



Tagging Imitation Skills of Students Diagnosed with Autism

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Using Discrete Trial Training (DTT) to Teach Imitation

- Discrete Trial Training
 - Shaping the topography of each response
 - Discrimination of responses within the same response class
 - Discrimination of learned responses across responses classes
 - Probing the emergence of untrained responses



Challenges to Shaping New Imitation Responses

- Staff are inconsistently differentially reinforcing closer approximations to the target response
- Reinforcement is not delivered immediately
- Student is a slow learner
- Student has gross motor deficits
- Student has generalization deficits
- Teaching plans do not specify criteria for changing the contingency for reinforcement



- TAG: Teaching with Acoustical Guidance
- A Tag serves as an auditory marker that signals to the student that the behavior requested has been successfully executed.
- Tagging speeds up the delivery of reinforcement making it more effective
- Tagging allows student to feel the response that is reinforced.



Design

- AB Design
- Independent Variable: Tagging
- Dependent Variable: Accurate Imitation responses



Setting

- Baseline and training sessions occurred at ABC school
- The room contained the trainer, a second person tagging, table, chair and camcorder.
- All sessions occurred in the morning



Materials

- Tagger
- Table and Chair
- Camcorder





Method

- Tagged first response until student imitated the modeled response independently 3 times.
- Tagged second response until the student imitated the modeled response independently 3 times
- Tagged each response until student independently imitated the following sequence T1T2T1/T2T1T2 with at least 80% accuracy

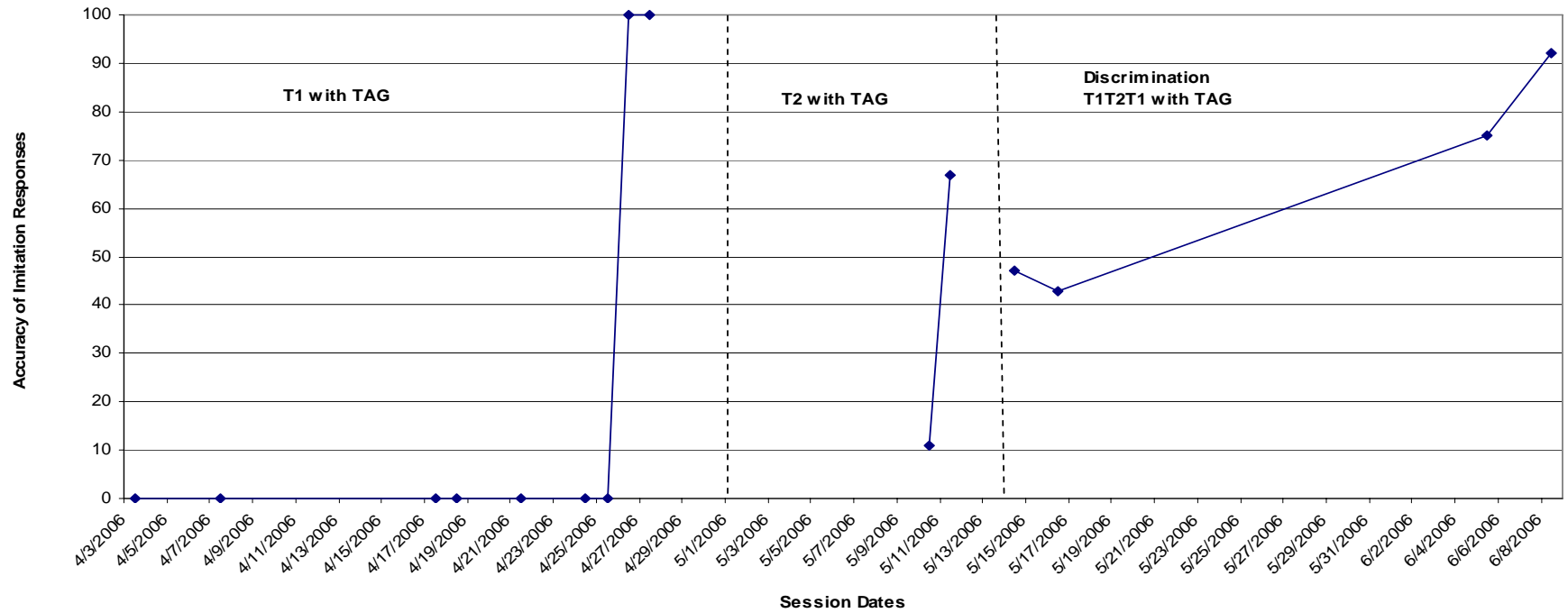


Participant 1

- 3 year-old male diagnosed with autism
- Attending ABC school Duarte preschool
- Scored 0 on D3 of the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS).
- Previously attempts to teach imitation through DTT were unsuccessful

Results

CY Accuracy of Imitation Responses per Session





Results

- There were 7 months of data with no progress prior to tagging.
- Took 15 sessions with tagging to obtain over 90% accuracy in discriminating 2 imitation responses.
- Student now has at least 5 mastered imitation responses and 2 of which were trained without tagging.

