THE EFFECT OF COMPUTER-EMITTED SPEECH INFLECTIONS DURING VERBAL-INTERACTIVE RESPONDING

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AB H. A. C. Ninness, T. Shore, and S. K. Ninness (1999) suggested that differential reinforcement of rule selections is a powerful procedure during human-computer interactions. In this study, the explored the possibility that similar procedures might be obtained using voice-interactive software. During baseline, 4 Ss made voice selections of items displayed on the screen and were exposed to "chimes" as a form of auditory feedback when making selections. In the first differential reinforcement condition, Ss were asked to make voice selections of these same items and Ss received brief, positively inflected, comments from the computer (e.g., 'mmmmhhmm,' 'okay,' 'yes') when making particular types of verbal selections. Selection of other items resulted in similar comments from the computer; however, these comments were devoid of "positive" inflection. In the final session, contingencies were reversed, and differential response rates regressed toward baseline levels. Results suggest that verbal selections of particular items come under the influence of positively inflected, computer-generated, differential reinforcement procedures.