

Assessing Client Preference for Communication Responses Across Functions of Challenging Behavior

DELANEY E. SCHNEIDER, Cynthia P. Livingston, Samantha J. Bryan, & Mary Rose Gomez
University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute

Introduction

- Functional communication training (FCT) has been shown to be effective at reducing severe problem behavior (Carr & Durand, 1985).
- Teaching multiple modalities of communication responses has been shown to decrease resurgence of problem behavior (Houck et al., 2023).
- Literature has shown that treatment outcomes may be affected by mand proficiency (Ringdahl et al., 2009).
- Client preference is seldom discussed in the literature (Winborn-Kemmerer et al., 2009).

Purpose

To assess client preference for functional communication response topographies across functional reinforcers of problem behavior.

Method

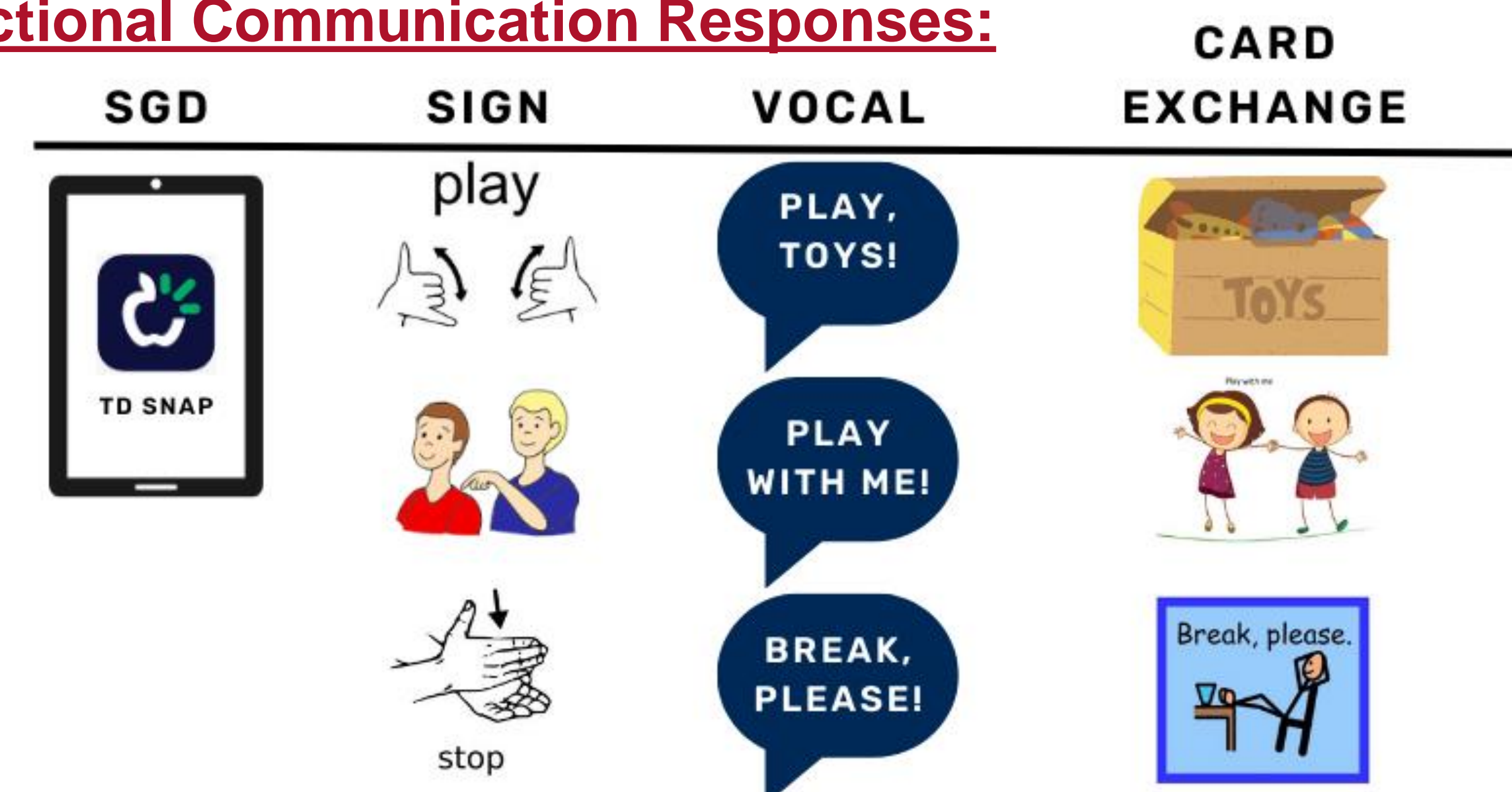
Participant

- Dillon: 7-year-old Caucasian male diagnosed with Autism
- Communicated using one-to-two-word phrases
- The results of his functional analysis (Iwata et al., 1982/1994) indicated his problem behavior was maintained by access to attention, tangibles and escape from demands

