

# RELATIONS OF LEARNING ABILITIES, TASK CHARACTERISTICS, AND ACQUISITION OF SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

M. Pongoski<sup>1,3</sup>, G. Roy-Wsiaki<sup>1,2</sup>, & C.T. Yu<sup>1,3</sup>

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA<sup>1</sup>, UNIVERSITÉ DE SAINT-BONIFACE<sup>2</sup>, ST. AMANT RESEARCH CENTRE<sup>3</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

- Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (**ABLLS-R**; Partington, 2006)
  - 544 training tasks
  - 25 skill areas
  - 4 broad domains
- Assessment of Basic Learning Abilities-Revised (**ABLA-R**; DeWiele, Martin, Martin, Yu, & Thomson, 2011)
  - 6 discrimination levels
- Roy-Wsiaki et al. (2017): Archival study
  - Categorized 99 ABLLS-R tasks into ABLA-R Levels
  - Tasks Matched to current ABLA-R level were acquired at a faster rate than tasks Mismatched Above or Mismatched Below

**Purpose:** To evaluate for a sample of children with ASD enrolled in an EIBI program rates of acquisition for tasks that are **MATCHED** and tasks that are **MISMATCHED** to a child's current learning ability level

## PARTICIPANTS

- 2 children with autism spectrum disorder
- Enrolled in the St. Amant Autism Programs
- Between the ages of 3 and 6
- ABLA-R Level 3, 4, or 5

## METHOD

- Single-subject alternating treatments design
- 3 conditions:

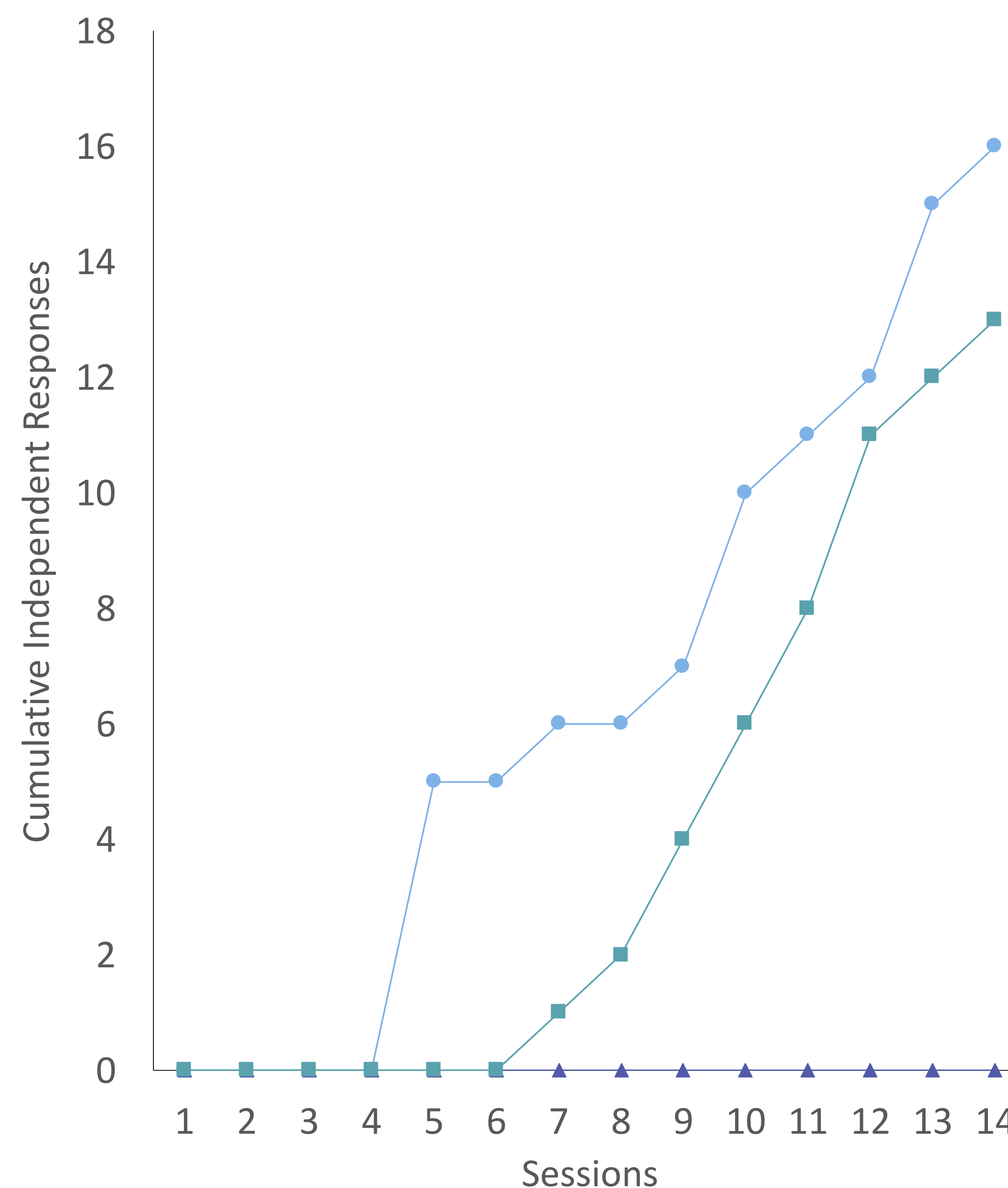
**Mismatched Above:**  
1 ABLA-R Level *above* current ABLA-R level

