

ABSTRACT

IMPROVEMENT AND GENERALIZATION DIFFERENCES IN GROUP VERSUS INDIVIDUAL THERAPY OF SOCIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

Therapy to improve social skills of children with autism may be more effective if provided in a group versus individual therapy context. The 2 male participants were diagnosed with high-functioning autism (HFA) and attending fourth grade at the time of the study. A modified ABACA/ACABA research design was used to investigate possible differences regarding improvement and generalization effects between group and individual therapy contexts. Discrete trial therapy (DTT) was the treatment implemented. Conversational turn-taking was the target behavior. The behavior was measured in turns per minute. Participants were observed for spontaneous use of the target behavior during each phase of the study. A comparison between the participants' improvement and generalization of the target behavior after implementing and withdrawing DTT demonstrated no substantial difference between an individual or group therapy context. Participant preference regarding therapy context appeared to have an effect on participant involvement and interest during therapy sessions.

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