Maria Revilla

Dr. Stephen Maret

General Psychology: OA

21 February 2023

Chapter 5 - Short Questions

33. Our perception is the way our sensory information is organized, interpreted, and consciously experienced. Our perceptions are also conditioned according to the part of the world we live in, the environment, culture, set of beliefs, values, prejudices, life experiences, and expectations. In addition, information is passed at a DNA level through generations, which helps species to survive, respond, and adapt to their environment. This also has an effect on how people from different cultures and geographical locations perceive and interpret the world.

A good example is provided by the Psychology and Neuroscience website https://psych-neuro.com/2016/02/17/cultures-influence-on-perception which states that people raised in Asian countries are more likely to recall background context and relative size, whereas Western cultures are more likely to focus on the absolute size of objects and the focal objects of images. This leads to the interesting conclusion outlined by Goh and Park (2009) that, “the brains of people from Asian and Western cultures activate different areas when performing a figure-ground recognition task.” This seems to indicate that there is a collective genetic and environmental factor to how different cultures perceive and interpret their world.

37. Sensation is the process by which our senses collect information from stimuli in our environment and send them to the brain for processing. Perception is the process by which all the external stimuli received from the senses and the nervous system are processed, organized, interpreted, and experienced by each individual. Sensation is a physical process, whereas

perception is a physiological one; perception is about making sense of the summary of sensory information received. For example, if I walk into a Trader Joe's and I smell the fragrance of the coffee they are offering as a sample, my sensory experience would involve my sense of smell picking up the smell of coffee, which is carried out by my nervous system into my brain where the perception of this event takes place. My perception could translate into the thought that this lovely smell of rich coffee reminds me of the Spanish coffee we have at home, and I might feel inclined to buy some.

39. Sensory adaptation is an interesting phenomenon that occurs when we stop perceiving external stimuli that remain constant for a continued period of time. It often happens when our attention is focused on another object which makes the repetitive stimuli become out staged by the main event and very much part of the background therefore no longer noted. For example, when I moved to a busy city road close to a major hospital, I noticed the constant loud sound of heavy traffic, police, and ambulance sirens. At first, it was very noticeable and annoying. Over time it became part of the background noise that I no longer hear or conscientiously notice when I am occupied with other activities. Sometimes when I speak to my family and friends on the phone, they hear it, but my brain has adapted to it and no longer registers the noise unless somebody brings it to my attention. This is called sensory adaptation and proves that sensation doesn't always translate to perception and that the brain has a selective power to switch things off that are not necessary as they might be overloading the mind by taking attention away from the more important events.

45. Ménière's disease is a sensorineural hearing loss resulting from the failure to transmit neural signs from the cochlea to the brain. This degeneration of the inner ear structures can result in hearing loss, tinnitus, vertigo, and pressure on the inside of the ear. It normally affects only

one ear and is more common between the ages of 40 to 60. This condition can be genetic, may be due to an excess of fluid in the inner ear, or may be caused by an autoimmune condition or a viral infection. This condition cannot be treated with hearing aids. Some people may benefit from a cochlear implant, an electronic device that consists of a microphone, a speech processor, and an electrode array, that will serve as a bridge between the sound information and the brain by stimulating the auditory nerve that sends the information to the brain for processing.

54. Subliminal messages are types of messages that are below the threshold for conscious awareness. For a message to be fully received and processed by the brain, a minimum amount of stimulus energy must be present for it to be detected at least 50% of the time. This is called the absolute threshold. The stimulus must be strong enough to excite the sensory receptors to in turn send nerve impulses to the brain through the process of transduction. Research has shown that subliminal messages are received but we are not aware of them, or in other words, they don't quite reach our conscious mind, however, they might influence our response to a small degree even outside our awareness.

There have been studies that prove their influence on our subconscious is minimal, and that they have little impact on our behavior. The exact influence of subliminal messages is difficult to ascertain from the studies. Over the years subtle subliminal messages have commonly been used in advertising, music, political campaigns, and self-help materials. In particular, in advertising, subliminal messages might be inserted to create an illusion, deviation, or deception that the brain might associate with other things in an effort to arouse individuals' interests or reinforce the brand. For example, SFX is a magazine that specializes in science fiction. Often when it portrays seductive women on the cover, the bottom part of the letter F is covered by the photograph, making the magazine's name appear to read SEX instead of SFX. Here is a subtle

subliminal message that may lead the viewer's mind in a different direction, catching their attention, and provoking an unrelated but newly suggested interest with a view to maximizing sales.