Attaining Fluency by a Youngster with Autism for a Beginning Listener Skill

John McElwee and Sean Munson
New Hope of Pennsylvania

Kyle is a 7-year old male with a diagnosis of autism. He has received an ABA program for almost 4 years. This was provided initially at home and then a combined school/home program. He presently attends a class for students with autism. His symptoms would be described as moderate to mild.

Hear See/Touch Objects. This is a basic listener/receptive skill. A set field size/number of objects are arranged on a table in front of the student. The objects were common household items of a size appropriate to place on a table (e.g. crayon, toy car). An instructor says the name of the object and Kyle is required to touch it (e.g. instructor says "car" and Kyle touches the car). This task is converted to a frequency drill by having the instructor continue to name the different objects as Kyle responds as fast as he can. The frequency aims were determined by sampling New Hope staff.

Hear See/Touch Pictures. This task is identical to the previous with the difference that pictures are substituted for objects. Their size was 2 inch square. The pictures were of items from fundamental categories (e.g. animals, vehicles and toys). Again, frequency aims were determined by sampling New Hope staff.

Results. The chart displays the accelerations for Kyle as he attained the frequency aims. The accelerations were x 1.8, x 1.5 and x 1.4 for receptive objects across ascending field sizes. For receptive pictures the accelerations were x 2.2, x 1.75 and x 1.5 for increasing field sizes. All retention checks were positive. This lends support to Kyle achieving fluency for this basic listener skill. Staff report Kyle enjoys "racing" and he mands or asks to do this activity.