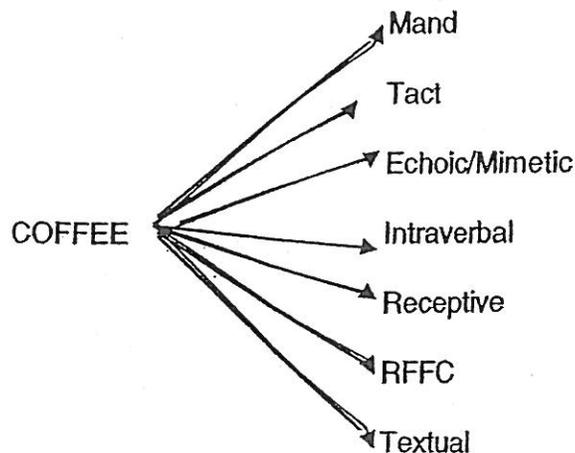


The "Meaning" of a Word

1. A word is not defined by its form. The definition of a word is determined by its functional category, e.g. mand, tact, etc.
2. The same word (coffee) has many different meanings based upon the conditions under which you learned to say it.
3. Many children with autism do not have verbal behavior repertoires that include responses in each of the categories for the same word (topography).
4. This happens because the categories are functionally independent and the responses (words) may not transfer across the categories without explicit training. For example, being able to mand a cookie by saying "cookie" does not guarantee that the same child will be able to tact (label) a cookie when they see one and there is no EO (motivation) for it.
5. A common profile of children with autism includes a large receptive repertoire, many tacts, very few mands and almost no intraverbals. Failing to have responses in all of the categories leads to a less than adequate verbal repertoire.
6. This problem may be a result of instruction, which failed to assess the language repertoire of the child according to the behavioral classification and then failed to recognize the need for explicit teaching. Usually the child's "cognitive abilities", and not the teaching, is said to account for failure to develop spontaneous language and conversational skills.

Teach All the "Meanings"



BEHAVIORAL CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE

MAND (Request) Asking for things that you want. A tendency to say "coffee" when you want it, e.g. when there is an EO or motivation for it.

Antecedent
Desire or Motivation (EO)

Learner Behavior
Verbal Behavior

Reinforcer
Specific to the EO

TACT (label) Naming or identifying objects, actions, events, relations, properties, etc. A tendency to say "coffee" when you see coffee.

Antecedent
Non-Verbal Stimulus

Learner Behavior
Verbal Behavior

Reinforcer
Social

ECHOIC (Vocal Imitation) Repeating precisely what is heard, usually immediately. A tendency to say "coffee" because someone else just said it.

Antecedent
Someone's Verbal Behavior

Learner Behavior
Verbal Behavior
(Matches Other Learner)

Reinforcer
Social

MOTOR IMITATION Copying someone's motor movements. A tendency to sign "coffee" when someone else signs coffee

Antecedent
Someone's Verbal Behavior

Learner Behavior
Verbal Behavior
(Matches Other Learner)

Reinforcer
Social

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE Following instructions or complying with the request (mands of others). A tendency to "pass the coffee" when someone asks you to do so.

Antecedent	Learner Behavior	Reinforcer
Someone's Verbal Behavior	Non-Verbal Compliance	Social

INTRAVERBAL

Answering "wh" questions or having a conversation so that what you say is determined by what the other person says. A tendency to say "coffee" when someone else says "What's your favorite morning beverage".

Antecedent	Learner Behavior	Reinforcer
Someone's Verbal Behavior	Verbal Behavior (Does not Match Other Learner)	Social

RECEPTIVE BY
FEATURE, FUNCTION
AND CLASS (RFFC)

Responding to items in the environment when provided a description of them and not their "names". A tendency to point to "coffee" when someone says, "show me what your Dad drinks in the morning".

Antecedent	Learner Behavior	Reinforcer
Someone's Verbal Behavior	Non-verbal Compliance	Social
