

Increasing social skills for three adolescents diagnosed with autism through the use of a Teaching Interaction Procedure

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Insegnamento di abilità sociali a studenti con Disturbo dello Spettro Autistico attraverso la *Teaching Interaction Procedure* (TIP) in contesto di piccolo gruppo

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Abstract

L'insegnamento di abilità sociali e pro-sociali costituisce una delle componenti più importanti nella strutturazione di un intervento per persone con diagnosi di disturbo dello spettro autistico (*Autism Spectrum Disorder*, ASD), a causa della loro specifica fragilità sociale e dei rischi ad essa correlati. L'inclusione di queste abilità costituisce una componente fondamentale nell'insegnamento per bambini ed adolescenti con diagnosi di ASD. Questo studio valuta l'insegnamento attraverso la *Teaching Interaction Procedure* (TIP) di tre abilità sociali in un gruppo di tre studenti con ASD. La procedura di insegnamento è basata sul modello presentato da Leaf e colleghi (2009) e prevede sei fasi: definizione del comportamento, motivazione ed esempi, descrizione dell'abilità in step comportamentali, dimostrazione, pratica e feedback. È stato utilizzato un disegno sperimentale *multiple probe design across behaviors* per ognuno dei partecipanti. I risultati hanno evidenziato miglioramenti per tutti e tre i partecipanti in tutte e tre le abilità sociali per le quali è stata implementata la procedura di insegnamento. Tali dati suggeriscono l'utilità e la fruibilità della procedura nei contesti di piccolo gruppo composti esclusivamente da alunni con diagnosi, estendendo la letteratura esistente e suggerendo la possibilità di applicare tale procedura in contesti già basati sull'insegnamento in gruppo, come quelli scolastici.



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Abstract

Individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) show specific impairments in social behaviour and are at risk of social isolation. Therefore, teaching social behaviors and pro-social skills is one of the most critical components in ADS interventions, and clinicians often include social skills interventions in the comprehensive curriculum. This study aimed to investigate the efficacy of the Teaching Interaction Procedure (TIP; Leaf et al. 2009 and 2010) in a small group setting. TIP consists of six phases: labelling the targeted skill, providing a meaningful rationale for the importance of the skill, describing each step, modelling the skill, practicing and providing feedback throughout the interaction. A multiple probe design across behaviors was implemented and replicated across three participants. All three participants showed improvements in each of the three social targets, suggesting that TIP can successfully be implemented in a small group of ASD students. These results extend the existing literature and suggest applying this procedure in those contexts that are already based on group teaching, such as schools.

Keywords: Applied behavior analysis; Autism; ASD; Social skills; Teaching Interaction Procedure; Group instruction



Method

Participants

Four conversational kids diagnosed with ASD, age 9 to 14 enrolled in the study after obtaining parental consent. All of the kids were conversational and showed verbal competencies above the VB-Mapp level 3.

Setting

The group met twice to 6 times a month, mainly on Saturday afternoon. Meetings took place at the clinic where the Association is based and lasted 3 hrs.

Target skills

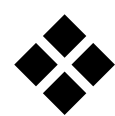
Gaining attention and interrupting appropriately an ongoing conversation. Giving the chance to change the game or activity when the peer shows lack of interest. Joining in when a play has already started.



