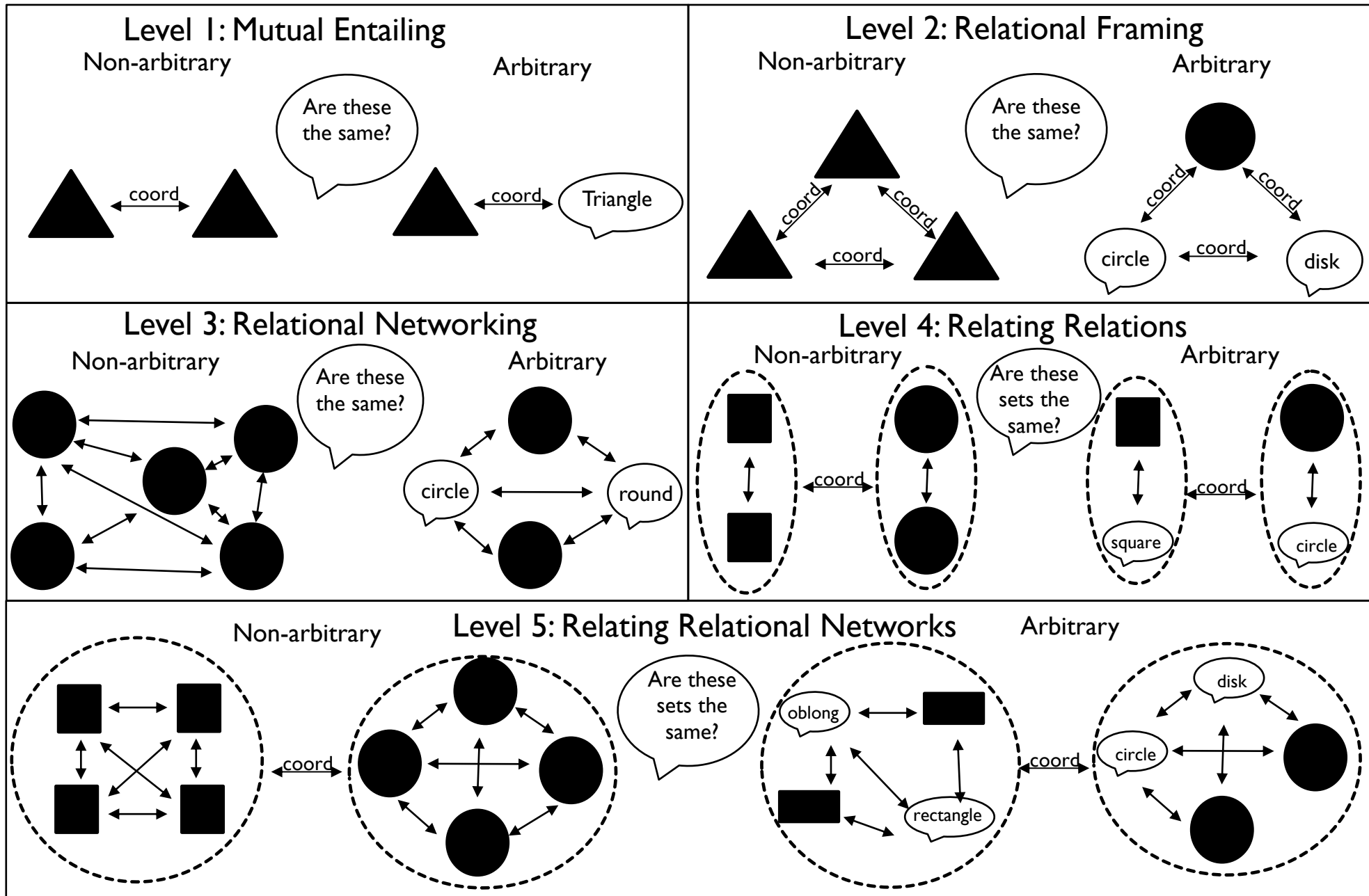


PRACTICAL  
IMPLICATIONS  
FOR ABA



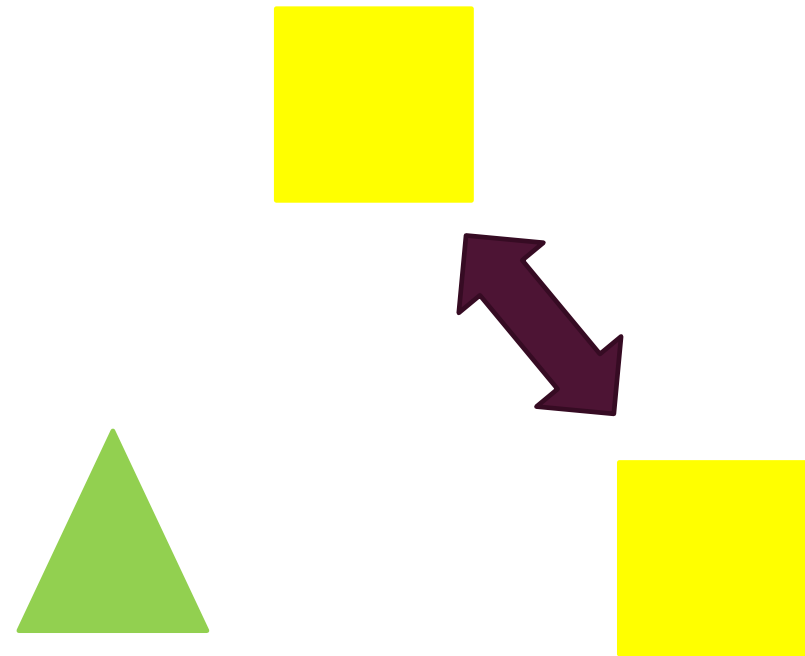
# COORDINATION





# LEVEL I – COORDINATION (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

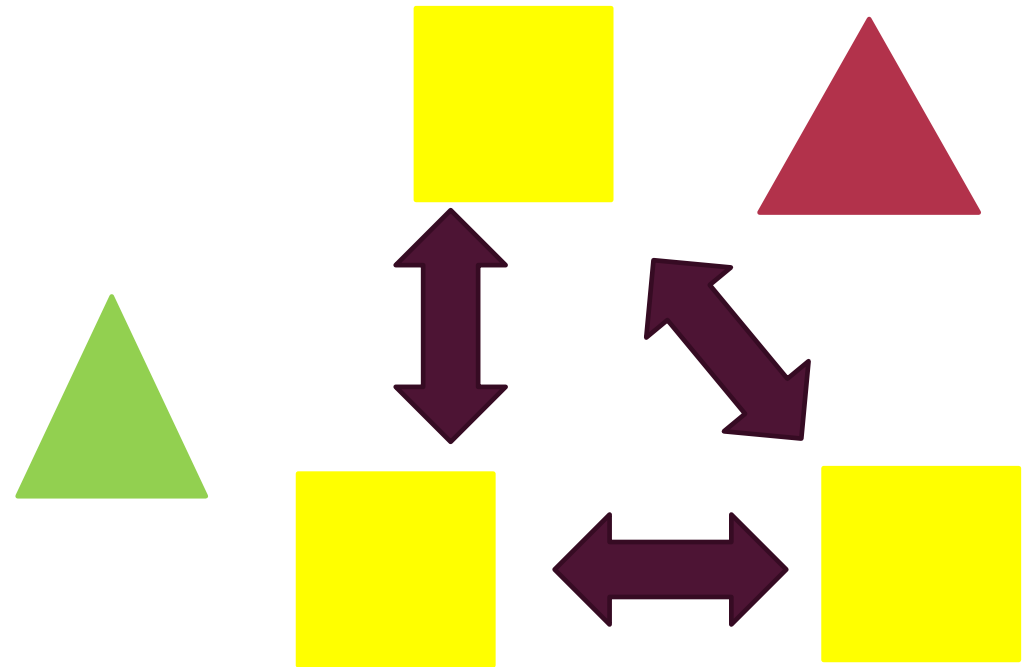
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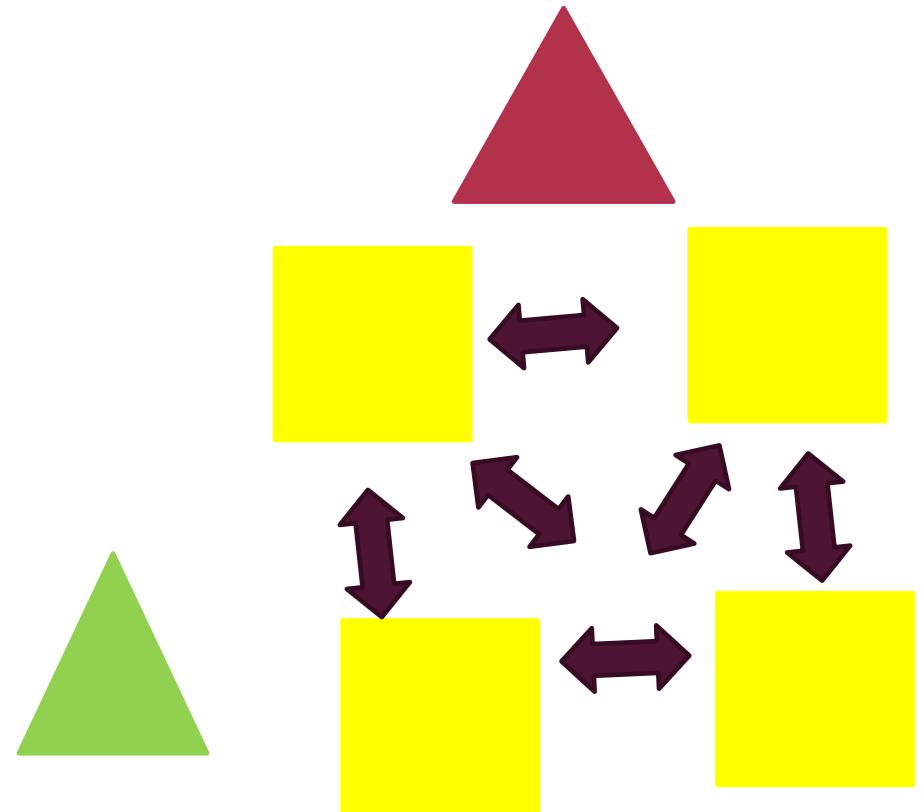
## LEVEL 2 – COORDINATION (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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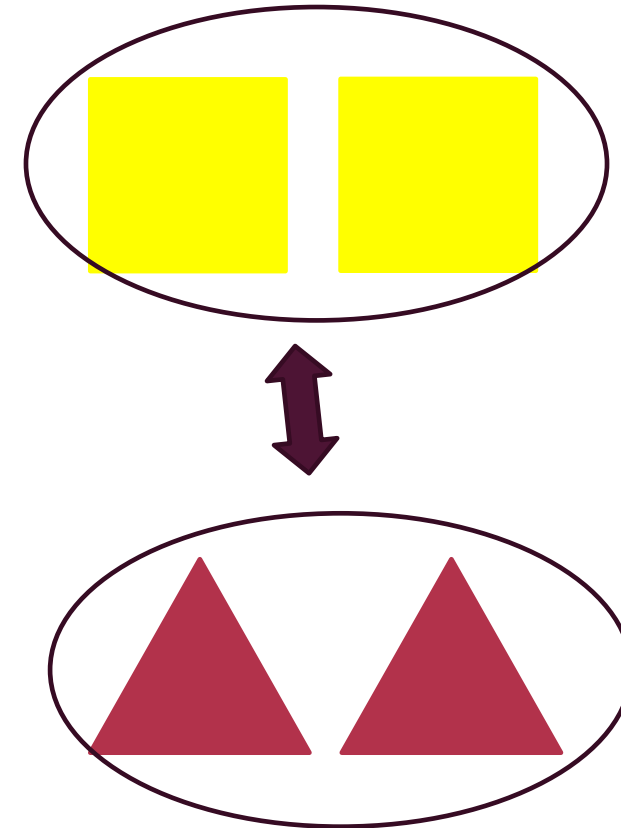
