

## **Teaching Verbal Behavior to Children with Developmental Disabilities**

Some argued that language is too complex to be explained by an operant conditioning account. Skinner challenged this assumption in *Verbal Behavior* (1957); however, the book was largely an exercise in interpretation and lacked direct experimental data. Since then, a growing body of research not only supported Skinner's interpretation but helped further refine our conceptual understanding of verbal behavior. This research has been instrumental in developing effective procedures to teach verbal behavior to children with developmental disabilities, who typically have language delays. The purpose of this talk is to overview such recent research. The central theme is the developmental sequencing of instruction that promotes learning along the simple-to-complex continuum.

After attending this talk, attendees are expected to have the verbal repertoire and problem-solving skills to:

1. Define and provide examples of listener behavior, echoics, mands, tacts, and intraverbals.
2. Articulate the advantages of a functional account of language development.
3. Know different procedures used for teaching verbal behavior.
4. Discuss the implications of derived stimulus relations research for teaching language.

## **Bilingualism in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

As many as 21% of school-age children in the United States of America speak a language other than English at home. Research shows that bilingualism does not lead to language delays in children with autism spectrum disorder; however, researchers only recently began to explore procedures to teach two languages to this population. This talk will discuss recent research on bilingualism, with a focus on (a) the optimal order of teaching languages, (b) teaching across different verbal operants, and (c) the development of teaching procedures that promote transfer across verbal operants.

After attending this talk, participants are expected to:

1. Understand what bilingualism is, and that learning two languages is not an additive process but rather an interactive one.
2. Learn about the optimal order of teaching languages to children with ASD.
3. Learn how to program instruction to promote the acquisition of verbal operants in two languages, as well as transfer across verbal operants in two languages.