

MODULE: TIME DELAY

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Phase II: Implementing Time Delay

Step 1. Gaining Learner Attention

1. Team members gain the learner's attention by:
 - a. using an attention-getting strategy (e.g., saying learner's name, saying, "Look") and
 - b. presenting the cue.

Once eye contact has been established with the learner, then team members can present the cue to begin the teaching activity.

EXAMPLE: A teacher says, "David." David looks at the teacher. She presents a flash card with the word "stop" on it and says, "What is this, David?" while pointing at the flash card (cue).

Step 2. Implementing the Time Delay

When first teaching a skill, a fixed 0-second delay is used with both constant and progressive time delay. That is, there is no wait time between the cue and the delivery of the controlling prompt.

1. Team members use a 0-second delay by providing the learner with the cue to use the target skill followed immediately by the controlling prompt.
2. Team members use the least restrictive prompt needed for the learner to use the skill.

EXAMPLE: After the teacher in the above example, says "What is this, David?" she immediately says, "Stop." The teacher continues to use the 0-second time delay 10 more times before increasing the delay between the cue and the prompt.

After the 0-second delay is implemented over a predetermined number of trials, the delay is increased based upon the time delay procedure being used (see Step 3 below).

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Step 3. Increasing the Delay

Two different time delay procedures can be used to increase the wait time between the initial cue and the controlling prompt: constant and progressive time delay. Both procedures are effective in teaching learners with ASD target skills.

With *constant time delay*, team members implement a fixed delay (i.e., 3-5 seconds) after using the 0-second delay over a predetermined number of trials. The delay provides an opportunity for the learner to use the target skill independently before being offered support from the team member.

1. Team members present the cue to the learner.
2. Team members wait 3 to 5 seconds for the learner to use the target skill.
3. If the learner's response is correct, team members immediately provide positive feedback by:
 - a. offering reinforcement (e.g., praise, access to materials, break) and
 - b. stating what the learner did (e.g., "You said, 'More,' Here's more snack," "You said, 'Two times two is four.' That's right. Two times two is four.")
4. If the learner's response is incorrect or if the learner does not respond to the cue, team members:
 - a. provide the cue again,
 - b. wait 3 to 5 seconds, and
 - c. use the controlling prompt to help the learner use the target skill.

With *progressive time delay*, team members gradually increase the delay (e.g., 1-second intervals) as learners become more proficient at using the target skill.

1. Team members present the cue to the learner.
2. Team members wait using the increased delay time before prompting the learner to use the skill.
3. If the learner's response is correct, team members immediately provide positive feedback by:
 - a. offering reinforcement (e.g., praise, access to materials, break) and

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- b. stating what the learner did (e.g., “You said, ‘More,’ here’s more snack,” “You said, ‘Two times two is four.’ That’s right. Two times two is four.”)
4. If the learner’s response is incorrect or if the learner does not respond to the cue, team members:
 - a. provide the cue again,
 - b. wait for the increased time interval (e.g., 1-second, 2-seconds), and
 - c. use the controlling prompt to help the learner use the target skill.

Step 4. Monitoring Progress

Monitoring learner progress is essential because it allows team members to modify the wait time as learners become more proficient at using target skills. Team members collect progress monitoring data as the teaching activity is implemented. Often times, team members place clipboards with data collection sheets at the activity so that they can easily record learner responses.

1. Team members record the number of correct/incorrect learner responses during the teaching activity.

Learner responses are recorded in the following ways:

- *unprompted correct response* (learner uses the target skill correctly without prompts within the time delay interval),
 - *prompted correct response* (learner uses the target skill correctly after being prompted),
 - *unprompted incorrect response* (learner attempts to use the target skill without prompts within the time delay interval, but performs it incorrectly),
 - *prompted incorrect response* (learner attempts to use the target skill after being prompted, but performs it incorrectly), and
 - *no response* (learner does not initiate use of the target skill during the time delay interval) (Kurt & Tekin-Iftar, 2008; Wolery et al., 2002; Schuster et al., 1998).
2. Team members review progress monitoring data after two teaching activities to determine a learner’s mastery of the target skill.

Generally, team members review data after two teaching activities have been implemented. This way, the wait time can be increased quite quickly to ensure rapid acquisition of skills on the part of the learner. Learners should demonstrate 100%

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correct responding *before a prompt* over two consecutive teaching activities before increasing the wait time. If 25% of a learner’s responses are *wrong after the prompt* after two teaching sessions, a more controlling prompt may be needed. A *no response* on 25% or more trials after two teaching sessions often indicates that the reinforcer is not motivating enough for the learner with ASD. Below is the same data collection sheet that was used during baseline; however, it contains data from a teaching activity that used a 3-second delay during two teaching activities.

Example Time Delay Data Collection Sheet

Target skill: Saying “Stop” when presented with a flashcard with the word “stop” on it.					
Date: 8/12/08		Delay: 3-second		Date: 8/12/08	
Date: 8/12/08		Delay: 3-second		Date: 8/12/08	
Trial #	Before prompt	After prompt	Trial #	Before prompt	After prompt
1	+		1	-	
2		-	2	+	
3	+		3	+	
4		-	4	+	

3. Team members gradually increase the time delay (e.g., 1-second intervals) as learners demonstrate 100% mastery of the target skill over the course of two instructional activities.

After the learner has demonstrated 100% mastery of the target skill using the increased delay, team members continue to gradually increase the delay. When team members reach a 5-6 second delay, then they should continue teaching the target skill using this time interval until the learner masters the target skill. The goal is to entirely stop using the time delay and prompting procedures so that learners use target skills independently.