

EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION WITH ADULTS WITH ASD: *CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR ANALYSTS*

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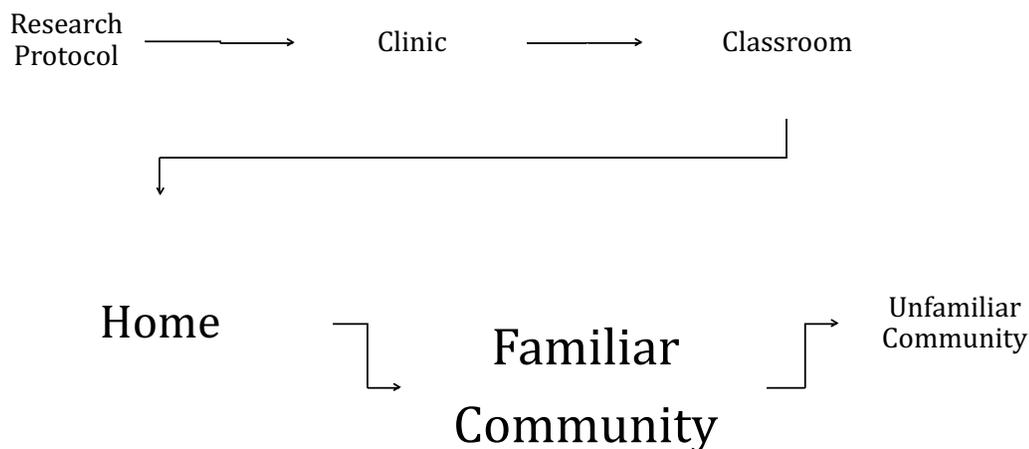
20 Basic Question on Social Importance

Questions 1-9	
1	Is the skill derived from a comprehensive and ongoing assessment?
2	Is the skill a prerequisite to a more complex, yet important skill (e.g., Letter ID as a prerequisite to reading)?
3	Is the skill one that can be of used across multiple environments?
4	Can the skill be acquired by the student in a reasonable time frame?
5	Is the skill one that will still be useful in 3-5 years?
6	Is the skill one that lends itself to an acceptable degree of instructional intensity?
7	Once acquired, is the skill one the student will use with sufficient frequency that it will be easily maintained?
8	Is the skill the most direct, simplest way to achieve the desired outcome?
9	Does the skill improve the student's ability to communicate?

20 Basic Question on Social Importance

Question 10-20	
10	Does the skill support social inclusion and/or peer relationships?
11	Does the skill ultimate promote independence via adaptive behavior?
12	Does the skill ultimately promote independence via self-management?
13	Does the skill ultimately promote individual safety?
14	If the skill uses "hi tech" is it the most current tech available?
15	Is the skill a one that student might find enjoyable?
16	Is the skill one the contributes to the student's health or to a healthy lifestyle (e.g., exercise)?
17	Is the skill one that is culturally relevant?
18	Is the skill of importance to the student's family?
19	Is the skill one that has relevance to future employment?
20	Is the skill one that has relevance to future life in the community, outside of the family home?

Least to Most Complex Implementation Environments



Generalization Challenges and ASD

- One issue emerged again and again throughout this review: the problem of teaching subjects to generalize their responses to novel stimuli within the same response class and to respond in a variety of settings and to a variety of people. (Harris, 1975, p. 575)
- [] autistic children show "stimulus overselectivity," a response to only a limited number of cues in their environment, and discusses how such overselectivity may relate to several of the behavioral deficits in autism. These include failure to develop normal language or social behavior; failure to generalize newly acquired behavior to new stimulus situations.... (Lovaas, Koegel, & Schreibman, 1979, p. 39)
- [] generalization is a central challenge for learners with autism and there is great need for interventions that can effectively support generalization. (Delano, 2007, p. 1236)
- Children with autism often have difficulty successfully applying newly acquired skills to novel situations. Naturalistic teaching procedures have been developed to help address this problem with generalization. (Cowen & Allen 2007, p. 701)

Intervention Context and Generalization

- There is consensus in the research that individuals with with ASD tend not to generalize newly acquired behaviors to novel or untrained stimuli, people, or places independent of intervention. What we don't know, however, is:
 - *The extent to which this is challenge is neurological in nature or;*
 - *The extent to which this challenge is more the result of the intervention challenges, or;*
 - *The extent to which this is challenge is both neurological in nature and associated with the typography of intervention.*

Intervention Context and Generalization

Behavioral Intervention Maxim #1

”If generalization is a concern then teach where the behavior is most likely to be displayed”

*Undergraduate Fieldwork Course
Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center*

Calculating the Necessary # of Instructional Opportunities

- Underlying good ABA-based intervention for skill acquisition in ASD is instructional intensity (e.g., Linstead, E., et al, 2017). However, as individuals age and skill targets become more complex and lengthy behavior chains, the necessary intensity is often not provided. This is generally because “pragmatic concerns” tend to override clinical necessity.
- For example, let’s define instructional intensity as the estimated number of instructional opportunities (IO) required for a learner to acquire the skill within a specified period of time.
- So for target behavior “Independently eating lunch at Burger King” we might estimate a minimum of 100 IOs will be required to for skill acquisition.
- If we then have 42 weeks/year of school-based programming in which to teach the skill.
- Then Instructional Intensity can be “calculated” as such:
 - $100 \text{ IOs} / 42 \text{ weeks} = 2.4 \text{ times/week Instructional intensity.}$
- If we are correct, then this individual will need to be provided 2-3 community-based instructional opportunities/week if our intervention is to result in skill acquisition, let alone maintenance and/or generalization.

The economics of ABA Intervention in ASD

- If the ABA-based Educational Program Costs: \$ 100,000.00/year
- Then the:
 - Per diem cost is: \$ 476.00/day
 - Per minute cost is: \$ 1.32/minute
 - Per IEP goal cost (assume 30/IEP) \$ 3,333.33/goal
- 18 years of intervention ages 3-21 years: \$1,800,000.00 Total Cost

- How then should we be define our outcomes in adulthood as distinct from those obtained via other programs for educational intervention?

A challenging proposal: *ABA Intervention Bill of Rights*

- Given the documented effectiveness of the ABA-based intervention in ASD and the diversity of evidence-based interventions available to behavior analysts, individuals who are the beneficiaries of this intervention should expect to graduate with:
 1. *A functional system of communication with application beyond the classroom*
 2. *The ability to completely toilet, shower, and dress independently*
 3. *The ability to make reasonable choices in such areas as meals, leisure, activity schedules, and potential reinforcers.*
 4. *The ability to access necessary adult healthcare by participating in dental and medical exams with limited support*
 5. *A repertoire of leisure skills that primarily function as leisure but also, to the extent possible, allow for a degree of social integration.*
 6. *The ability to work at a preferred job by being able to remain engaged on a single task for a minimum of 45 minutes at a production rate of 75% that of a typical worker and 100% QC.*
 7. *A repertoire of socially valid community skills including purchasing, accessing entertainment, accessing communities of faith, etc.*
 8. *A repertoire of basic safety skills including discriminating between staff who can, if necessary, provide assistance in private activities that are not sexual in nature.*
 9. *A socially valid repertoire of social interaction skills tagged to items 1-8 above.*