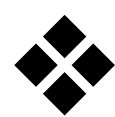
Procedure: BST vs TIP



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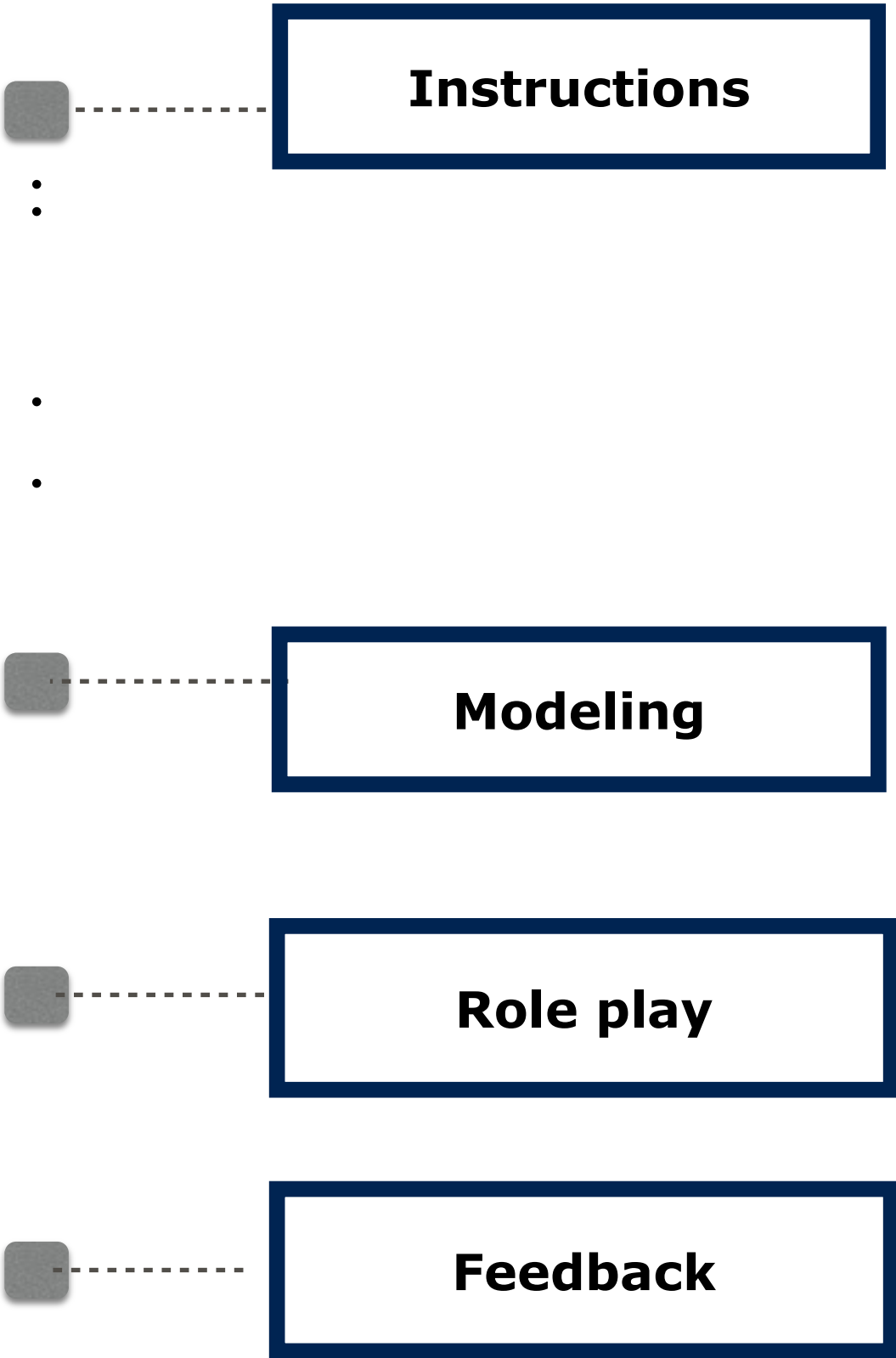


