Will Intraverbals Emerge Following Instructive Feedback?

Instructive feedback (IF) can be incorporated into discrete-trial instruction and may be an efficient way to teach more skills—typically referred to as secondary targets—within an instructional section. Research has shown that some autistic children/children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) acquire secondary targets with IF. Few studies have explored whether instruction with IF might be even more efficacious if emergent responding is programmed for and assessed throughout intervention. The study in this presentation replicated Frampton and Shillingsburg (2020) and incorporated IF within mastered listener-by-name trials with two children diagnosed with ASD. Therapists conducted mastered listener-by-name trials (e.g., “Show me otter,” and the participant selects the picture of the otter) and embedded IF statements of features of the target stimuli (e.g., “It lives in rivers.”) into the consequence portion of the trial. We evaluated acquisition of secondary targets and emergent responses (i.e., tact-by-feature, listener-by-feature, intraverbal WH, reverse intraverbal WH, and fill-in intraverbal) using a concurrent multiple probe design across sets. We observed increased correct responding for secondary targets and emergent responses for the first set of stimuli with one participant and for all three sets with the second participant. I will discuss reasons why our study partially replicated Frampton and Shillingsburg, suggest recommendations for future research on IF, and provide considerations for using IF in practice.

The cat is being brushed by the dog: The role of automatic reinforcement in grammar

Because humans amass amazingly robust verbal behavior repertoires, it is not plausible that all verbal behavior is acquired through socially mediated reinforcement. Parity, a condition which occurs when a speaker’s verbal behavior matches with the models provided by the verbal community, offers a potential mechanism for acquisition and audience control. Previous research examined the acquisition of novel or unfamiliar grammatical constructions in the absence of or in competition with socially mediated reinforcement. In this presentation, I will describe a study that builds upon previous literature on the emission of passive-voice autoclitic frames. An example of a tact with a passive-voice autoclitic frame is the response “The cat is being brushed by the dog” when shown a picture of a dog brushing a cat. In this study, we assessed the effects of modeling on the emission of passive-voice autoclitic frames by 13 children assigned to either a control, replication, or vocal-imitation group using a pre- and post-test design with multiple training and testing phases. Participants in the control group never used passive voice autoclitic frames, but most of the participants in the replication and vocal-imitation groups did after the training phases. I will compare these results to those found in previous studies and discuss potential mechanisms to account for the emission of passive voice autoclitic frames.