• Baby learns that mother produces a sense of pleasure – caregiver (NS) provides food and becomes a CS, whenever the CS is seen it produces a CR of pleasure.
• Operant conditioning – crying is reinforced because it produces a pleasurable consequence.
• Negative reinforcement – caregiver receives because the noise of the crying stopping is pleasurable.
• Drive reduction – hunger is a primary drive and innate, attachment is a secondary drive learned by an association with the caregiver and the satisfaction of a primary drive. Sears et al (1957) argue that caregivers provide food and so the primary drive of hunger becomes associated to them.

Evaluation

+ Some elements of conditioning involved, plausible that it plays a role in attachment.
- Animal studies provide evidence against food being the basis of attachment – Lorenz’s geese kept attachment to who they had imprinted on regardless of who fed them. Harlow’s monkeys attached to the softer surrogate in preference to the wire one with milk.
- Feeding is not an important factor – Schaffer and Emerson (1964) showed that for many babies the attachment was to someone other to who fed them.
- Ignores other factors linked to attachment – quality of attachment is associated with developing reciprocity and good levels of interactional synchrony.
- Newer learning theory developed – Hay and Vespo (1988), parents teach their children to love them through modelling attachment behaviours and rewarding them when they display their own attachment.

Bowlby’s (1958, 1969) Monotropic Theory of Attachment

• Attachment is innate, just like imprinting, gives a survival advantage. Imprinting and attachment evolved because they protect young animals from hazards by staying close to their caregivers.
• Monotropic = primary attachment figure, emphasises an attachment to one figure which is more important and different from others.
• More time spend with the mother figure is ideal – 1) laws of continuity, constant care = better quality of attachment. 2) Law of accumulated separation, separation time adds up and has consequences.
• Social releasers – innate cute behaviours to encourage attention from adults. Social releasers activate adult attachment system. Attachment is a reciprocal system.
• Critical period – about 2 years when the infant attachment system is active, viewed more as a sensitive period.
• Forms an internal working model of relationships, template for what relationships are like. Future expectation that all relationships are loving and reliable if that is the first relationship formed, vice versa with neg. relationship.