



An Evaluation of Treatment Procedures For Increasing Social Skills : A case study

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TAGteach™

- TAGteach™ (Teaching with Acoustical Guidance) utilizes a click sound marker or a “tag” to identify a desired behavior.
- It has its basis in the laws of learning and a key focus on shaping and positive reinforcement.
- TAGging speeds up the delivery of reinforcement.
- It is clear and succinct and avoids inconsistent differential reinforcement often provided by verbal feedback.



Teaching Social Skills

- Video modeling (Nikopolous & Keenan, 2004).
- Scripts (Sarokoff et al., 2001).
- Tactile prompts (Shabani et al., 2002)



TAGteach™ and Autism

- Skill acquisition, transitions
 - Madden & Hanson 2006; Fogel, 2006; Gutierrez, 2007; Rosenblum, 2007; Ueda, 2006
- Eye contact
 - Libby et al., 2007; Nichol 2007

Method

- Participant
 - A 6 year, 7 month old male diagnosed with Autism and Mild MR.
- Setting
 - Home or school playground.
- Materials
 - Tagger, Audio tape recorder, social stories
- Experimental Design
 - Single case Multielement Design



Data Collection and IOA

- Eye contact
 - Defined as looking at/towards the direction of the speaker or person of focus in an activity
 - Data were collected using a 10-s partial interval recording sheet (Vollmer et al., 2001)
 - IOA: exact agreement for 35% of sessions averaged 93% (range, 83% - 100%)



Data Collection and IOA

- Close proximity
 - Defined as being within 5 feet of peers
 - Data were collected using a 10-s partial interval recording sheet (Vollmer et al., 2001)
 - IOA: exact agreement for 41% of sessions averaged 95% (range, 87% - 100%)



Close proximity



Procedure (a): TAG

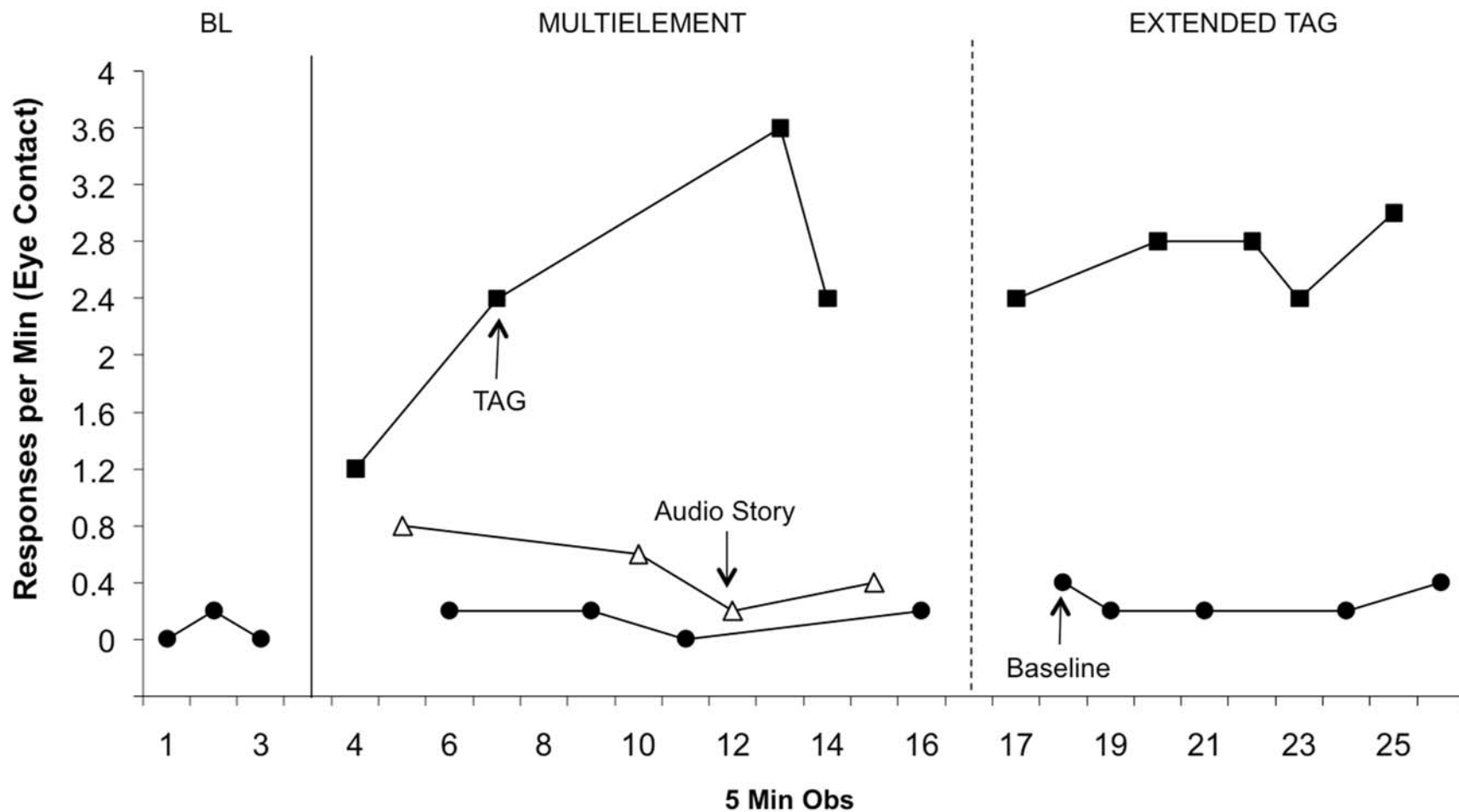
- BL: no feedback was given
- Each TAG session started with:
 - A verbal instruction to engage in the target bx.
 - A quick role play scenario whereby the target bx exhibited by the participant was reinforced with a TAG.
 - Thereafter, each occurrence of the target bx was reinforced with a TAG.
 - No additional prompts to engage in the target bx were delivered in treatment sessions.