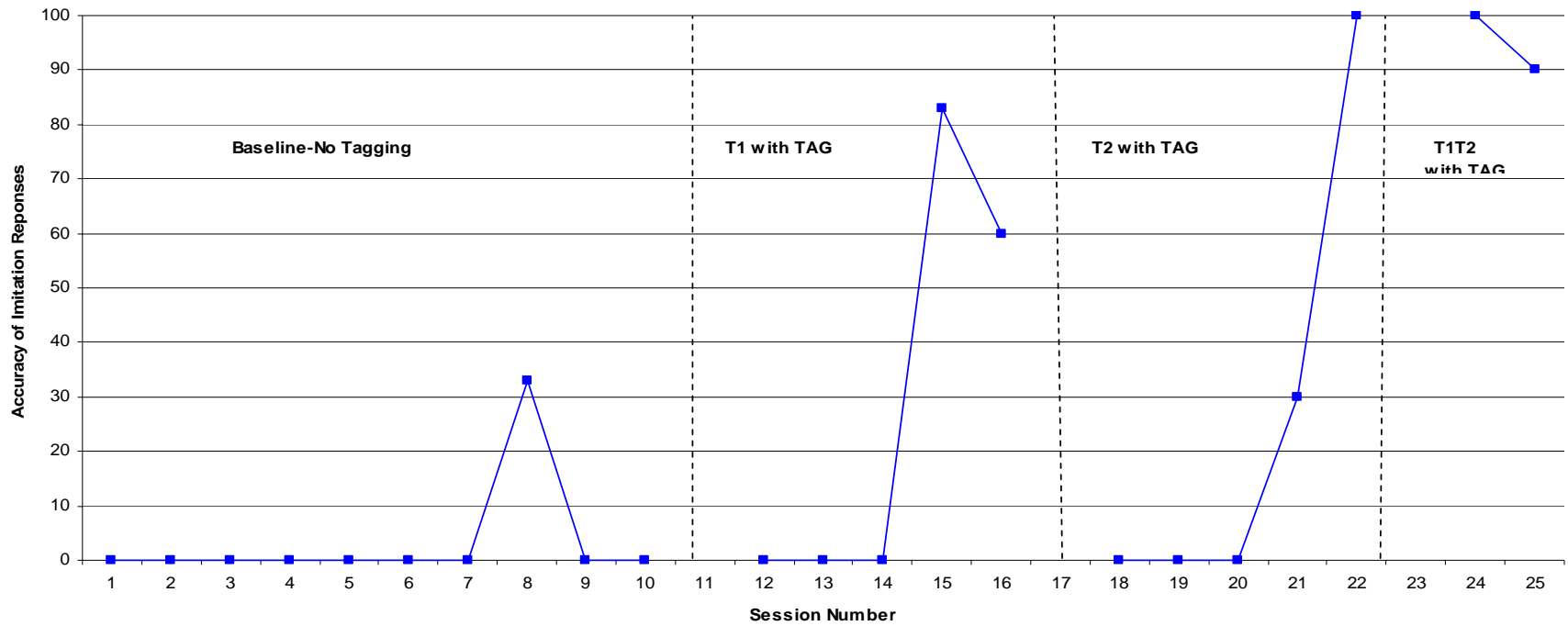


Participant 2

- 2 year old male diagnosed with Autism
- Attending ABC's infant/toddler development center 15 hours per week
- Did not have gross motor imitation on the Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers assessment log
- Previous attempts to teach imitation skills in DTT have been unsuccessful

Results

RY Accuracy of Imitation Responses with Tagging per Session





RESULTS

- Student acquired targets in less than 4 sessions.
- Baseline showed minimal acquisition after 8 sessions without Tag
- Student acquired an additional target with TAG since the completion of this study



Discussion

- TAG can be used to enhance the shaping procedures already in place in most intensive treatment programs
- TAG can accelerate a student's acquisition of an imitation response
- Skills learned with TAG are maintained over time
- Other areas of use included shoe tying and spitting during a tooth brushing routine.