## LEVEL 3 – COORDINATION (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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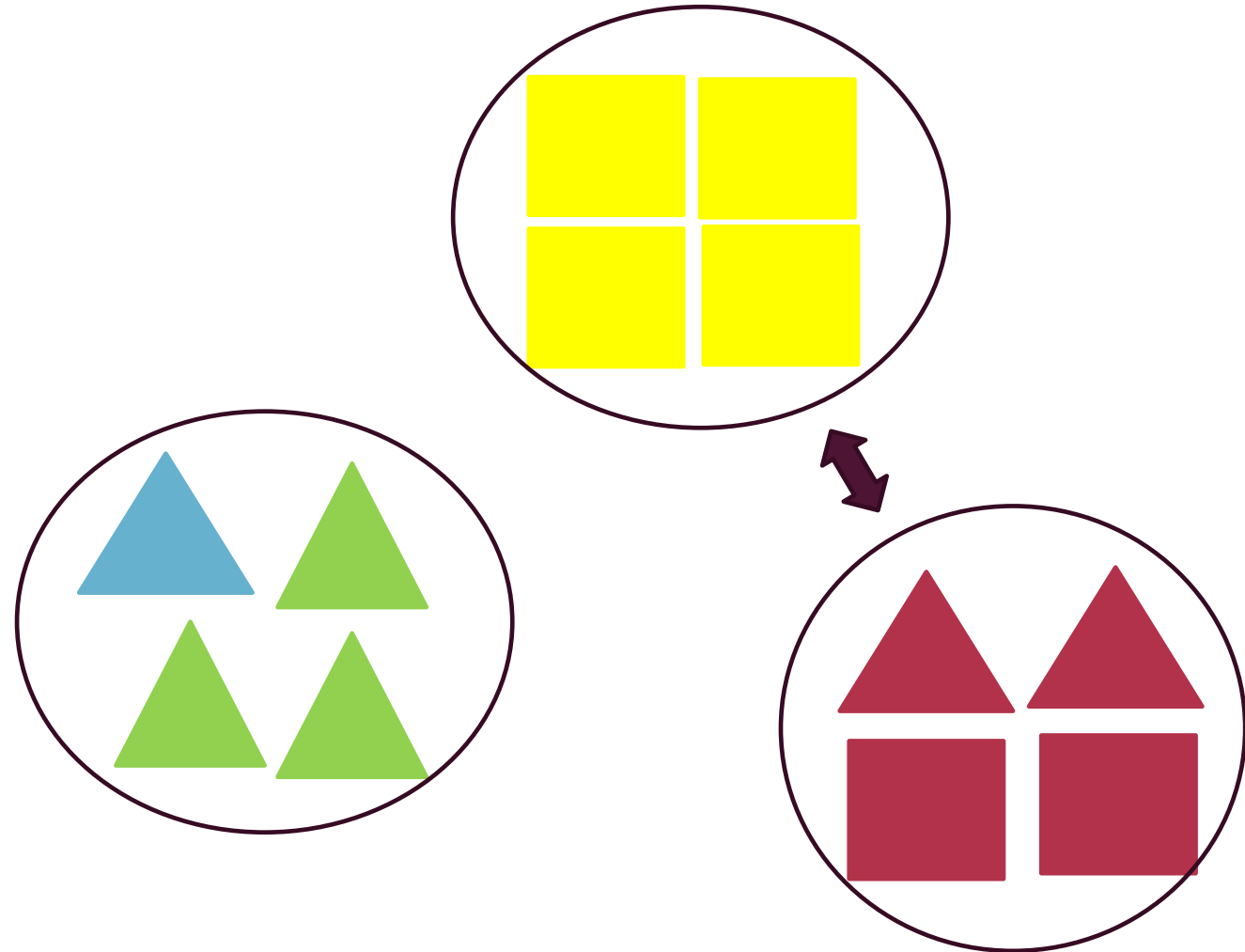
## LEVEL 4 – COORDINATION (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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## LEVEL 5 – COORDINATION (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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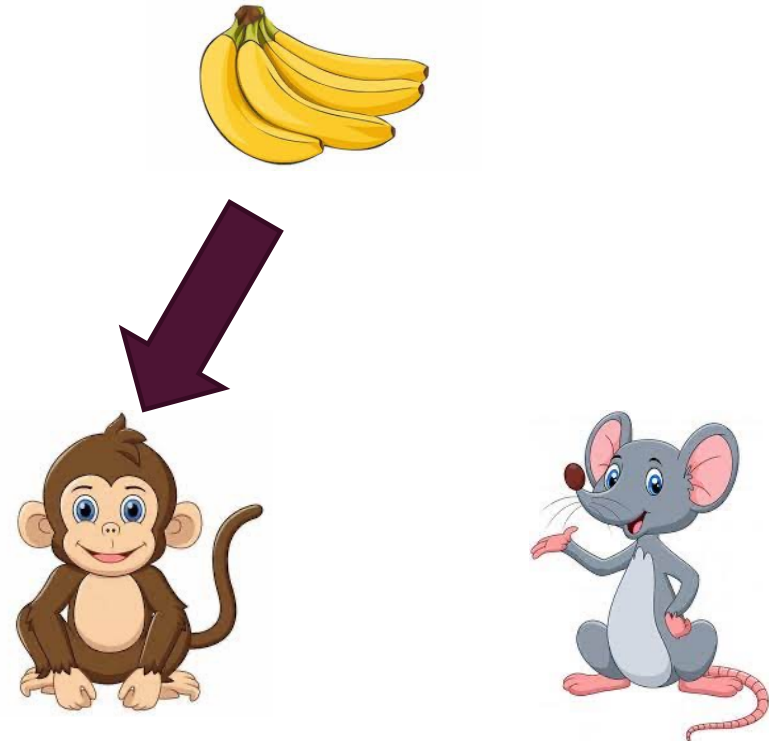
# LEVEL I – COORDINATION (ARBITRARY RELATION) TRAINING AB

