



A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Antecedent Exposure to a Checklist and Performance-Based Feedback

Helen Trebicka, B.A. Psychology, David Rosenberg M.S., BCBA, LABA,
& Darlene Crone-Todd, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA-D
Department of Psychology, Salem State University



INTRODUCTION

Literature:

- Studies have shown that when DTT fidelity occurs at higher rates from teachers, therapists or parents, there are higher rates of learner acquisition (Koegel et al., 1977, Lafaskis & Sturmey 2007, Miles & Wilder, 2009, Nigro-Bruzzi & Sturmey, 2010).
- It is important to measure and assess the accuracy and consistency with which DTT is administered. (Babel et al., 2008)
- High quality training impacts an individual's attitude to their job, leading to improved performance, and job satisfaction (Truitt, 2011).

Problem:

- Lack of efficient training can lead to low staff retention rates and high turnover, leaving companies with inexperienced technicians (Dietz & Zwick, 2022).
- Treatment packages have proven to be effective but can be costly and labor intensive (Parsons & Reid, 1995).

Purpose:

- The present study aims to produce these results with the use of a treatment fidelity checklist and verbal feedback, while also comparing the social validity of the two techniques to assess staff preference.

METHOD

Subjects:

3 behavior technicians (BTs), two females, ages 35 and 21, and one male, 28-years-old with less than six months of experience in the center.

Setting:

A behavior therapy center in Massachusetts

Materials & Equipment:

- Classroom desk and chairs
- DTT materials
- Fidelity data sheet, acceptability survey, pen

Experimental Design:

Multiple condition design

METHOD cont.

Variables:

- Independent Variables: Exposure to checklist, and corrective feedback or praise
- Dependent Variables: Percent accuracy of implementation of DTT steps and ratings of procedural validity

PROCEDURE

Baseline:

- Therapists were observed conducting three programs consisting of 10 trials each with their client.
- Participants were not provided any instruction prior to initiating their session with the client. Each program took approximately 6-7 minutes to complete.
- Data was collected, in real time, on the therapists' ability to complete all parts of fidelity checklist.

Intervention:

- Phase B
 - The fidelity checklist was provided to the behavior therapists for review.
 - Observations were conducted on their ability to implement 3 DTT sessions.
 - No feedback was provided
- Phase C
 - The fidelity checklist was provided to the behavior therapists for review.
 - Observations were conducted on their ability to implement 3 DTT sessions.
 - Constructive feedback was given on any steps missed, and praise was given for all steps completed correctly.

Acceptability Rating Scale

- Participants were asked to complete a final acceptability rating scale to test for social validity
- Asked about the participants' preferred condition as well as a series of ten questions, regarding the study's effects.

RESULTS

Baseline

- Participants A, B and C performed with 56.7%, 66.7% and 76.7% accuracy, respectively, during the baseline phase.

Phase B

- Scores increased to 76.7%, 93.3% and 86.7% accuracy, respectively, after reviewing the checklist.

Phase C

- Scores increased to 93.3% 96.7% and 93.3% accuracy when being provided with active feedback.

Acceptability Rating Scale

- 33% of participants preferred the checklist condition to the feedback condition and 66% of participants had no preference.
- All participants reported that the intervention **improved their DTT ability**, found it **helpful**, and would **use it to learn other skills**. All participants reported that neither phase in the intervention was time-consuming, or produced negative effects on their behavior.

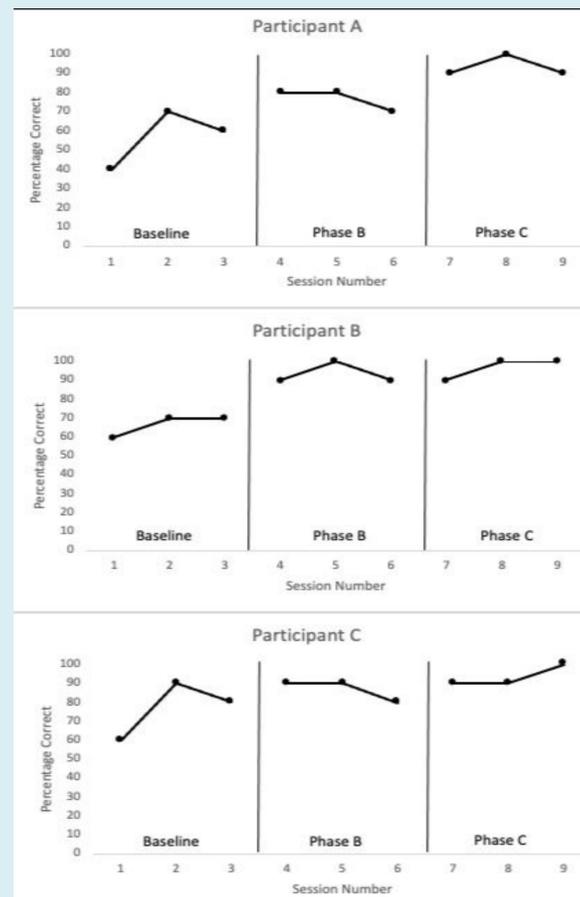


Figure 1. Percentage of accurate responding in Baseline, phase B and phase C, of participants ability to conduct DTT sessions with a client.

DISCUSSION

- The current research provides a comparison of the two techniques and may provide guidance for future training and maintenance for behavioral therapists' skills.
- There is a positive correlation between treatment fidelity and skills acquisition.
- Positive effects on fidelity occur when using checklists and feedback as a form of training.

Limitations:

- Transfer effects from the checklist condition to the feedback condition.
- Possible reactivity from live observation.
- No maintenance probe.
- Staff performance may be influenced by client behaviors.

Future Research:

- A cost-benefit analysis may be done to see if this type of training is effective in keeping staff and reducing turnover.
- Further research may be done to include a component analysis of the two techniques.

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