

# Research article summary

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**Research Question** This research seeks to determine if paraprofessionals can achieve a high degree of accuracy after being trained in discrete trial teaching. The specific research question seeks to find answers to the degree of generalization trainees display when observed outside the clinical setting.

### Method

The design used in this study was a delayed multiple baseline across-subjects design. This allows the independent variables to enter the study after the first participant has begun to be observed and evaluated. There were three bachelor level paraprofessionals involved in the study. Each of these professionals worked with children in their homes. Each child had been diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Delays or Autism. The materials used during the study were written pamphlets and any manipulative materials such as flash cards, toys and treats necessary for the Discrete Trial Teaching instruction. The independent variable was the discrete trial teaching instruction delivered to each of the paraprofessionals. The dependant variable was the percentage of accuracy each paraprofessional displayed in correctly implementing the discrete trial instruction in a home setting. The procedure for this study involved training the paraprofessionals in a classroom setting until they were 100% accurate in delivering correct discrete trial teaching. They were then monitored over the space of several months to see how accurately they could generalize the skills to the children they worked with in their homes. Multiple observers were used as a part of this procedure, as was typical, non-specific supervision by agency supervisors.

### Results

After arriving at 100% accuracy in the classroom setting, all three

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paraprofessionals showed very low accuracy scores at the beginning of the home sessions. Initially, they scored at 50%, 54% and 63% accuracy. After typical supervisory interventions over the next 1-3 weeks, all of the participants were operating above 95% accuracy. All participants were approaching 100% accuracy by the end of the study.

### Discussion

The results suggest that training paraprofessionals in discrete trial teaching is an effective way to instruct children with Autism and Pervasive Developmental Delays in the home setting. The high percentages suggest that the paraprofessionals were able to generalize the classroom instruction to the home base instruction they are expected to deliver to their clients. This ability to generalize is important because paraprofessionals typically work with multiple clients in multiple settings throughout the day.

### Limitations

One limitation in the study was the fact that the baseline for accuracy was established using an abbreviated two-day trial period. This was done because the more precise 10-day trial period to establish a baseline did not coordinate with the teaching and hiring schedule of the agency. It was established that there was only 5% variability between the estimate and actual 10-day trial. Another limitation stemmed from the fact that the same supervisor did not always conduct supervision of the paraprofessionals. The unique style and personality displayed by each supervisor in implementing discrete trial teaching could not be accounted for in this study.

### References

Bolton, J., & Meyer, M. (2008). Promoting the generalization of paraprofessional discrete trial teaching skills. Focus on Autism and Other <https://assignbuster.com/research-article-summary/>

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