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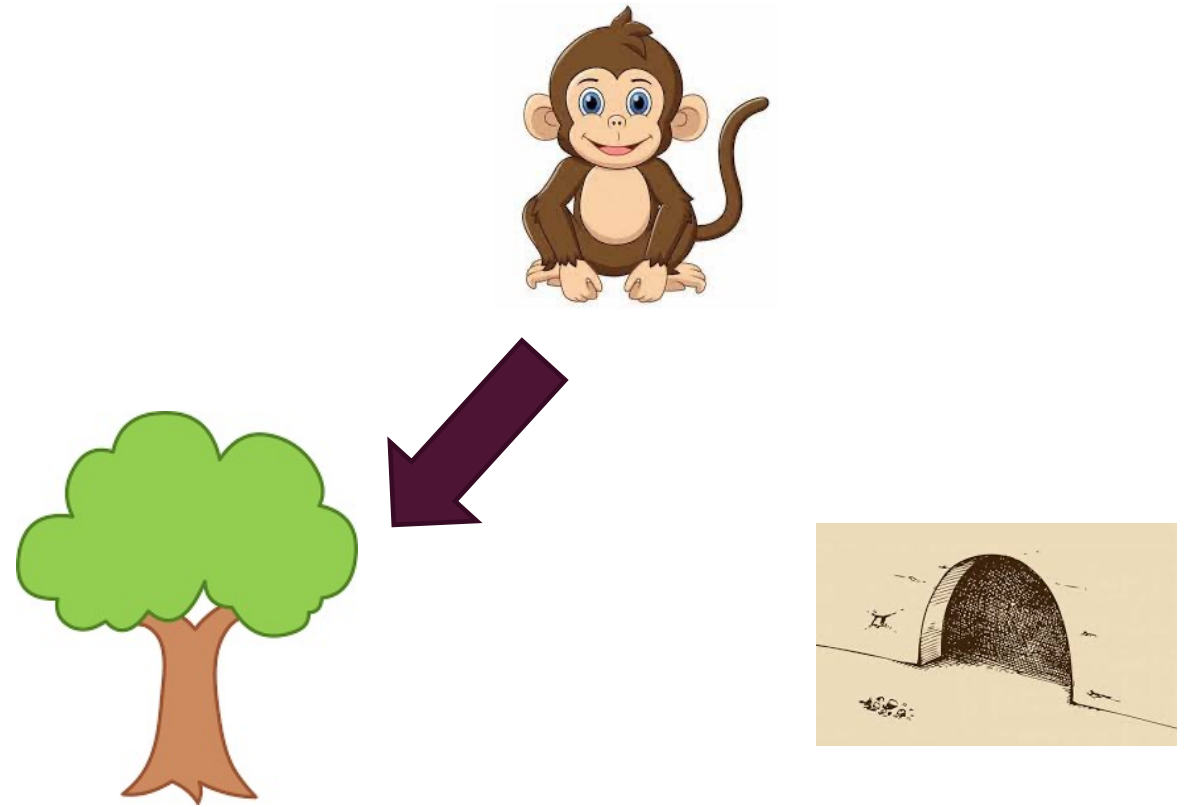
# LEVEL I – COORDINATION (ARBITRARY RELATION) TESTING BA

