

PSYC 531

Article Critique 10: The effects of alternating mand and tact training on the acquisition of tacts

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Skinner (1957) identified seven verbal operants — echoic, mand, tact, intraverbal textual, copying a text, and taking dictation (p.55). According to the article, “Tact is a verbal response whose form is controlled by a nonverbal discriminative stimulus.” The stimulus can be “an object, event, or property of an object or event (p.55).” “Mand” is a verbal response that is controlled by “a motivational variable rather than Sd (p.55).” Generally speaking, preferred reinforcement is a target that asked for a manding at the beginning. Manding is the most beneficial for the speaker, while tacting is useful for the listener. Therefore, the research is to investigate the effect of combining techniques of teaching verbal behavior -- the alternating effect of mand and tact training (p.56).

The study compared the control and experimental condition (alternating mand-tact training) — the alternating training “was more effective in training tacts than the tact only training procedure (p.62).” Additionally, fewer trials of training are required if combining those two verbal operants. Mand and tact training benefits each other.

We all know how time precious is for children with autism, and we can use a combination of the different verbal operants in the future treatment plan. I appreciate

the study considered the sequence effects and showed proof that “the average number of trials increased for subjects in both phases (p.64).”

Reference

Carroll, R. J., & Hesse, B. E. (1987). The effects of alternating mand and tact training on the acquisition of tacts. *The Analysis of Verbal Behavior*, 5(1), 55-65.