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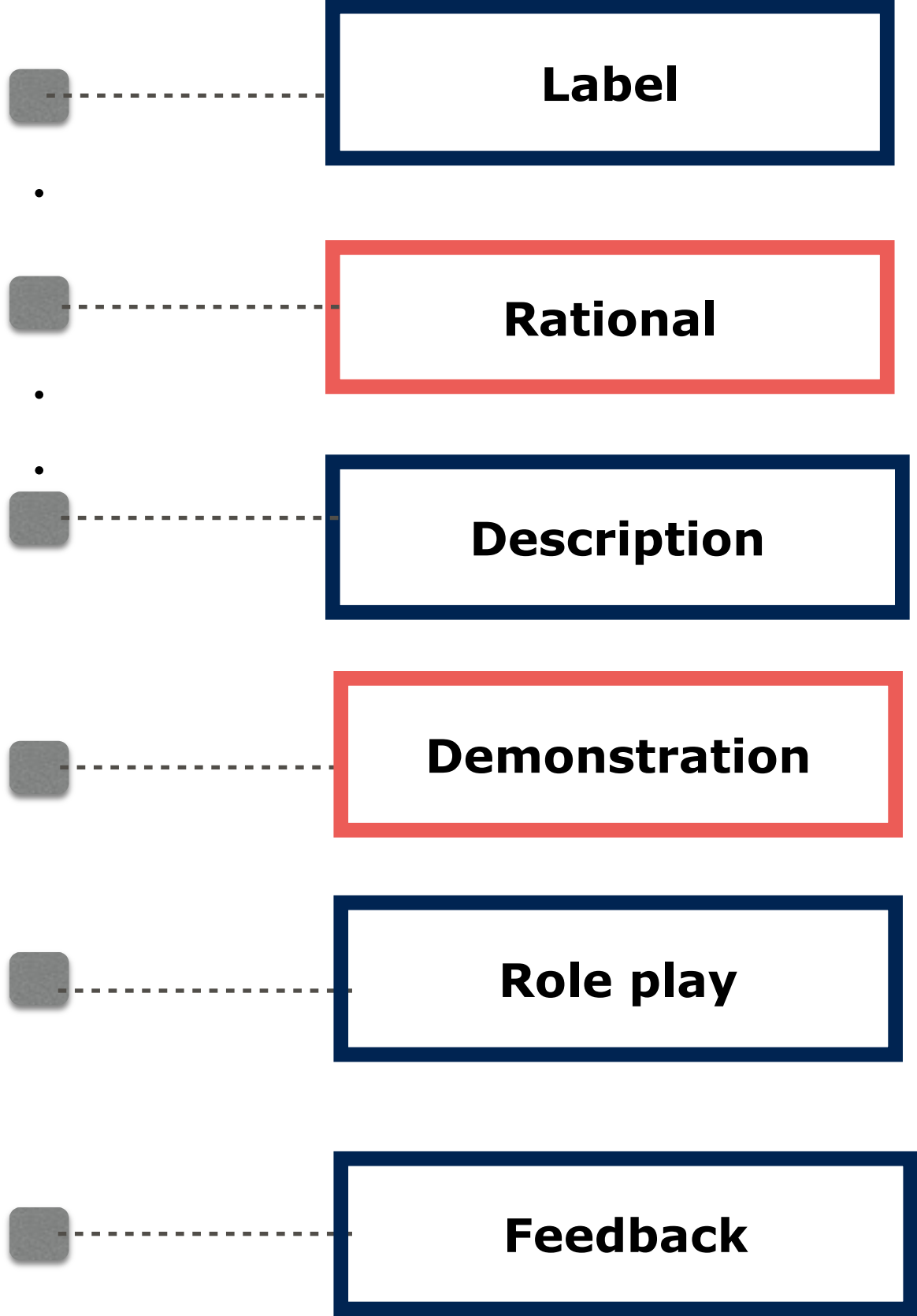


