High-Preference Strategies and other Interspersal Procedures for Learners with Disabilities: A Review of the Literature

Elias Clinton, Ph.D
Black Hills State University

Tom J. Clees, Ph.D
The University of Georgia

Interspersal Procedures (IP) represent a group of interventions that imbed, at varying ratios, requests for individuals to exhibit mastered skills before or within sequences of requests for target skills. Interspersal Procedures include numerous strategies, such as high-probability request sequences, pre-task requests, and high-preference strategies. Such arrangements can increase attempts to perform target or less preferred tasks. The purposes of this review include (a) an overview of terminology related to IP, (b) a discussion of the conceptual basis for using IP, (c) a description of the experimental literature that has used IP with individuals with disabilities, (d) a categorical summary of this literature, and (e) a discussion of pragmatic concerns and guidelines for deciding when to use IP.

Keywords: interspersal procedures; high-preference task requests; discreet task completion hypothesis; disabilities; behavioral momentum; premack principle