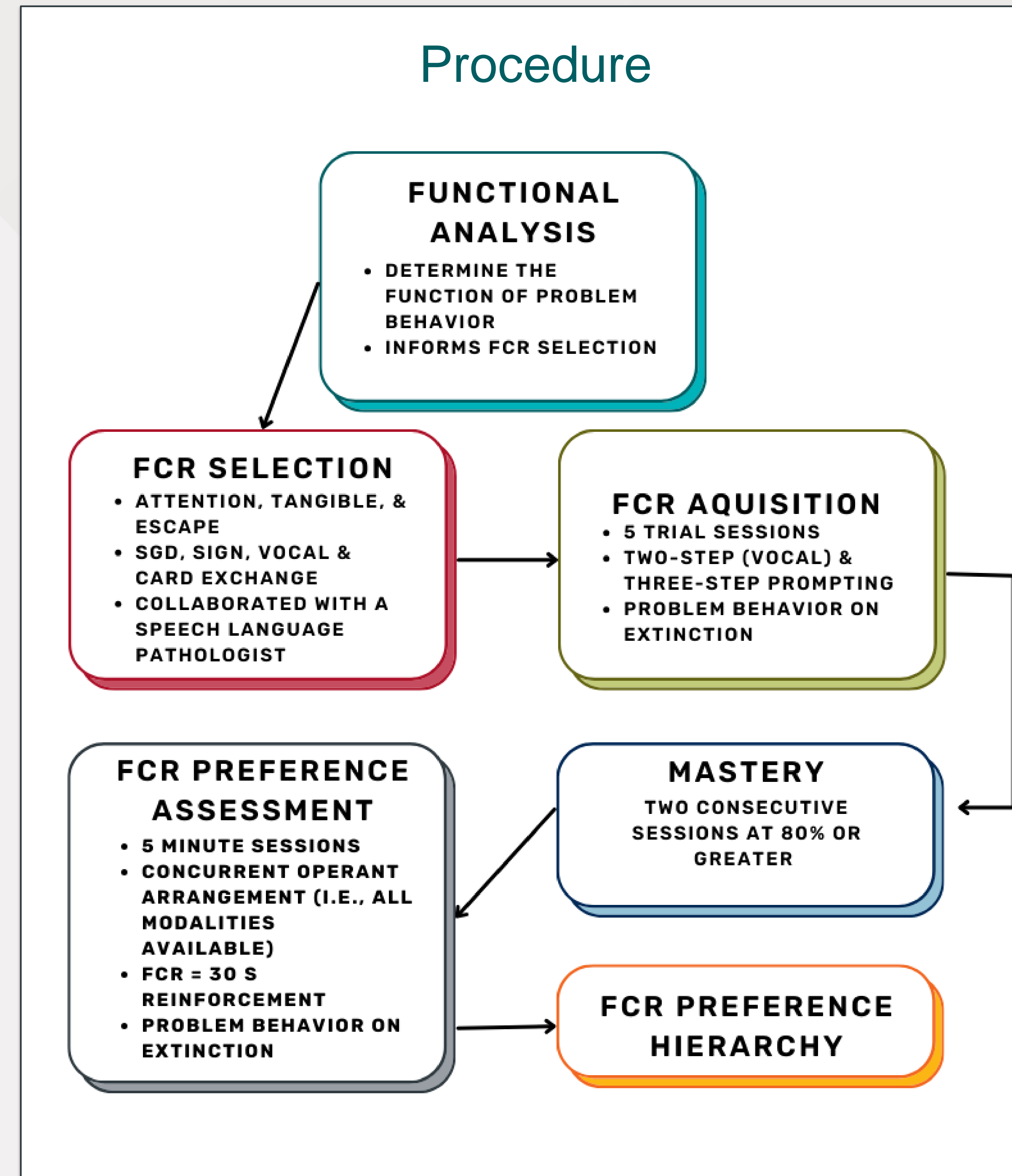
Setting:

- Padded treatment room at a university-based severe behavior clinic
- One-way mirror, table and two chairs, and stimuli relevant to the condition (e.g., folder tasks, iPad, legos, etc.)