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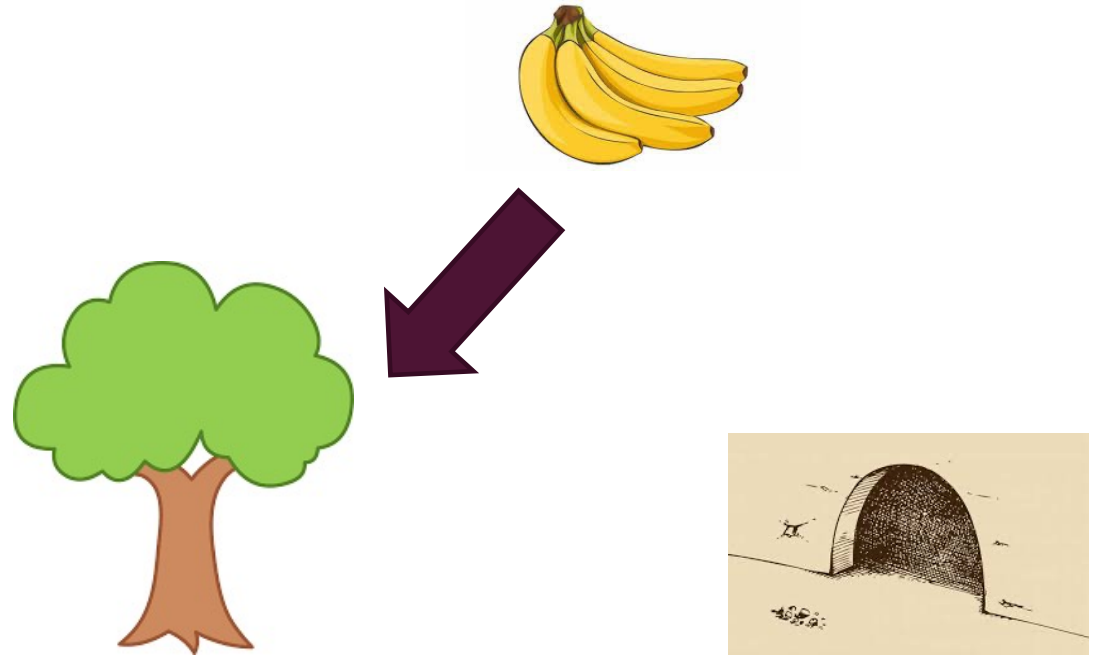
# LEVEL I – COORDINATION (ARBITRARY RELATION) TRAINING AC

