

## Introduction

- The client is a four-year-old female diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and currently receives applied behavior analysis (ABA) services at FSU's Early Childhood Autism Program (ECAP).
- She has previously demonstrated significant progress with manding via pointing and consistently engages in spontaneous points for preferred items or locations.
- Throughout sessions at ECAP, clinicians have observed that she variably attempts to repeat words or approximations of words. Therefore, clinicians elected to introduce an *Initial Manding and Tacting via Vocals* protocol.
- This protocol intends to capitalize on her vocal attempts and continue to introduce her to a variety of words to add to her verbal repertoire.
- The purpose of this protocol is to strengthen her communication repertoire by increasing opportunities for and rates of vocal speech sound production over time.

## Methods

- The clinical team conducted this protocol in the form of natural environment teaching.
- Clinicians would frequently model vocalizations of words relating to various items or actions in the natural environment.
- *Example:* The clinician would say "marker" while holding a marker.
- Any time she made a spontaneous or independent vocalization, clinicians would immediately echo back the vocalization.
- Upon the repeat of vocalizations from the client, it was immediately paired with positive reinforcement through a positive affect and social praise (Esch et al. 2009).
- Data was collected via frequency recording. A tally was recorded when a spontaneous or independent vocalization of a word occurred throughout session.
- Data was also recorded on the type of words the client emitted by the clinician writing down the specific words. This can be seen in figure 2.

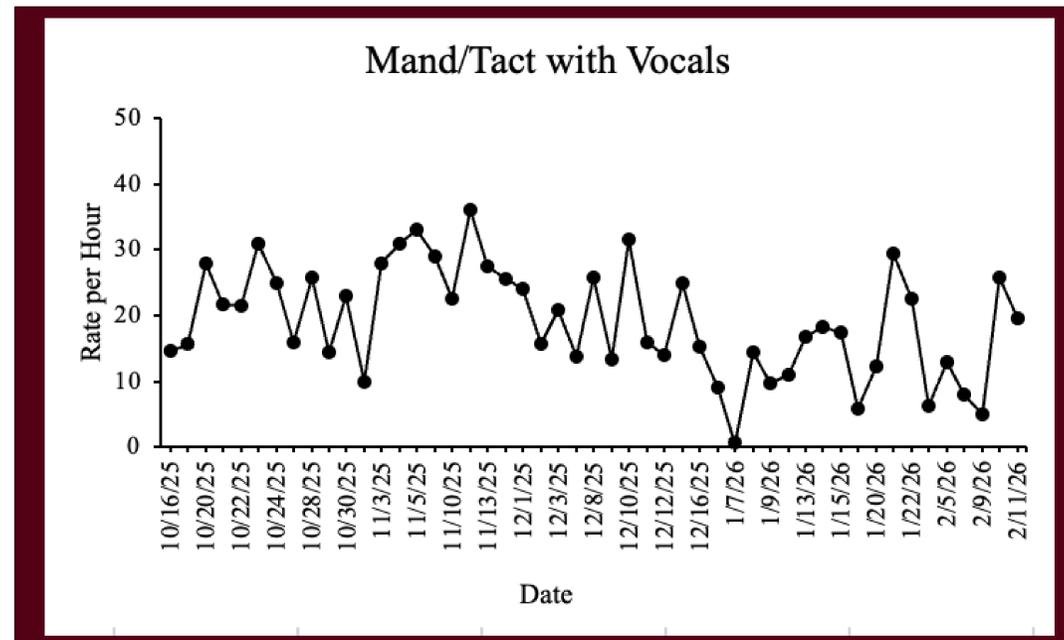


Fig. 1: The figure above demonstrates the rate per hour of approximate words produced within the *Manding and Tacting via Vocal* protocol.

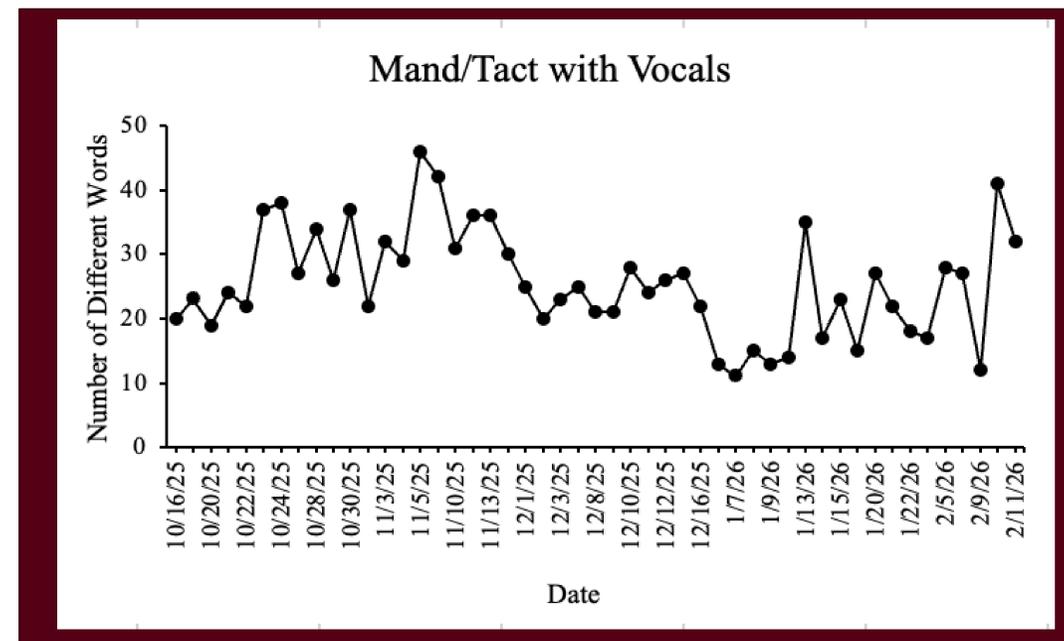


Fig. 2: The figure above demonstrates the number of different words produced within the *Manding and Tacting via Vocal* protocol.

## Results and Discussion

- This protocol helped fade the clients primary form of communication from pointing to vocalizations.
- The client continues to show significant progress within her vocal communication.
- The client's current programming includes working on manding via phrases (3+ words).
- The client is now communicating to clinicians using multiple words to describe items or activities.
- The protocol initially decreased challenging behaviors by increasing her vocal communication repertoire.
- This skill is generalizing to the home setting as she is continuously using vocals to request items, activities, or locations to caregivers.

## References

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- Sigafoos, J., O'Reilly, M. F., Lancioni, G. E., Carnett, A., Bravo, A., Rojeski, L., & Halle, J. W. (2016). Functional assessment of problematic forms of prelinguistic behavior. In D. Keen, H. Meadan, N. C. Brady, & J. W. Halle (Eds.), *Prelinguistic and minimally verbal communicators on the autism spectrum* (pp. 121–145). Springer Science + Business Media
- Sundberg, M. L. (2004). A behavioral analysis of motivation and its relation to mand training. *The Analysis of Verbal Behavior, 20*(1), 39–56.