

PSYCHOLOGY SORTED: KEY RESEARCH TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

COGNITIVE APPROACH

Topic 2: Reliability of cognitive processes

Key Idea: The extent to which the cognitive processes of memory, thinking and decision-making are reliable.

Content	Research	Use in Cognitive Approach	Links to
Biases in thinking and decision-making	Classic	Availability heuristic (an example of a cognitive bias): people judge the frequency of something by the ease with which the examples come to mind (availability). In the study, participants judged frequency by the ease with which the famous names were recalled. (<i>Their 1974 article also covers other heuristics.</i>)	
	Tversky & Kahneman (1973)		
	Critique/Extension	Study showing how cognitive biases in mental health diagnoses lead to racist diagnoses. Especially relevant to confirmation bias and availability heuristic.	Abnormal Psychology: Factors influencing diagnosis - the role of cognitive biases in diagnosis.
	Pavkov & Lewis (1989)		
	Recent	Representativeness heuristic and its relationship to gambling: examples of 'hot hand' and 'gambler's fallacy' biases.	
	Sundali & Croson (2006)		

Further resources

BBC Health Check radio interview with Daniel Kahneman (2012). Thinking, fast and slow.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00mmnj2>



BBC interview with Daniel Kahneman

TED talk by Dan Ariely (2008). Are we in control of our own decisions?

<https://tinyurl.com/mqe5xyo>

(Note: the speaker is a behavioural economist – not a psychologist. The theories of dual systems and of cognitive biases in thinking and decision-making owe a lot to behavioural economics.)



Ted talk by Dan Ariely