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## LEVEL 2 – COORDINATION (ARBITRARY RELATIONS) TESTING BC

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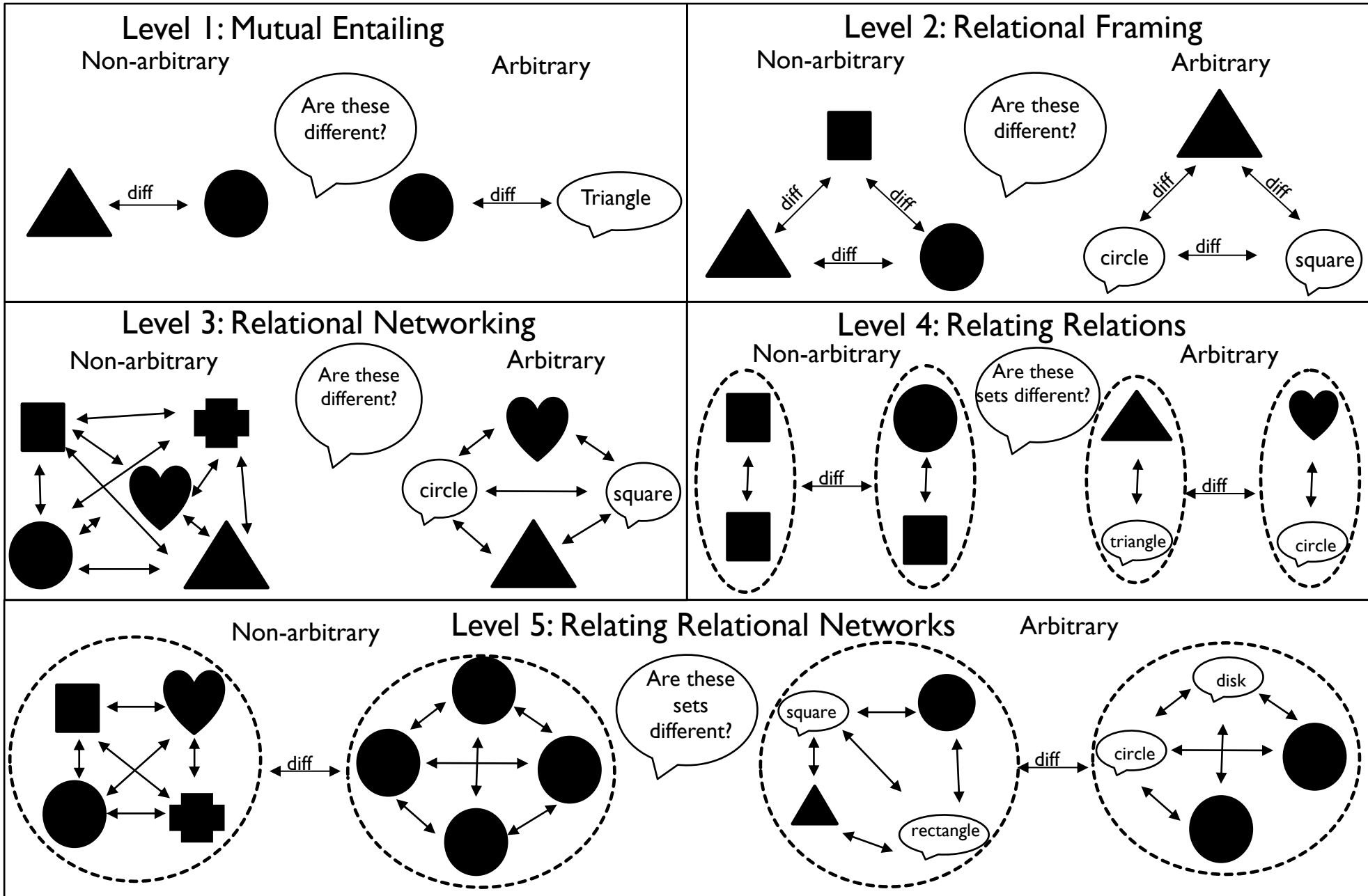






