

# VERBAL BEHAVIOR

The fundamentals of communication

# WHAT IS VERBAL BEHAVIOR?

- Behavioral approach to language
  - Focuses on the speaker and the listener
  - Emphasizes the role of the listener or audience in language
  - Breaks language down into verbal operants
  - The verbal operants differ in the stimuli that evokes verbal behavior and the consequence for the speaker.

PRIMARY VERBAL  
OPERANTS

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Mand

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Tact

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Intraverbal

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Echoic

MAND

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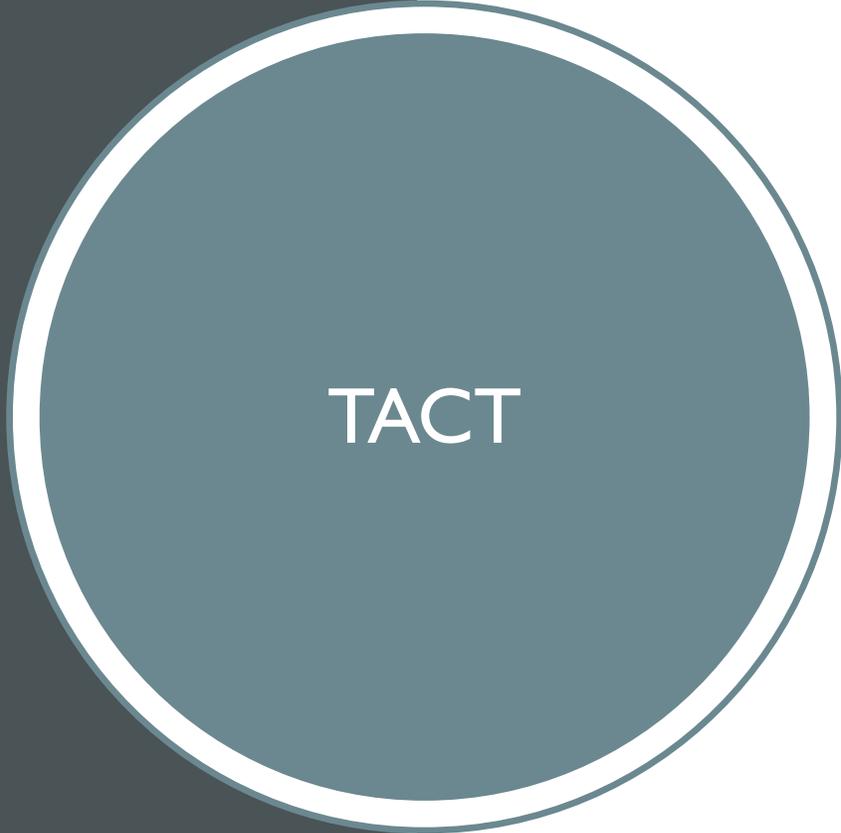
A request

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Child wants to play with a ball  
and says “ball”

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Reinforcement for a mand is  
delivery of the requested  
item, activity, or information



# TACT

- Labeling what you see, hear, taste, touch, etc..
- Child says "train" while in the car waiting for a train to pass.
- "what's this?" while pointing to a picture of a fish
  - "fish" the child says.
- Begin with tacts for preferred objects and those common in child's environment.



## TACT TRANSFERS

- (Receptive) to Tact transfer
  - Receptive target is “ball”, so after the child masters “touch the ball”, “Show me the ball”
  - You introduce “what is this”, while holding up the same ball or picture of a ball.
- Tact to Mand transfer
  - Tact target is “ball”, child masters target “what is this?”, response of “ball”
  - With the ball present, if the child says “ball”, you honor this as a mand, and give the child a ball.
- (Matching to Receptive) to Tact
  - to mand to echoic to intraverbal....they are all related

# INTRAVERBALS



## Answering Questions



## Intraverbal Fill-ins:

“Old Mcdonald had a \_\_\_\_”

“e-i-e-i-\_\_”

”You eat \_\_\_\_” ”you sleep in a  
”  
\_\_\_\_



## Intraverbals

“Where do you sleep?”, “What do you eat?”

”What’s your name?”, “Where do you live?”

# ECHOICS

- Repeating what is heard
- Saying “ball” after an adult says “ball”
- The ability to perform echoic behavior on command makes learning the other verbal operants much quicker and more efficient.
- Echoing on command makes vocal prompts more effective and are used to teach tacts, mands, and intraverbal behavior.

# CONVERSATION

- Anne: I've never seen you here before (tact/mand for attention).
- Are you new to the area (mand for information)?
- Jayme: Yes, I recently moved here from Florida (intraverbal).
- Anne: Oh, what part of Florida (mand for information)?
- Jayme: The Tampa area. (intraverbal).
- Anne: I love Tampa (intraverbal/mand for attention)!
- Jayme: Do you like going to the dog tracks in Tampa (mand for information)?
- Anne: Yes (intraverbal)!

# NON-VERBAL OPERANTS

- Responding to the language of others.
- “Listener Skills”
  - Receptive language
  - Following Directions
- “stand up”, “come here”, “put your coat on and stand by the door”

Response form controlled by:

Chart by Jack Michael

EO

MAND

SD

Verbal Stimulus

Nonverbal Stimulus

TACT

Point-to-Point  
Correspondence

NO Point-to-Point  
Correspondence

INTRAVERBAL

Formal Similarity

DUPLIC

- Echoic
- Mimetic
- Copying text

NO Formal Similarity

CODIC

- Textual (reading out loud)
- Taking dictation (transcribing)