**Matched:**  
Matched to current ABLA-R level

**Mismatched Below:**  
1 ABLA-R Level *below* current ABLA-R level

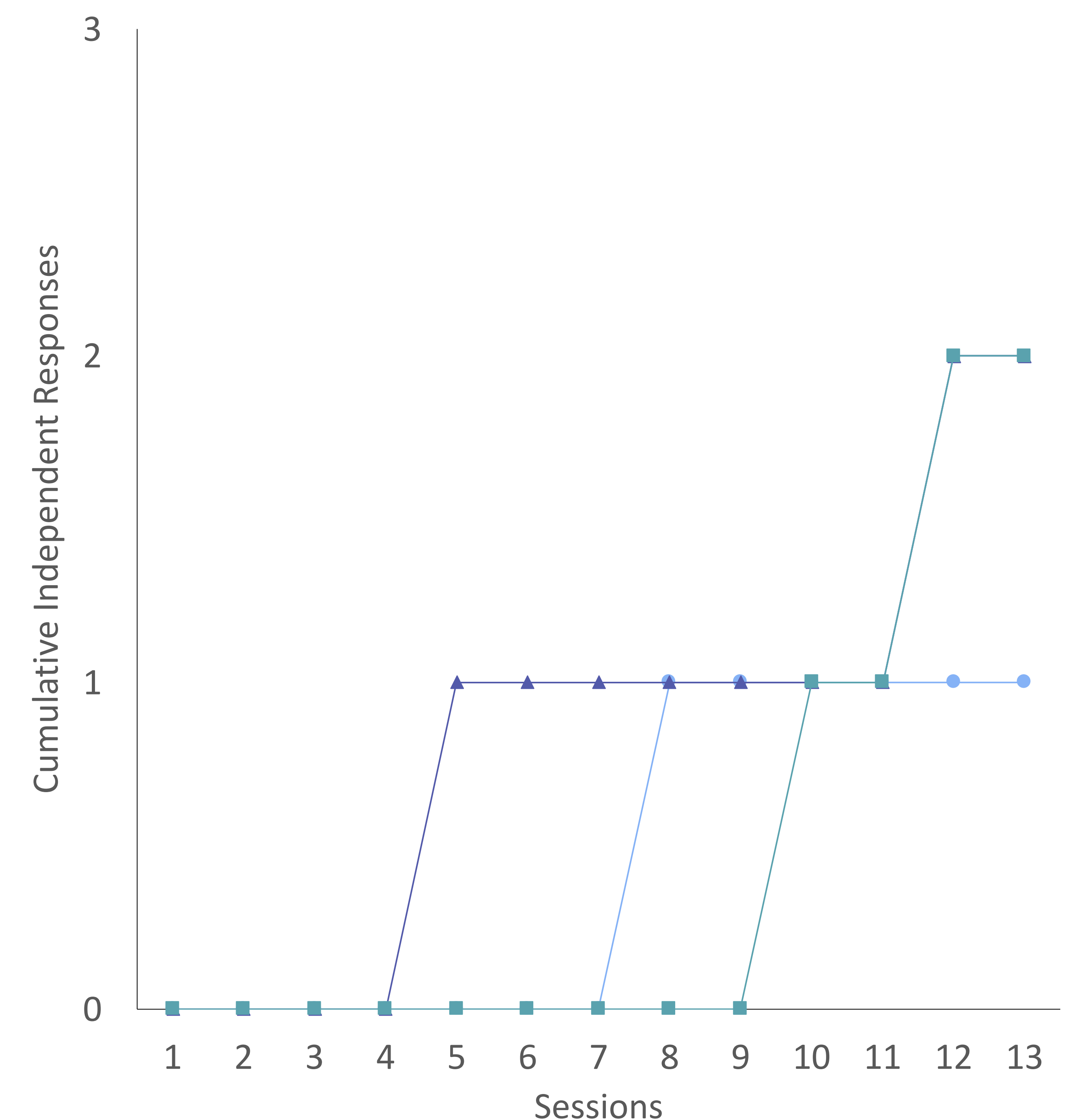
- Conduct ABLA-R to determine child's current learning ability level
- Select and teach ABLLS-R training tasks using Discrete Trial Teaching methods:
  - Graduated Prompt Delay
  - Least to Most Prompting methods
  - Error Correction Procedure

P05 – ABLA-R Level 4



● Mismatched Below ▲ Matched ■ Mismatched Above

P07 – ABLA-R Level 4



## DISCUSSION

### Results:

- P05:** Only mastered one teaching exemplar in the **BELOW** condition and obtained highest rate of independent responding in the **BELOW** condition
- P07:** Did not master any teaching exemplars in any condition and obtained the highest rate of independent responding in the **MATCHED** and **MISMATCHED ABOVE** conditions

### Limitations:

- Limited number of teaching sessions
- Limited knowledge of child's current teaching environment (e.g., most effective prompting strategies, modified teaching materials, etc.)

Although results were inconsistent with existing literature this study:

- Expanded on previous research examining matched and mismatched ABLLS-R training tasks
- Used a strong experimental design
- Allowed for interobserver and procedural integrity checks

## REFERENCES

DeWiele, L., Martin, G. L., Martin, T. L., Yu, C. T., & Thomson, K. (2011). *The Kerr-Meyerson Assessment of Basic Learning Abilities Revised: A self-instructional manual (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. St. Amant Research Centre, Winnipeg, MB, Canada. Retrieved from <http://stamantresearch.ca/abla/>

Partington, J. W. (2006). *The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised*. Pleasant Hill, CA: Behavior Analysts, Inc.

Roy-Wsiaki, G., Martin, G., Yu, D. C. T., Martin, T., Kaminski, L., Miljkovic, M., Rigby, S., ... Pongoski, M. (2017). An analysis of training tasks, maladaptive behaviours, and rates of task acquisition based on archived data from an early intensive behavioural intervention program. *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*, 23(1), 29 – 43.