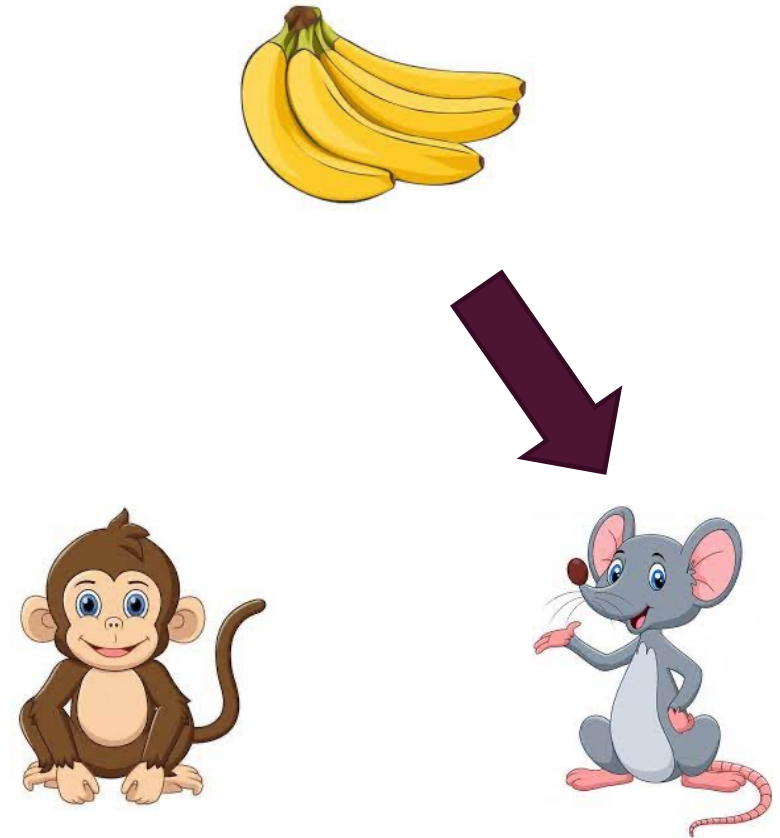
DIFFERENCE





# LEVEL I – DIFFERENCE (ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

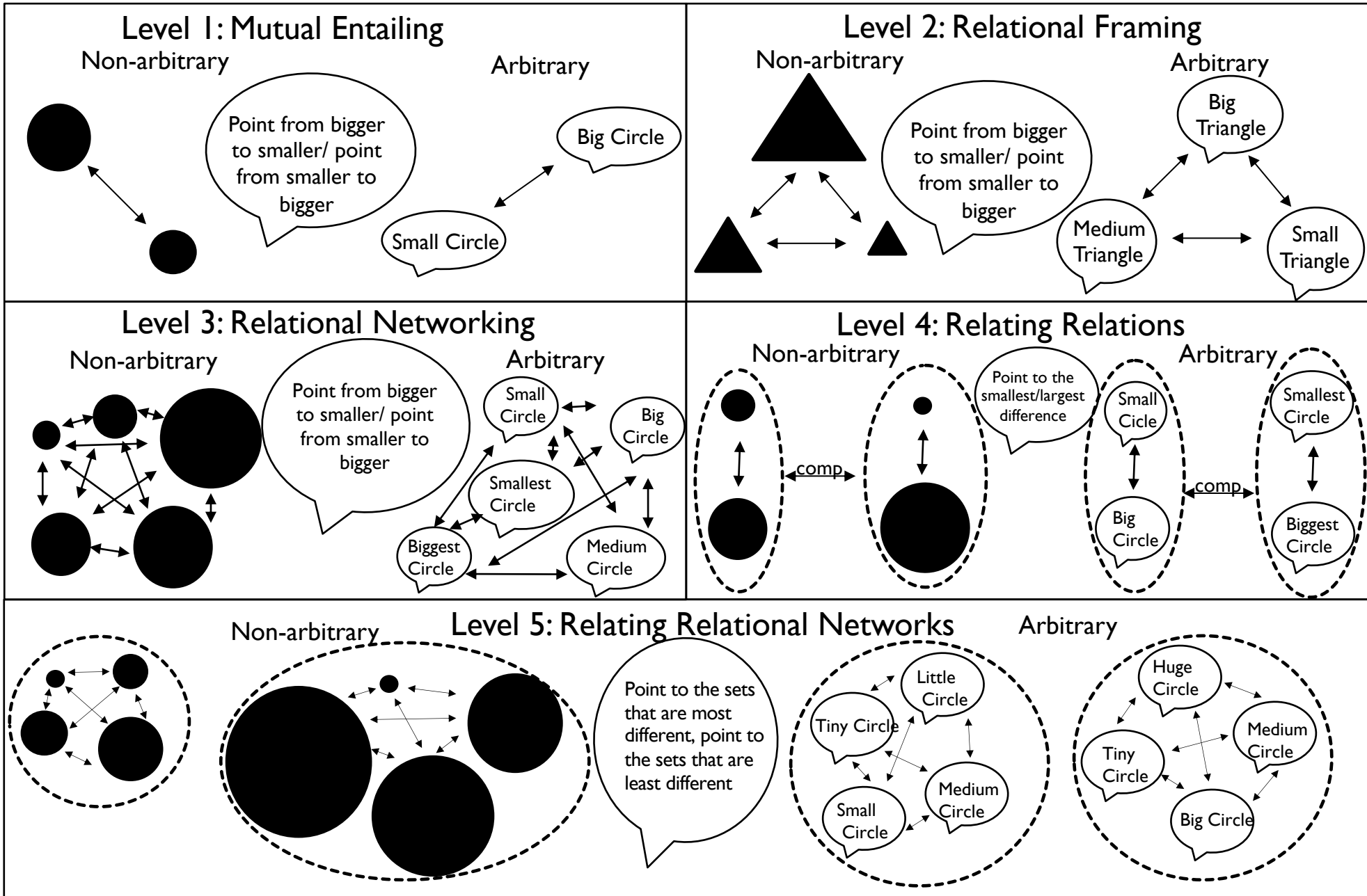
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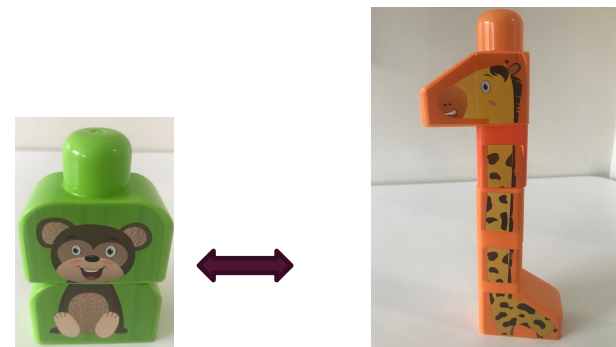
# COMPARISON





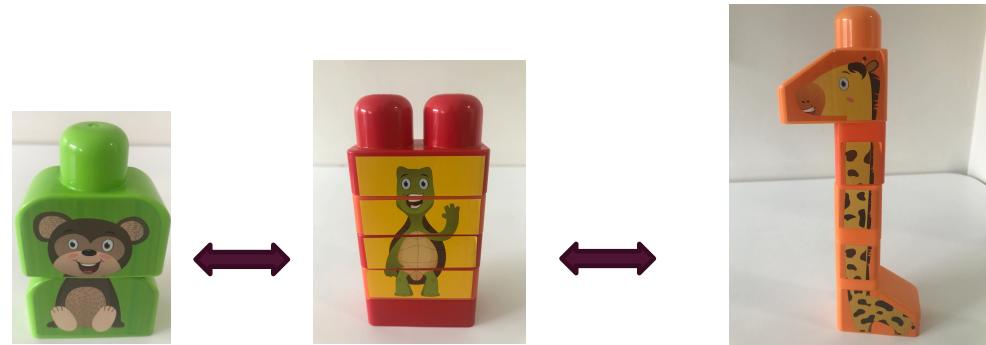
# LEVEL I – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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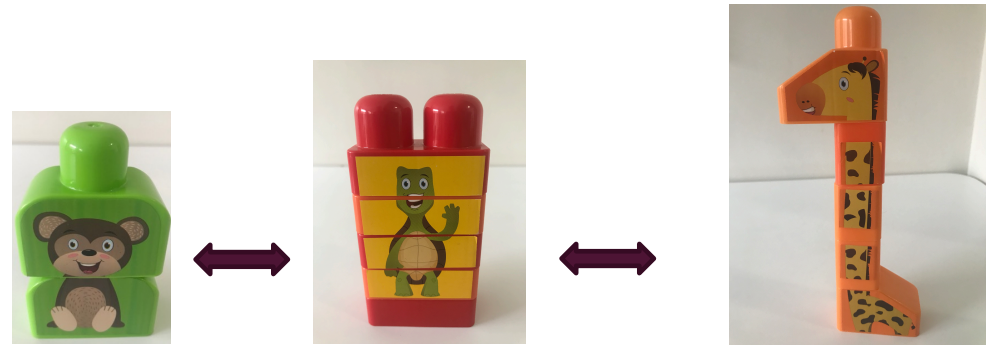
## LEVEL 2 – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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## LEVEL 2 – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

