

Improving Academics in Children with Autism Using PRT

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Introduction

Increasing numbers of children with autism in general classroom settings (IDEA, 2004; Mesibov & Shea, 1996)

Exposed to grade-level academic tasks

Problem behaviors during academics (Macintosh & Dissanayake, 2006; Ochs, Kremer-Sadlik, Solomon, & Sirota, 2001)

Wide range of negative consequences



Introduction

Resistant to traditional behavior management techniques (Grosenick, George, George, & Lewis, 1991; Koegel, R.L. & Egel, 1979)

Functions as a means to escape and avoid

How to increase motivation and responsivity?

Provide more opportunities for success

Motivational Components

Modifying Curriculum (Kern, Childs, Dunlap, Clarke & Falk, 1994; Dunlap, Kern-Dunlap, Clarke, & Robbins, 1991)



Motivational Academics

- Purpose

Investigate whether the use of motivational procedures of PRT **improve basic academic skills** in children with autism, specifically **writing and math**.



Specific Questions

- Will the use of motivational procedures during writing and math tasks:
 - Result in faster completion?
 - Decrease disruptive behaviors?
 - Increase interest?
- Will gains maintain and generalize?



Procedure

Differences Between Baseline and PRT Intervention		
	Baseline	PRT Intervention
Materials & Setting	Chosen by Adult	Chosen by Child
Task	Fixed Difficulty Level	Interspersal of easy and difficult tasks
Reinforcer	Unrelated to the Task	Embedded within the Task

Examples: Writing and Math



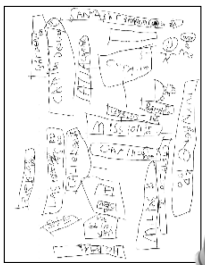
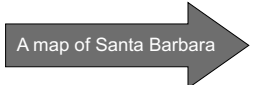
Results

- **Faster Completion**
- **Decreased Disruptive Behavior**
- **Increased Interest**
- **Maintained and Generalized**



Self-Initiated Writing

- Playing Teacher
- Hangman
- Writing Stories
- Drawing Pictures



Discussion

- › **Collateral Gains**
- › **Success in the School Setting**
- › **Better Outcomes**
- › **Prevention**



Summary – Home/School Coordination

- Reduces Disruptive Behavior
 - Avoidance
 - Escape
- Increases Child Responsiveness
- Increases Child Learning
- Improves Team Work



Teaching Initiations to Children with Autism using PRT

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Prognosis Study

- Literature Review
 - Children who had the best outcomes had:
 - Presence of Verbal Communication before the age of 5 years
 - High IQ (i.e., measurable IQ over 50)



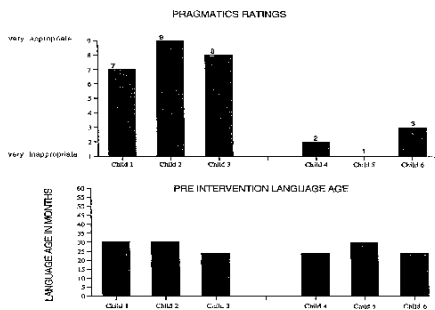
Prognosis – Study 1

- Adolescents and Young Adults Selected that:
 - Had good outcomes
 - Had poor outcomes

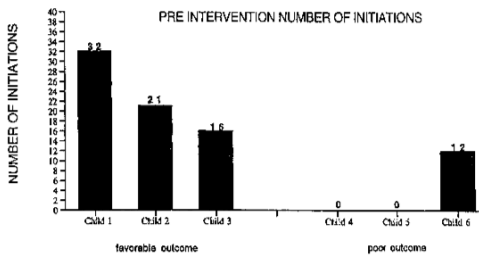
- Data Selected to Analyze
 - Communication
 - Repetitive behaviors
 - Play
 - Disruptive Behaviors
 - Levels of Engagement



Data



Data



Intervention Study Study 2 - Initiations

- Would Teaching Initiations result in better long-term outcomes?



What's That?

- Favorite items
- Opaque bag
- Prompt Query
- Label item
- Have child repeat label
- Provide Natural Reward
- Fade favorite items



Additional Initiations

- Where is it?
- Whose is it?
- What's happening?
- What happened?
- Look!
- Help!



Where is it?

- Hide favorite items
- Prompt Child to Query
- Provide location (preposition)
- Child receives natural reinforcer

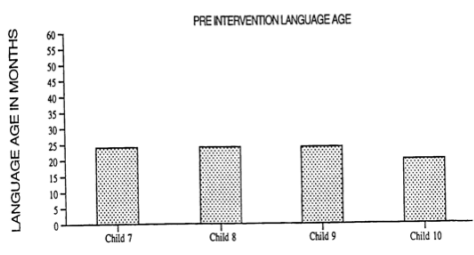


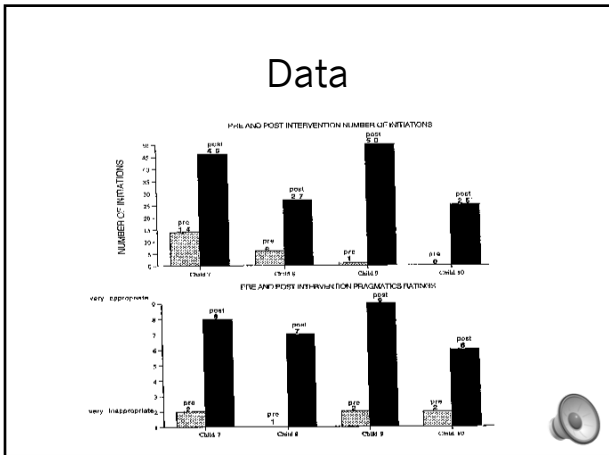
Whose is it?

- Items associated with a member of family
- Prompt query
- Provide item



Data





- ### Verbs
- ing ending
Past tense
- Use pop-up books of child's interests
 - Manipulate tabs
 - Prompt question

- ### Other Queries
- "Look"
 - Use favorite activities or items
 - Prompt "look"
 - Fade Prompt
 - "Help"
 - Set up situations
 - Prompt "help"
 - Fade Prompt

Summary

- Generalization to Home and School
- Learned targets as a result of the intervention
- Increased functions of language
- Improved social interactions



Interactive Website

autismPRThehelp.com

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Thank you!