



Non-Verbal Mands

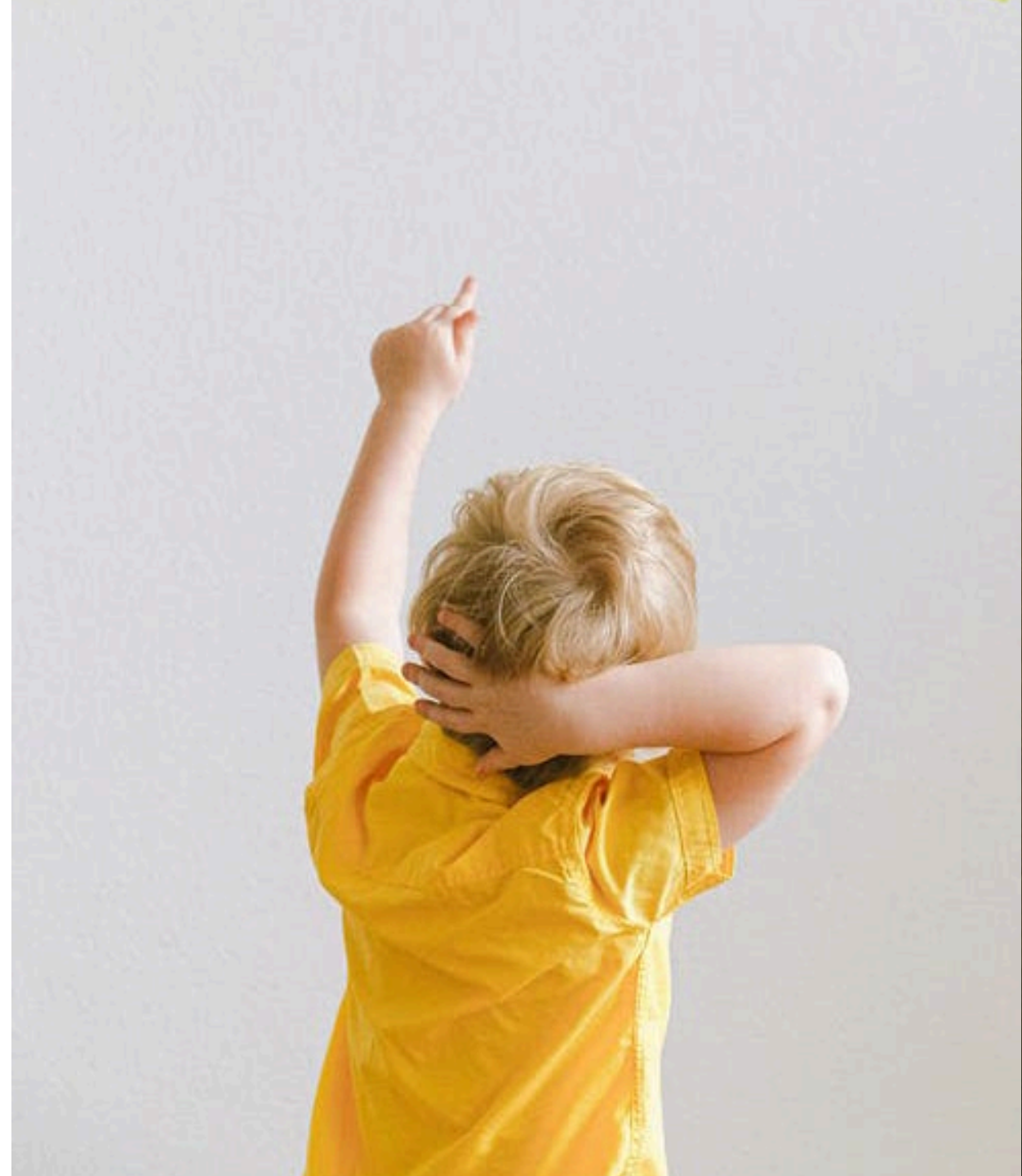
Teaching the requesting of
using signs or pictures

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Mand

- Mand is a request
- Expression towards desired items/ activities.
- When a child says “Apple” when they want to eat apple, it is a mand
- Mand is a part of Verbal Behavior approach
- Mand is often the first verbal operant taught



Key concepts of mand

- Mand is based on having a need met
- Reinforcer is pre-determined by the behavior
- The child asks for a specific item – and gets this item as a result of their behavior (which is asking)
- A child must be motivated to ask for something
- **Example:**
 - Child want ice-cream
 - Child says “I want ice-cream” (mand)
 - Child gets ice-cream

Types of mands

By mean of communication:

Vocal mands

- Words
- Questions
- Phrases

Non-vocal mands:

- Pictures (PECS)
- Signing
- Gestures
- Applications, devices

Types of mands

Mands for desired items and activities

Mands for attention

Mands for information

Mands for ending of something undesirable

Interactive break

Can you think of an example of a non-vocal mand?

Can eye contact be a mand?