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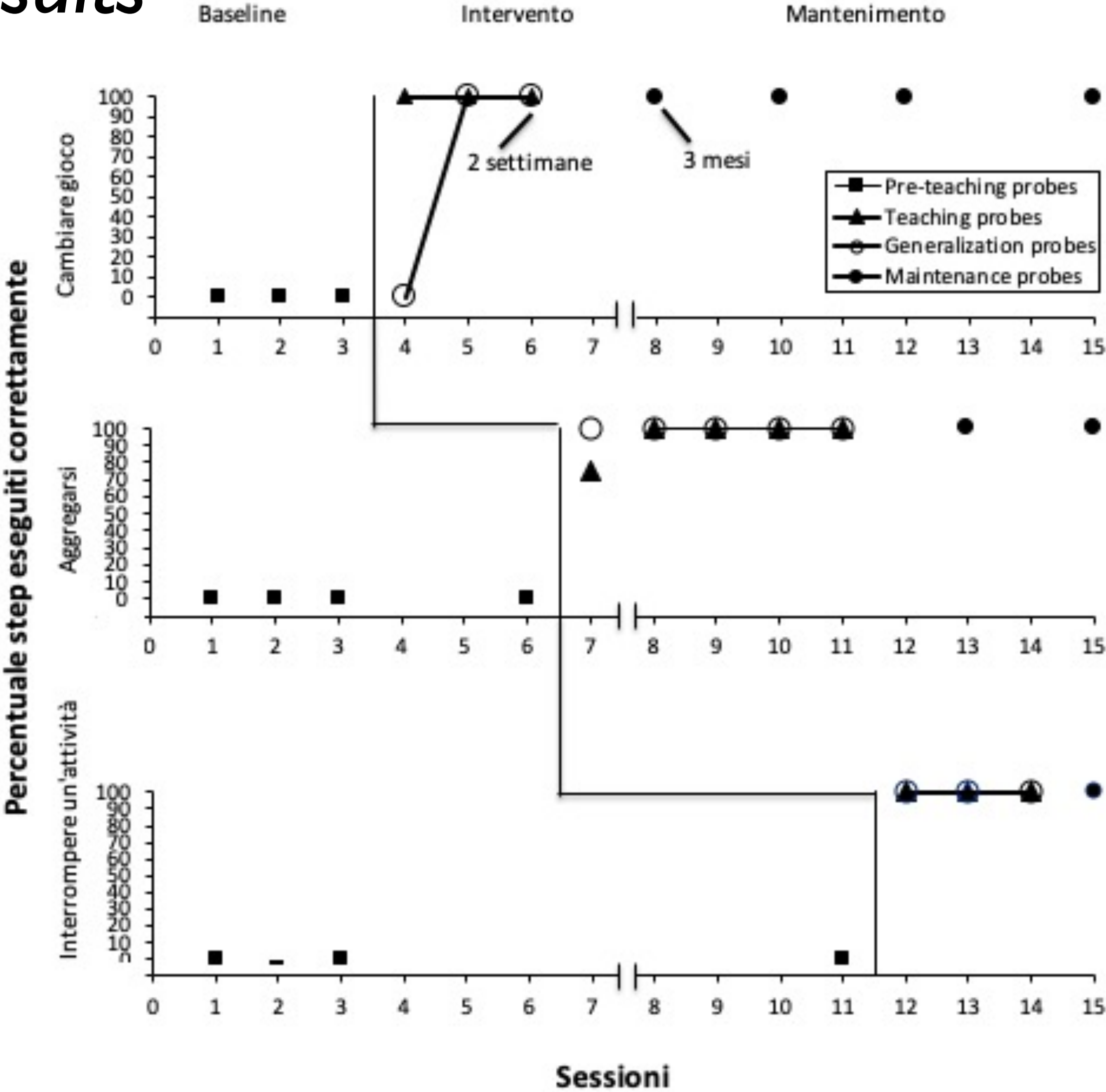
BST



TIP



Results



Student 1

Mean Percentage Correct Responding Across Conditions and Probes

Pre-teaching probes	Teaching probes	Gen. probes
	100%	66%
0%	95%	100%
	100%	100%
Maintenance probes		
	100%	