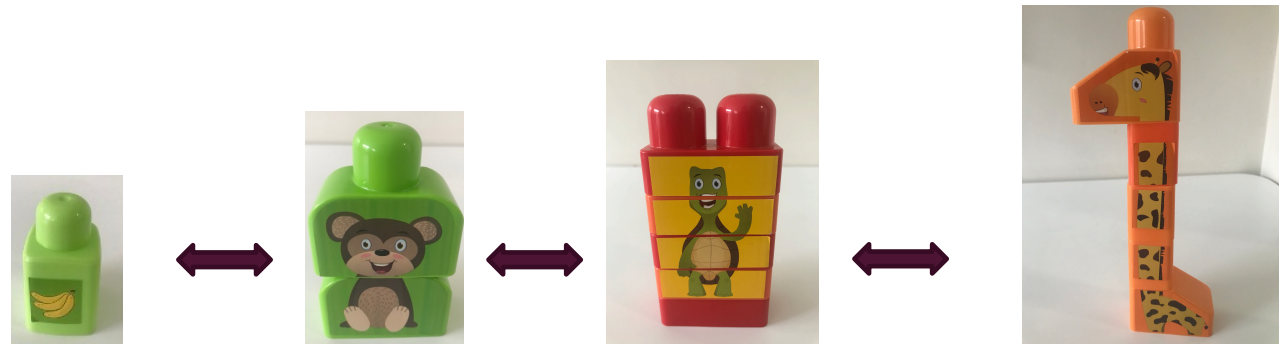
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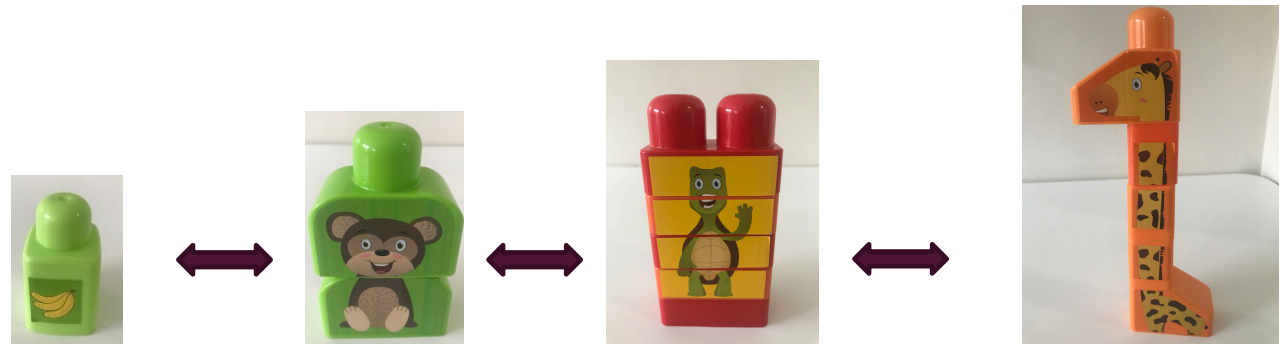
## LEVEL 3 – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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## LEVEL 3 – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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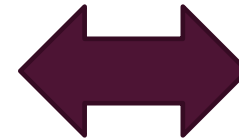


## LEVEL 4 – COMPARISON (NON ARBITRARY RELATIONS)

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SET 1



SET 2



# CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION USING THE MDML



# SUMMARY

- Luca, age eight years, has a diagnosis of autism and intellectual disability. He lives with his mother. He has been receiving in-clinic ABA services since Feb-2021, as well as speech and occupational therapy.

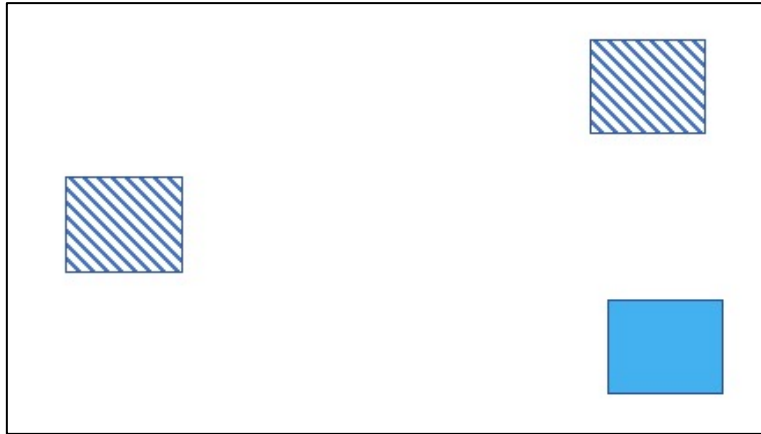
- The evaluations used were: VB-MAPP, some of AFLLS, specifics for Reading, and non-arbitrary relational repertoire.

# SUMMARY

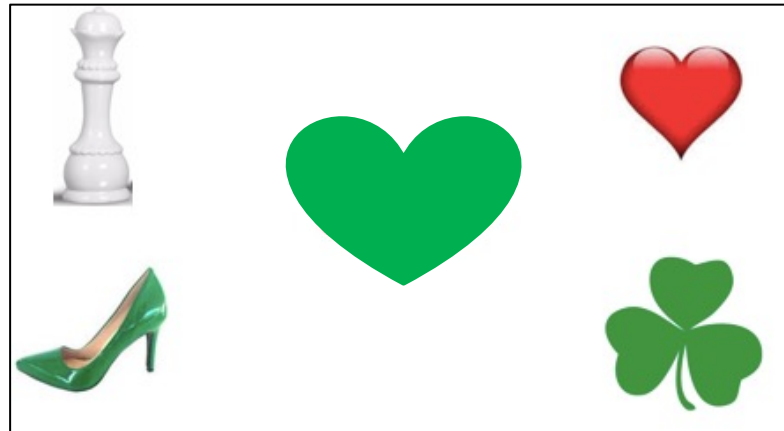
- Luca loves a superhero series and some Ipad games. He also participates well in board games (but it's not his first choice).
- Barriers: shows rigidity with changes in his routine but often complains when he is asked to repeat the trials in a teaching session.