Interactive break

Examples of non-vocal mands include:

- Handing picture of water to mom when thirsty
- Signing "Cookie"
- Signing "I want iPad"
- Placing pictures "I want", "blue", "car" on a sentence strip



Why mand is important

- **Children can effectively ask for their wants and needs**
- **Mand helps decrease problem behaviors**
 - Problem behaviors in children very often are caused by a mand deficit, when the child is not able to make their needs known
 - Child who cannot request will often use inappropriate behaviors to ask for things
- **Manding facilitates learning other language skills**
- **Manding improves communication between the child and their family as child's needs become known and understood**
- **This evidently improved bond**
- **Mands improve social interactions**

Teaching mands using PECS

- **PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System**
- Learners use pictures to communicate
- Effective for learners of pre-school and elementary school age
- Assessments to be made prior to start using PECS:
- Communications skills assessment
- Reinforcers assessment



Teaching mands using PECS

Advantages

- Pictures are easy to understand for adults and peers
- Can be used when fine motor skills that are not strong

Disadvantages

- Selecting pictures is time-consuming
- Pictures are sometimes too abstract
- Book has to be carried everywhere
- Pictures can be lost
- Children can have weak discrimination btw pictures

Factors to consider

- Training environment – can be both structured and unstructured. At the beginning two adults assist the learner: helper and communication partner
- Communicative exchange – at the beginning it is prompted physically while **no verbal prompts** are provided
- Reinforcers – contrive motivation before working on requesting
- May need to conduct a preference assessment
- Teaching strategies:
 - Physical prompts and prompt fading
 - Open-hand prompt and prompt fading
 - Progress monitoring

Identify reinforcers

- Use child's preferences
- Select reinforcers that:
- Can be delivered quickly
- Can be consumed or contacted briefly
- Can be controlled
- Are strongly motivating



Steps for teaching mands using PECS – Phase 1

1. The learner reaches toward desired item. Helper interrupts reach and redirects learner to pick up the picture/symbol.
2. The learner has picture/symbol in hand. The helper assists the learner by placing the picture in the open hand of the communication partner.
3. Communication partner hands the item to the learner and names the item.
4. No verbal prompts are given throughout the learning process in Phase 1.
5. The exchange is immediately rewarded with the requested item being given to the learner.
6. Once the exchange steps are established with the learner, physical assistance is faded.
7. Once physical assistance is faded during the exchange, open-hand prompt used by the communication partner is faded.

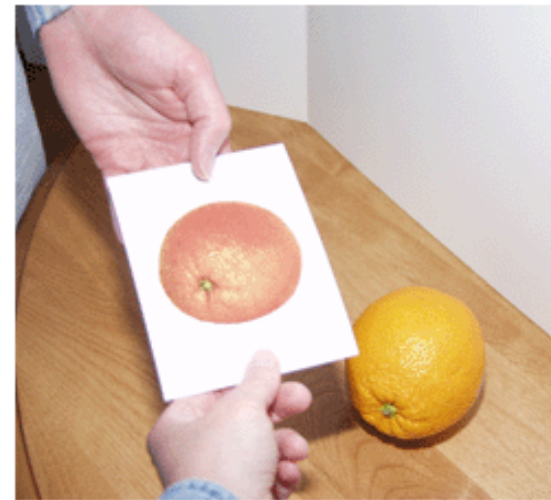
Teaching process

PECS - Phase 1 (w/o 2nd prompter)

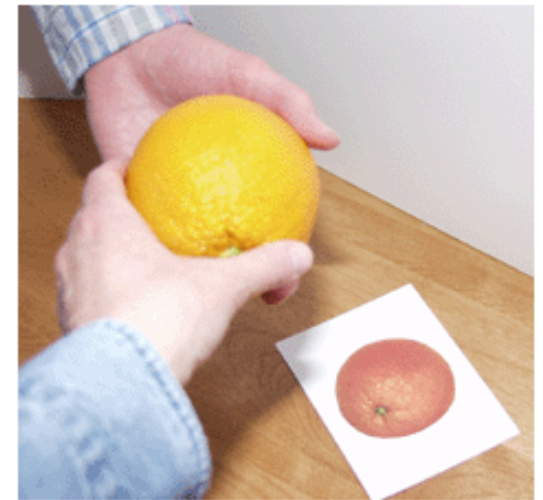


Tips for teaching mands using PECS

1. Verbal prompts should not be used. Desired item itself should serve as a visual cue
2. At the beginning, use full physical prompting (hand over hand)
3. Physical assistance should be faded by moving to touch, then to gestures, etc.
4. Deliver reinforcer upon each successful picture exchange immediately
5. Open hand prompt should be faded only after physical assistance has been faded
6. Provide many opportunities for practicing mands



Request an item



Receive the item



Next phases

- **Phase 2. Expanding spontaneity:**
 - Traveling
 - Adding environments and partners
- **Phase 3. Discrimination of pictures**
 - Choosing between pictures
 - Error correction added
- **Phase 4. Building sentences**
- **Phase 5. Responding to “What do you want?”**
- **Phase 6. Commenting**

Requesting using PECS

3-year-old Rage is learning to speak using his PECS book



Teaching mands using sign language

Advantages of sign language

- Sign language is portable, no equipment is needed
- It is comprehensive
- It can work to improve vocalization
- Not necessary to need huge discrimination

Disadvantages of sign language

- Adults should be trained, too
- It is not universal
- Smaller audience

Teaching mands using sign language

- Find reinforcing items, choose those which are easier to imitate/sign
- Ensure motivation, use moments when the child is highly motivated
- Model (show how to do) the sign and say the name of the item at the same time
- If the child does not imitate, physically prompt them to sign the item
- Deliver the desired item
- Practice imitation and strengthen skill

Teaching mands using sign language - process

Brief Manding Session



Tips for teaching mands using signs

- It is fine to modify signs to make them easier to perform especially when children are young
- Fade physical prompting as soon as possible
- Use shaping – accept closer approximations then shape
- Always reward signs that are closer to spontaneous or spontaneous mand
- Always model sign with saying the name of the item vocally simultaneously

Teaching mands using sign language - process

Mand Sign



Early Learner Requests using American Sign Language ASL Mands



Questions?





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Thank you!



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