**Symposium at ABAI 2019: Focusing on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Behavior Analysis**

A Systematic Examination of the Influences of Interventionist Language on Mands Using a Speech Generating Device

(Applied Research)

MEGAN G. KUNZE (University of Oregon), Christine Drew (University of Oregon), Wendy A. Machalicek (University of Oregon), Rebecca Crowe (University of Oregon)

Abstract: Individuals with disabilities whose family members speak a language other than English and communicate using speech generating devices (SGDs) require assessment of instructional language and programmed language output of the SGD. In this study, an alternating treatment design was used to examine the effect of interventionist language as a putative motivating operation (English or Spanish) on the (a) choice of SGD language output, (b) frequency of mands, and (c) frequency of challenging behavior for a 10-year old non-verbal child with Down syndrome. Results indicated a slight increase in manding when the interventionist spoke Spanish compared to the English or control conditions. The participant also manded most frequently in Spanish on the SGD, suggesting a preference for Spanish output. These results indicate a potential preference for instructional language and expressive language using an SGD. Challenging behavior was observed more frequently in the English and control conditions. The implications of this research were discussed in the context of potential motivating operations for communication. The ethical practices and standards of Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and educators were also addressed.