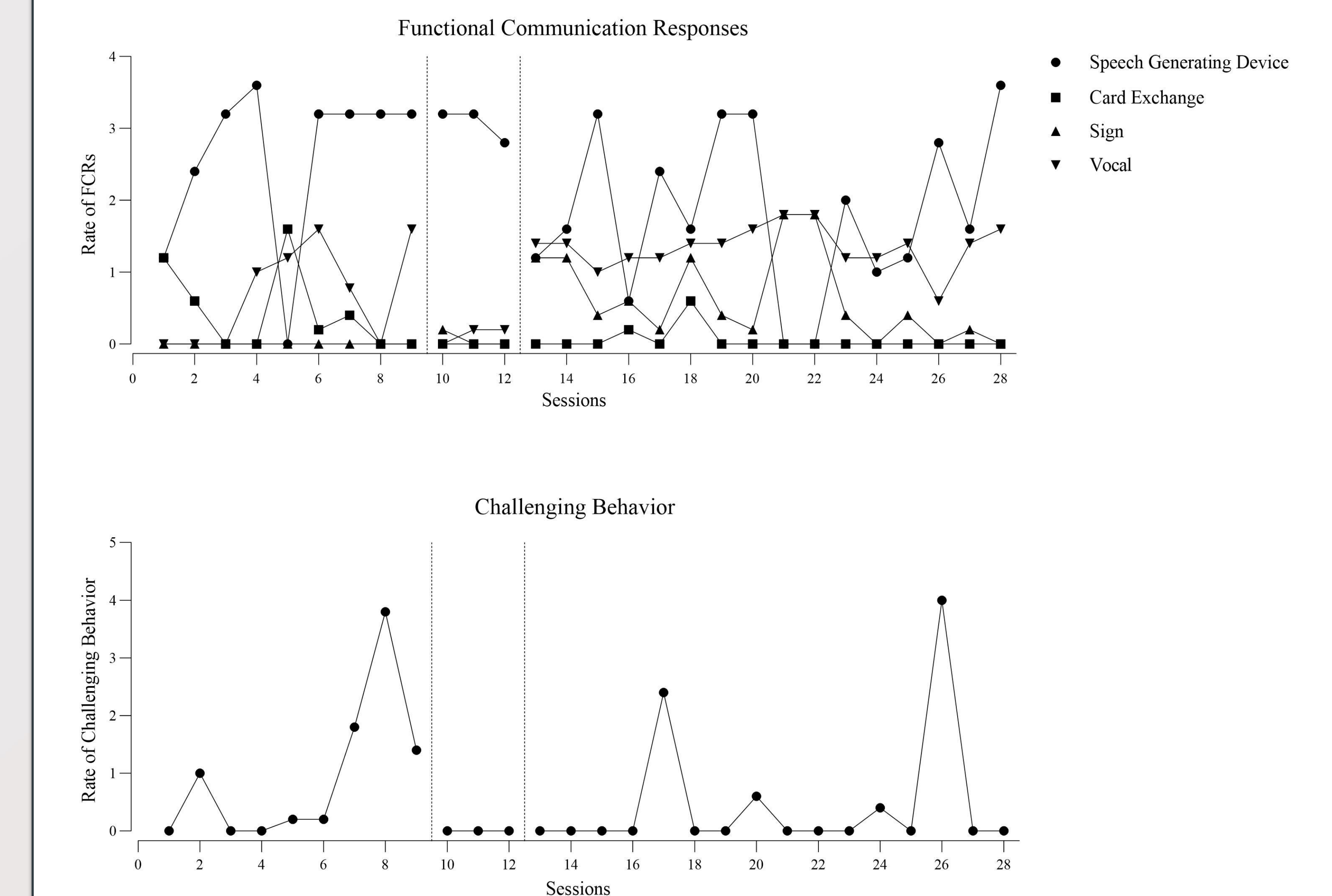
Functional Communication Responses:



Procedure



Results



Discussion

- Speech-generating-device (SGD) was the most preferred topography across all functions, however, response patterns differed.
- Vocal responses occurred at a higher rate during the escape-to-choice condition relative to the other functions.
- The presentation of cards signaling the availability of the vocal and sign language response may have affected responding.

Future Directions

- Comparing client preference to caregiver preference.
- Absolute versus relative FCR preference.
- Will the use of a preferred FCR topography during treatment decrease problem behavior relative to a lower preferred topography?

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