Procedure (b): Audio Story

- BL: no feedback was given
- Each treatment session began by having the therapist review the corresponding audio story (i.e., eye contact or close proximity) with the participant.
- Each occurrence of the target bx was reinforced with verbal praise.
- No additional prompts to engage in the target bx were delivered in treatment sessions.

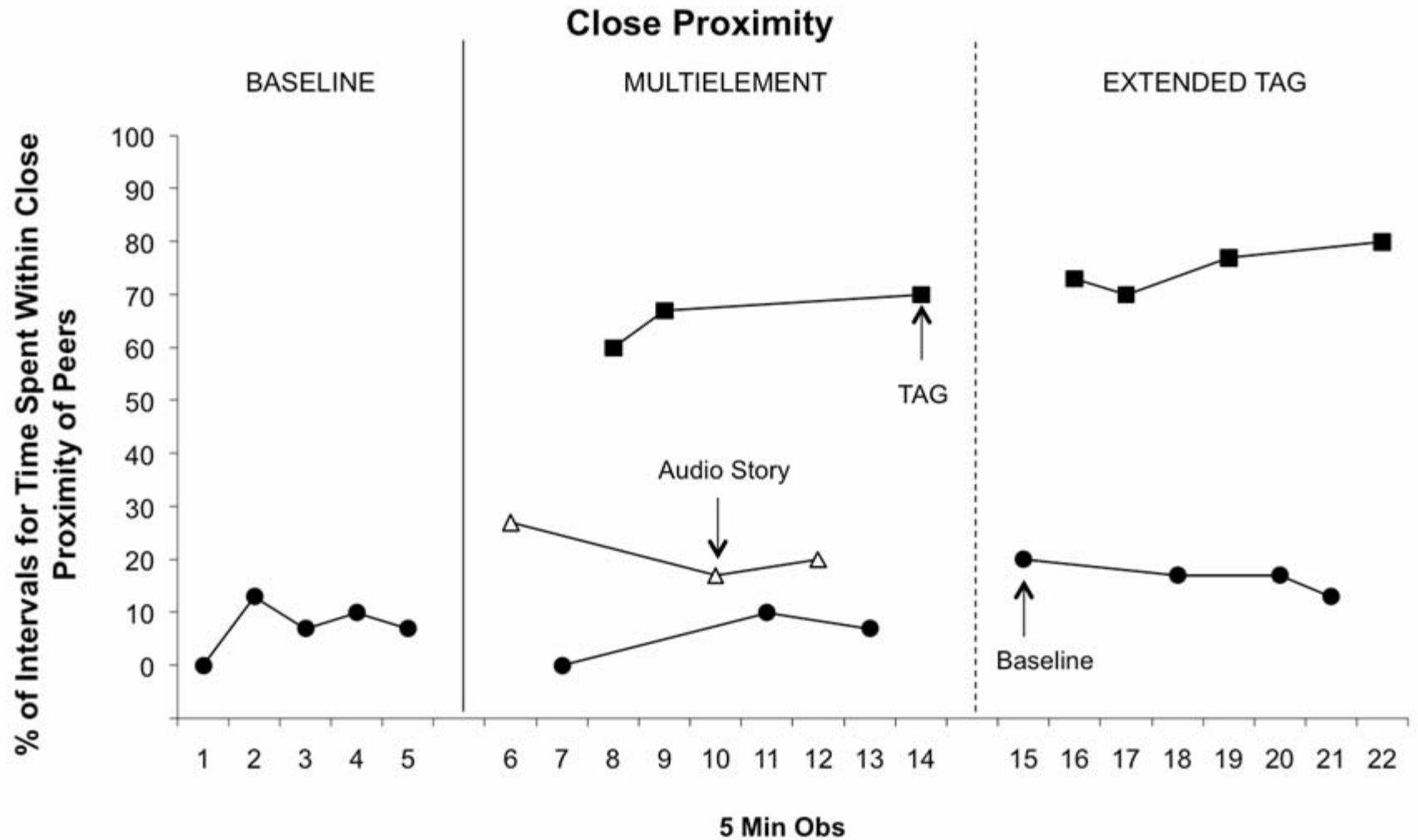
Eye Contact











Discussion and Implications

- Higher levels of the target behavior were exhibited with TAGteach™ compared to the Audio Story.
- TAGteach™ is easier to prepare and implement in applied settings.
- Low levels of the target bx given no intervention in the extended TAG sessions indicate a further need for the intervention; however, continued implementation of TAGteach™ could eventually lead to an increase in independent occurrences and persistence of the target behaviors over time.

Future Research

- Evaluate effectiveness of TAGteach™ with higher level social skills (e.g., initiations, reciprocal social exchanges, sharing etc.).
- Incorporate a follow up session to evaluate maintenance of target bx.
- Peer as therapist
- Train to generalize (Stokes & Baer, 1977)
 - In multiple settings
 - Across different peers
 - Across different therapists