

Implementation of Precision Teaching by the Speech-Pathologist

Ginger Pierce

In the field of communicative disorders, it is not always a matter for the speech-language pathologist (SLP) to teach a new behavior alone, but to eliminate an erred response and replace it with a new, positive behavior. Many clients who have a communicative disorder have acquired the use of an erred phonological or linguistic rule system at an automatic level, where the response is made without conscious effort. Whether the task of the SLP is to teach the client an entirely new behavior or a behavior to replace an erred response, it is apparent that the behavior must obtain a high level of proficiency to generalize the correct use in conversation.

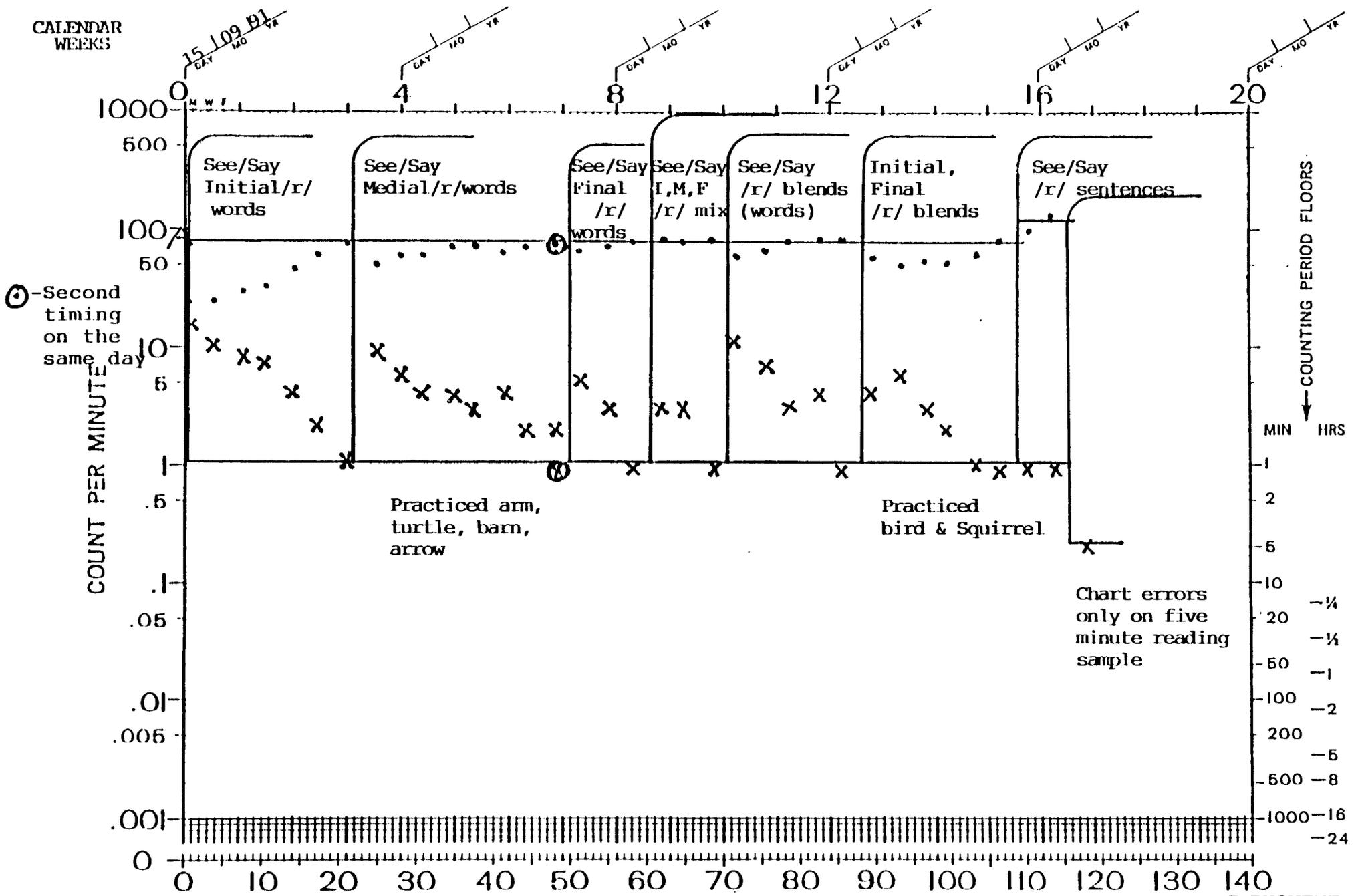
The application of Precision Teaching has been shown to be an effective therapeutic process in facilitating the desired behavior at an automatic level. A strong therapeutic program entails explicit instruction, responding with the child, modeling, correcting, reinforcing, and practicing appropriate communicative behavior. Knowing that normal conversation rate is about 120--140 words per minute, one must consider the use of increasing the rate of correct production of the new behavior, if the client is to replace the new response for the erred response in conversation; thus, the use of Precision Teaching is foremost here.

Valuable information, such as the effectiveness of therapy procedures, carry-over and error analysis can be obtained from the Standard Celeration Chart. Whether the target behavior is involving fluency, voice, language, or articulation, the use of timings can be applied. In articulation, different practice sheets enable the therapist to pinpoint specifically which combinations of phonemes are more difficult for the client in the language areas, specifically vocabulary development, auditory discrimination, word retrieval, syntax, multiple meanings, and categorization. Abusive vocal behavior can be charted in a voice therapy program. In implementing a fluency program for stutterers, methodically obtaining fluency in gradually increased time increments has been successful. A key to improved performance is to be specific when addressing short-term objectives with the use of a rate contingency.

In the area of communicative disorders, the real value of a strong therapeutic program linking with Precision Teaching is found in the confidence and increased self-esteem that the clients gain in becoming articulate, expressive, fluent users of our language.

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CALENDAR WEEKS



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