

Behaviourism is a theory of learning that was influential in the 1940s and 1950s, especially in the United States. Thus encouraged by their environment, children would continue to imitate and practise these sounds and patterns until they formed 'habits' of correct language use. Traditional behaviourists hypothesized that when children imitated a y the language produced by those around them, their attempts to reproduce r e t , what they heard received 'positive reinforcement'.