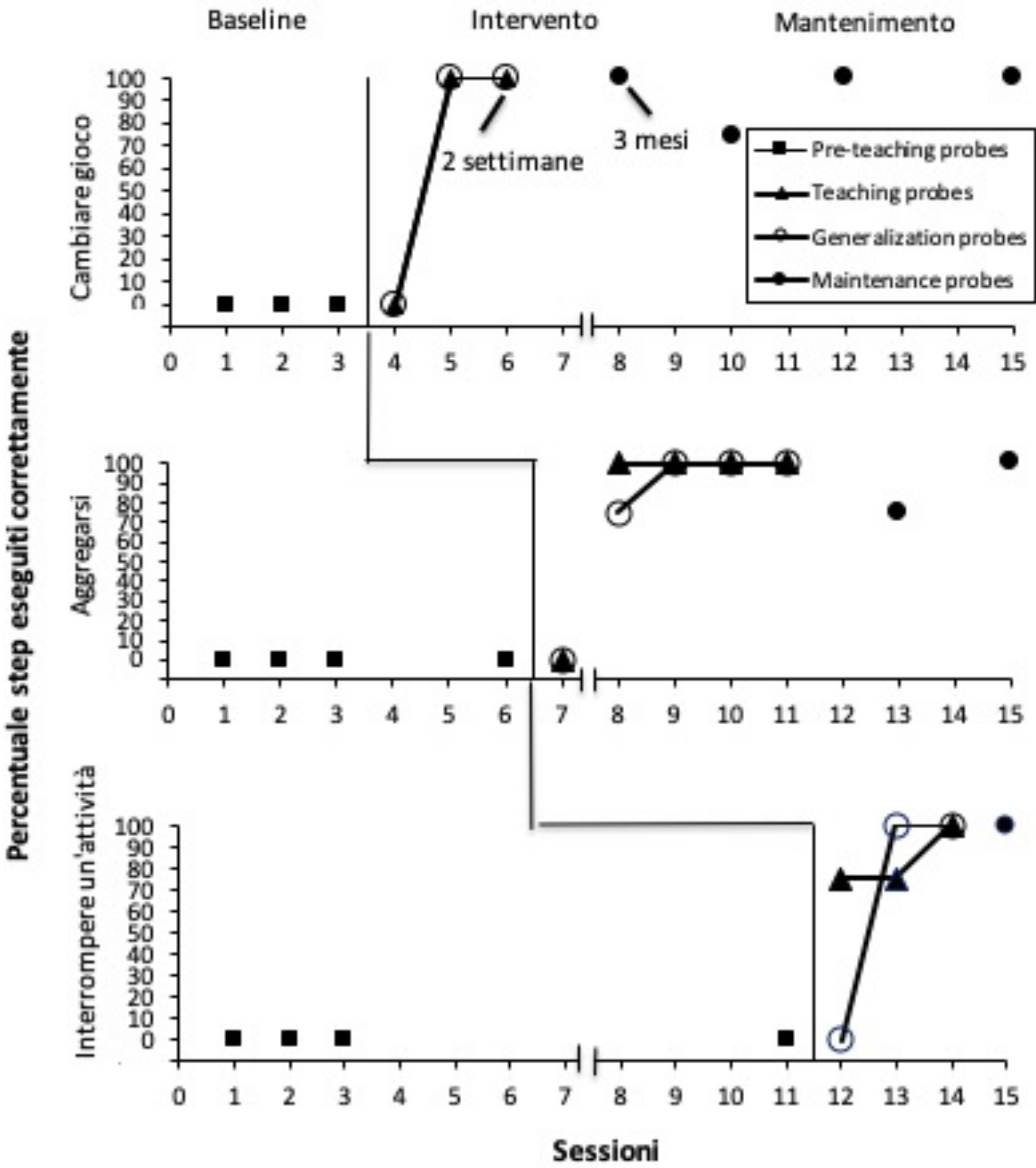


Student 2

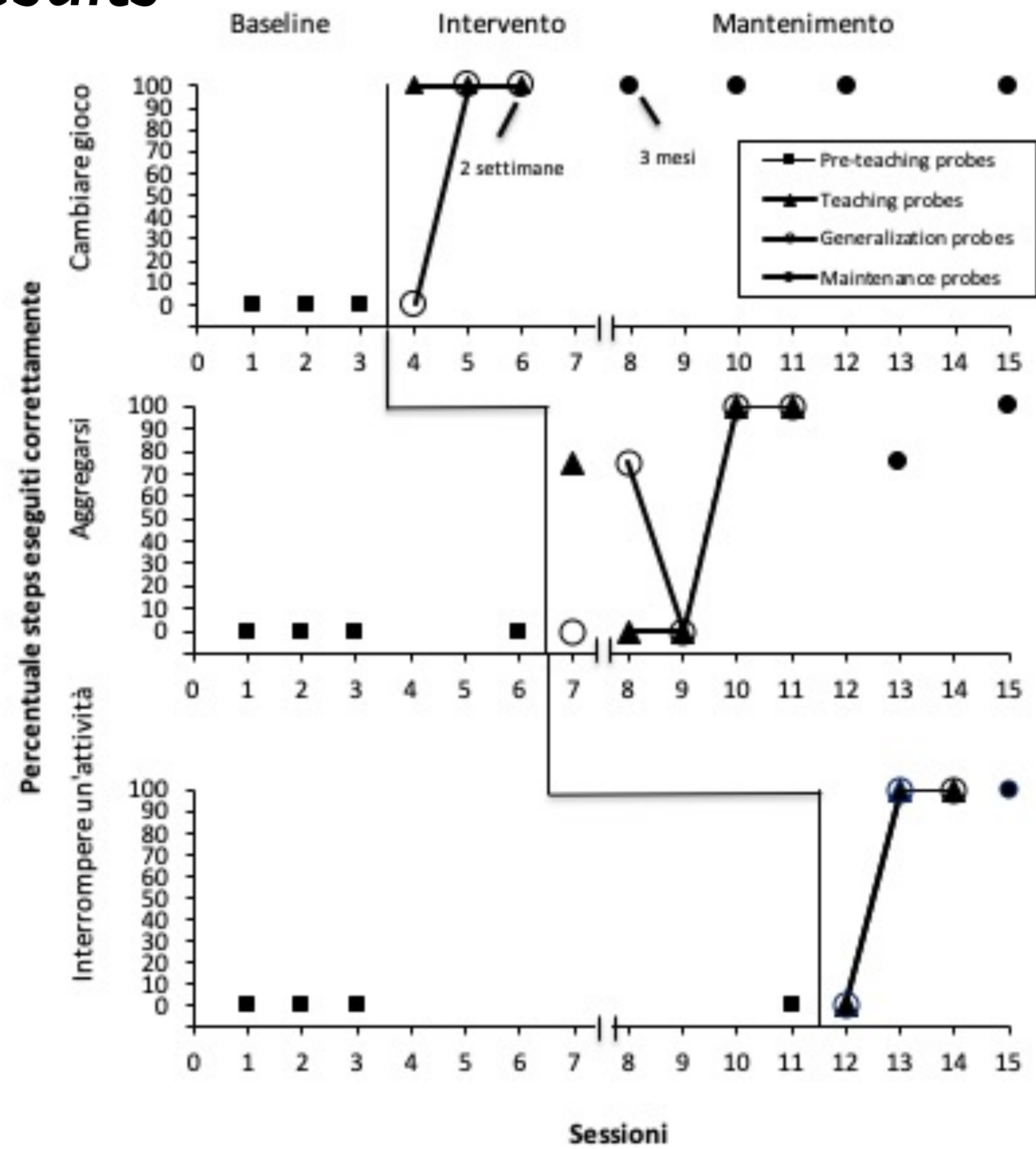
Mean Percentage Correct Responding Across Conditions and Probes

Pre-teaching probes	Teaching probes	Gen. probes
0%	66%	66%
	80%	75%
	83%	66%
Maintenance probes		
93%		
87%		
100%		

Results



Results



Student 3

Mean Percentage Correct Responding Across Conditions and Probes

Pre-teaching probes	Teaching probes	Gen. probes
	100%	66%
0%	55%	55%
	66%	66%
Maintenance probes		
	100%	
	87%	
	100%	



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Conclusions