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Major: Behavioral Psychology

Minor: Business and Family Life Education

Plans for Future: Attend Michigan University BATS

Area of Interest: Verbal Behavior and Autism
Increasing Vocalizations in Children with Autism

Nicholette Christodoulou
Anna Woodhams
Introduction

• Some children with autism show little to no progress with typical echoic procedures in the classroom
• We assessed an alternative method for increasing vocalizations and echoic behavior
• Limited research on interventions with this population
Intervention

• Baseline
  – 30 minute observations of child’s normal work environment
  – Early sounds echoic pretest
Intervention

- Phase 1
  - 5 minute sessions
  - All appropriate sounds reinforced
  - Whining/crying or vocal stereotypy not reinforced
Phase 1

- Video
Intervention

- Phase 2
  - 5 minute sessions; first 3 minutes all appropriate sounds reinforced, last 2 minutes all sounds except dominant sounds reinforced
Intervention

• Phase 3
  – Echoic procedure
  – 5 target sounds
    • Selected from dominant sounds in phase 1 and 2

• Phase change Criteria
  – 3 consecutive sessions at 80% or above, or 2 consecutive sessions at 90% or above
Phase 3

• Video
My Roles

- IOA data
- Graphing
- Video taping
Jeremy

Increasing Vocalizations in Children with Autism

Phase 1

Phase 2

Number of Vocs

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Jeremy
Increasing Vocalizations in Children with Autism

Phase 1

Number of Vocalizations

Sessions
Results

- Phase 1
  - Rapid increase in overall vocalizations

- Phase 2
  - Decrease in sound on extinction
  - Increase in variety of appropriate sounds

- Echoic Test

- Phase 3
  - Met phase change criteria in four sessions
Discussion

• Sessions held in quiet rooms with minimal noise and distractions
• Higher rates of reinforcement for making specific sounds
Discussion

• “Mand-like” sounds
• Is it necessary for the child to mand before learning to echo?
My Experience

• Learned valuable research skills
• Completed Honors Thesis
• Improved writing skills
• Time-management skills
• Improved graphing skills
• Special thank you to Anna!
Questions/Comments?