Systematic Instruction Plan Module
Transcript for Slides 08

Slide 01
When considering a schedule of reinforcement it is important to remember that a behavior is not necessarily going to be reinforced every time it occurs. So a reinforcement schedule is guidelines or rules stating which occurrence of a behavior, if any, will be reinforced. One schedule of reinforcement is intermittent reinforcement, meaning when reinforcement is not delivered each time a behavior occurs. Another reinforcement schedule is a continuous reinforcement schedule. This is when every instance of a behavior is reinforced. An example of this is turning on a water faucet, every time you turn the handle water will come out. When teaching a new behavior, often teachers use continuous reinforcement in the beginning stages of learning or the acquisition stage and eventually fade back the use of reinforcement to an intermittent schedule.

Slide 02
There are some advantages to using intermittent reinforcement. First, it economizes on time and reinforcers when reinforcement does not have to be delivered for each instance of a target behavior. Second, the use of intermittent reinforcement helps to maintain a target behavior. Third, use of intermittent reinforcement helps reduce the chance a student will become satiated due to fewer instances the reinforcer needs to be delivered.

Slide 03
This slide provides an overview of all types of reinforcement schedules. The important thing here is to note the definitions for particular words. Continuous means every time. Ratio means a certain number is required. Interval means a certain passage of time is required. Duration means the behavior needs to occur for a certain amount of time. Fixed means every set instance and variable means it is random.

Slide 04
Here is a visual look at how the schedules of reinforcement break down.

Slide 05
A fixed ratio schedule of reinforcement is when a fixed number of responses is required before reinforcement is delivered. For example, if you have a fixed ratio 4 schedule, which when written looks like FR4, reinforcement would only be delivered after every fourth occurrence of behavior. So when working on the behavior of switch activation using a FR4 schedule, you would only deliver the reinforcer to the student after the student appropriately activates the switch 4 times. You continue doing this after every forth time. Remember, the fixed means every set time. So if you say you are going to use a Fixed Ratio 3 schedule, or FR3, you will reinforce after every 3rd time the behavior occurs. This type of schedule
usually produces rapid rates of responding with short postreinforcement pause meaning the student does not respond for a period of time following reinforcement. Also, the length of the pause is directly proportional to the number of responses required so a large ration requirement produces long pauses and small ratio produces short pauses.

Slide 06
A fixed interval schedule of reinforcement is when reinforcement is delivered for the first response following a set passage of time. So even if the target response occurs within the set time, it will not be reinforced. The first target response to occur following the end of the interval will be reinforced. For example, a Fixed Interval 3 schedule, FR3, is when reinforcement will be delivered the first time the behavior occurs after 3 minutes. A FR5 schedule is when reinforcement is delivered to the first occurrence of the target behavior after 5 minutes has passed.

Slide 07
A variable schedule of reinforcement is when the behavior requirement for reinforcement varies randomly from one reinforcement to the next. Under the variable schedule there is either a variable ratio or variable interval schedule. A variable ratio means that on average a number of occurrences of the behavior will occur before being reinforced. So a Variable Ratio 4, VR4 schedule means that on average every 4th occurrence of the behavior will produce reinforcement. So maybe the 4th and 6th and 12th time the behavior occurs it is reinforced, but on average it produces a VR4 schedule. This schedule produces an overall high consistent rate of responding because the student does not know which occurrence of the behavior will be reinforced. A good example of this is playing a slot machine at a casino. A player is unable to predict which occurrence of pulling the lever on the slot machine will result in a win. A variable interval schedule is when reinforcement is delivered for the first correct response following the elapse of variable durations of time. So a variable interval schedule of 5 minutes, a VI5, is when on average the student will be reinforced for the first occurrence of the target behavior after an average of 5 minutes occurs. So it may be after 2 minutes and then again 8 minutes, but on average it is about every 5 minutes. This type of schedule usually produces an overall low consistent rate of responding.

Slide 08
A final schedule of reinforcement is a duration schedule. Again, you can set it to be a fixed duration or a variable duration schedule. A duration schedule requires the behavior to continue for duration of time before reinforcement is delivered. This type of schedule is used for continuous behaviors like time in seat or time on task.