

Abstract: Rate-building in a Mediated Transfer Paradigm

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Background This description is based on research conducted in the Behavior Prosthesis Laboratory classroom in 1976-78 with severely retarded adult students. At that time we were integrating component/composite curriculum analysis, based on Eric Haughton's groundbreaking discoveries of the early 1970's on "elements and compounds," with the mediated transfer work being conducted by Murray Sidman and his associates on the other side of the Fernald State School campus, in Waltham, MA.

Reference Although unpublished, this work was originally reported at ABA in 1979:

Binder, C.V. Response rate measurement in a mediated transfer paradigm: teaching severely retarded students to read. Paper presented at a meeting of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Dearborn, Michigan, June, 1979.

Composite task The two composite tasks were constructed as follows:

Matches objects to words = names objects (exists) + reads words (taught)

Follows written directions: = follows spoken directions (exists) + reads words

Procedure We followed this procedure with four students:

Procedure	P.A.	P.M.	M.M.	A.A.
Assess: Names objects in an array	Y	Y	Y	Y
Assess: Follow 4-word spoken directions	Y	Y	Y	Y
Probe: Place printed words near objects	N	N	N	N
Probe: Follow 4-word written directions	N	N	N	N
Teach to accuracy: Read printed words	Y	Y	Y	Y
Probe: Place printed words near objects	Y	Y	Y	Y
Probe: Follow 4-word written directions	Y	Y	N	Y
Build rate: Reads printed words	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Probe: Place printed words near objects	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Probe: Follow 4-word written directions	↑↑	↑↑	Y + ↑↑	↑↑

Note: Bold symbols indicate behavior or increase in rate achieved without direct intervention.

Conclusion Results suggested that building rate (what we later called fluency-building) of components could itself lead to acquisition of composite behavior that might not otherwise have occurred based on accuracy-only in components, and could produce higher rates in the composites without explicit rate-building on them.