# MDML EVALUATION – COORDINATION LEVELS 1-5.



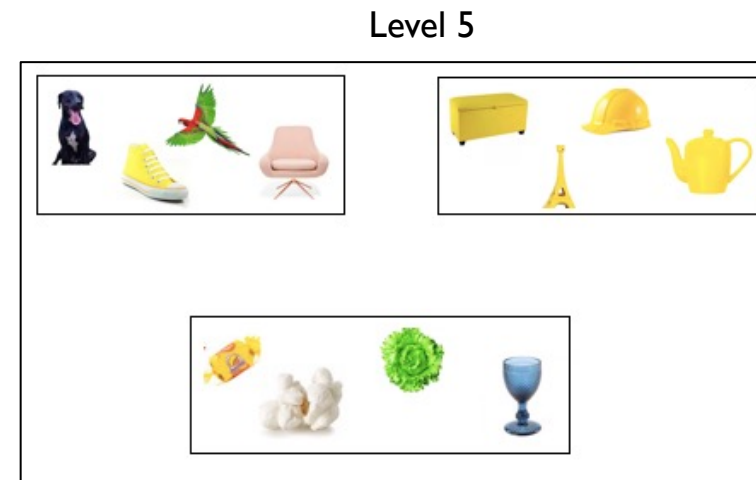
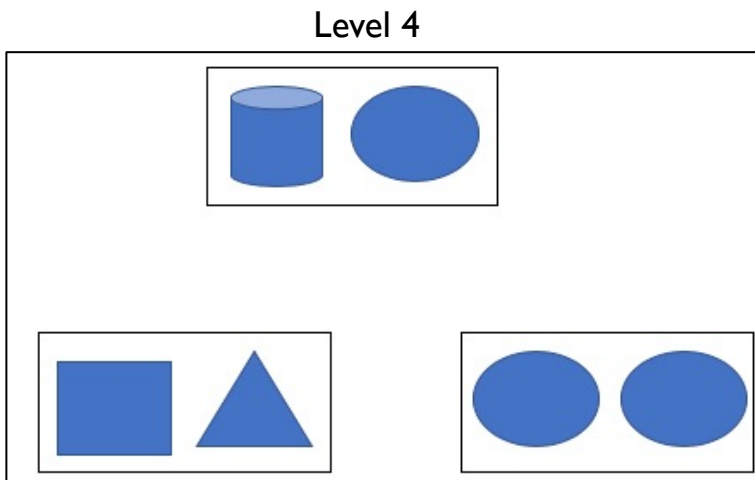
Level 1



Level 2



Level 3





# ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

*MDML – Levels 1-4 non arbitrary*

Non arbitrary				
Level	Coordination	Difference	Comparison	Opposition
1	10/10	9/10	10/10	1/10
2	7/10	4/10	10/10	–
3	5/10	–	–	–
4	0/5	–	–	–
5	–	–	–	–

---

## CLINICAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM - OBJECTIVES

- LEVEL 2 - COORDINATION **NON ARBITRARY** RELATIONS
- Match in the same/different relations, 2D stimuli, in terms of shape/color in a set involving four pictures, presenting contextual cues of same/different.
  - Correction Critereon: if the learner make two consecutive mistakes the relation can be directly trained and one **new set of non-familiar** added to the procedure.
  - Ending Critereon: being able to respond to five **new stimuli** without presentation of reinforcement.

---

## CLINICAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM - OBJECTIVES

- LEVEL I – COORDINATION **ARBITRARY** RELATIONS
- Match pictures of animals with written English names (These training trials **will be reinforced**).
  - When the learner is consistently relating two pairs of names and pictures of animals he can proceed to the test.
  - **Test - Level I** – Present the written English names and the learner have to select the respective animal.
    - Ending Critereon: two correct answers out of of two oportunites in two simultaneous blocks.

---

## CLINICAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM - OBJECTIVES

- LEVEL 2 – COORDINATION **ARBITRARY** RELATIONS
  - Present the “sound that an animal makes” and the learner will select pictures of animal (These training trials **will be reinforced**).
    - When the learner is consistently relating two pairs of pictures and sounds of animals he can proceed to the test.
  - **Test - Level 2** – Present the written English name and the learner have to emit the respective sound.
    - Ending Critereon: two correct answers out of of two opportunites in two simultaneous blocks.

# DIMENSIONS

- **Coherence:**
  - Non-arbitrary procedures: using visual-visual elements in the training will make the coherence higher than employing stimuli with different sensory properties (tactile, olfative).
- **Complexity**
  - For early learners complexity should be always kept as low as possible, in other words isolated relation-types and only the necessary number of elements for one specific level should be used. On the other hand, for more advanced learners, mixing different relation-types and adding more elements than the necessary in some given level could be desirable for refining their relational repertoire.
- **Derivation**
  - Employing familiar elements might likely lower the derivation level and non-familiar elements would likely have the opposite effect. (e.g., animal context vs teach a new language).
  - Sometimes it is useful to lower the derivation level to increase fluency at the same level across future opportunities
- **Flexibility:**
  - Try to employ different set ups for the stimuli presentation (other than traditional Matching to sample).
  - Use the same stimuli from one relation to other relations.

# THE MDML FRAMEWORK

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>			
	<i>Coherence</i>	<i>Complexity</i>	<i>Derivation</i>	<i>Flexibility</i>
<i>Mutual Entailing</i>	Coh/Mut-Ent	Cpx/Mut-Ent	Dev/Mut-Ent	Flx/Mut-Ent
<i>Relational Framing</i>	Coh/Frame	Cpx/Frame	Dev/Frame	Flx/Frame
<i>Relational Networking</i>	Coh/Net	Cpx/Net	Dev/Net	Flx/Net
<i>Relating Relations</i>	Coh/Rel-Rel	Cpx/Rel-Rel	Dev/Rel-Rel	Flx/Rel-Rel
<i>Relating Relational Networks</i>	Coh/Rel-Net	Cpx/Rel-Net	Dev/Rel-Net	Flx/Rel-Net

# CONCLUSION

- The roots of RFT can be traced back to an early conference paper on rule-governed behaviour in 1984
- A full book-length treatment of RFT is now itself 20 years old
- Curiously, the potential impact of the RFT approach to human language and cognition in applied behaviour analysis is only now beginning to emerge
- One of the main reasons that RFT failed to make a significant impact earlier was its apparent complexity and the introduction of many new terms and concepts (some might say jargon!) unfamiliar to traditional behaviour analysis
- Furthermore, RFT lacked an overarching framework that attempted to organise and summarise its key assumptions and concepts

# CONCLUSION

- Many ABA researchers and practitioners understandably did not see any potential value in engaging with the theory in the absence of such a framework
- Hopefully with the introduction of the MDML in the general updating of RFT the much needed framework is emerging.
- This, we hope, will help ABA folks begin to utilise RFT in ways that hitherto could not readily be seen or appreciated
- Of course, this will take time and effort – but we hope that today's workshop will play some small part in that journey



THANK YOU! ANY  
QUESTIONS?

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