



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NEWCASTLE**  
AUSTRALIA

FACULTY OF  
EDUCATION AND ARTS



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# The Impact of an in-class collaborative professional development model on communication partners.

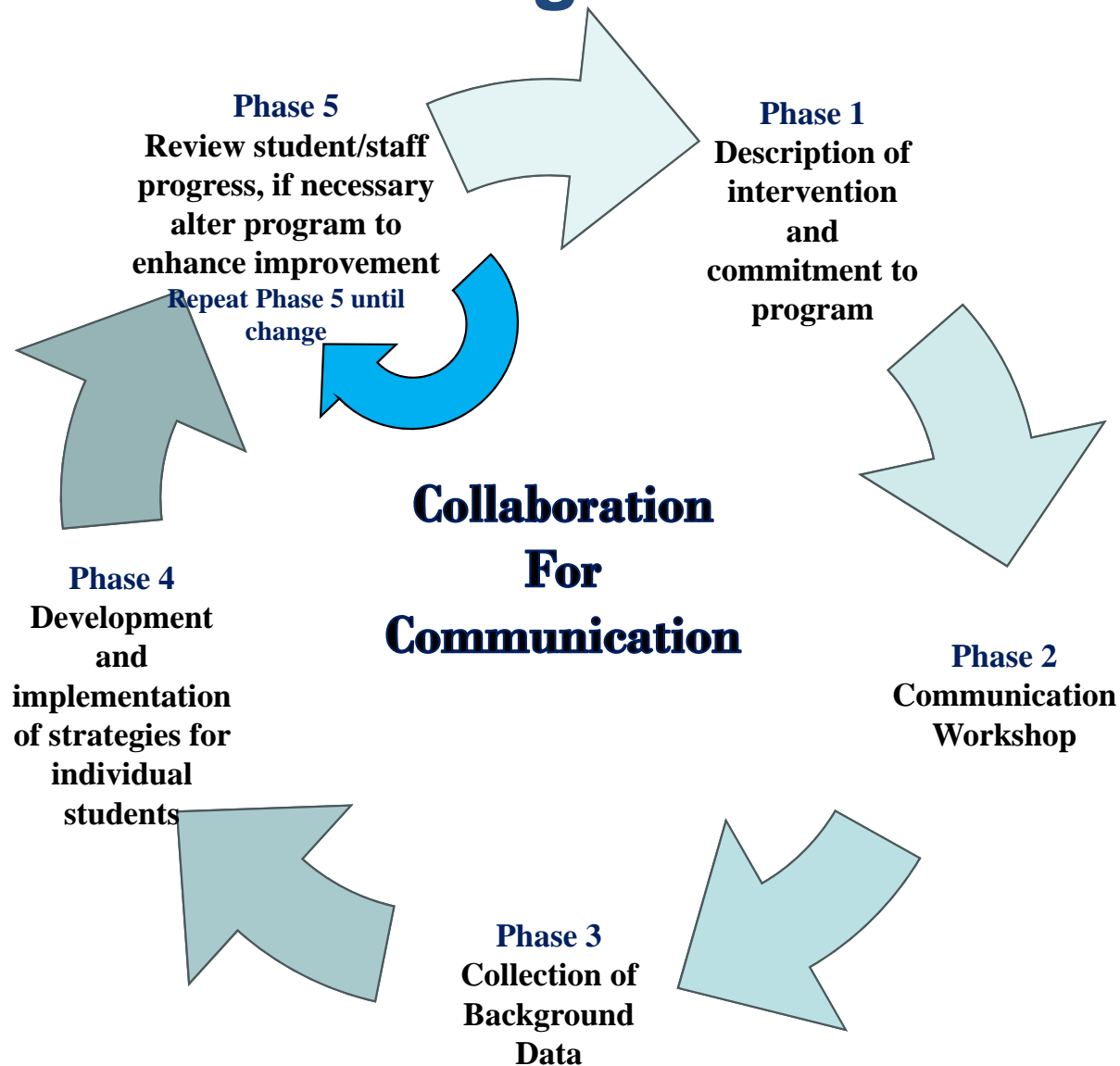
**Bennett , Arthur-Kelly, Foreman, and Neilands**

22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2010

# Aims of the research

- To develop a professional development program which will provide support for communication partners of students with PMID
- Determine if the professional development program results in change for the communication partners and their students
- Determine the characteristics of the reported changes if any

# Collaborative Professional Development Program



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# Participant Sample and Setting

- Four students in three special schools in the Hunter Region NSW Australia.
- Four students integrated into 4 mainstream classes in NSW Australia.
- Eight students; five male and three female. Ages 5-13yrs
- The sixteen communication partners( teachers and aides) of the eight students
- One student per class.

# Instrumentation

- Vineland II Adaptive Behaviour Scale.
- Pre and post self-report questionnaire pertaining to skills, knowledge and concerns (Arthur et al, 2003).
- Observational Data;
  - Behaviour state
  - Communication Indicator
  - Communication Partner
  - Social Context
  - Teacher Interaction
  - Teachers' Aide Interaction
- Procedural Checklist.

# Observer Training

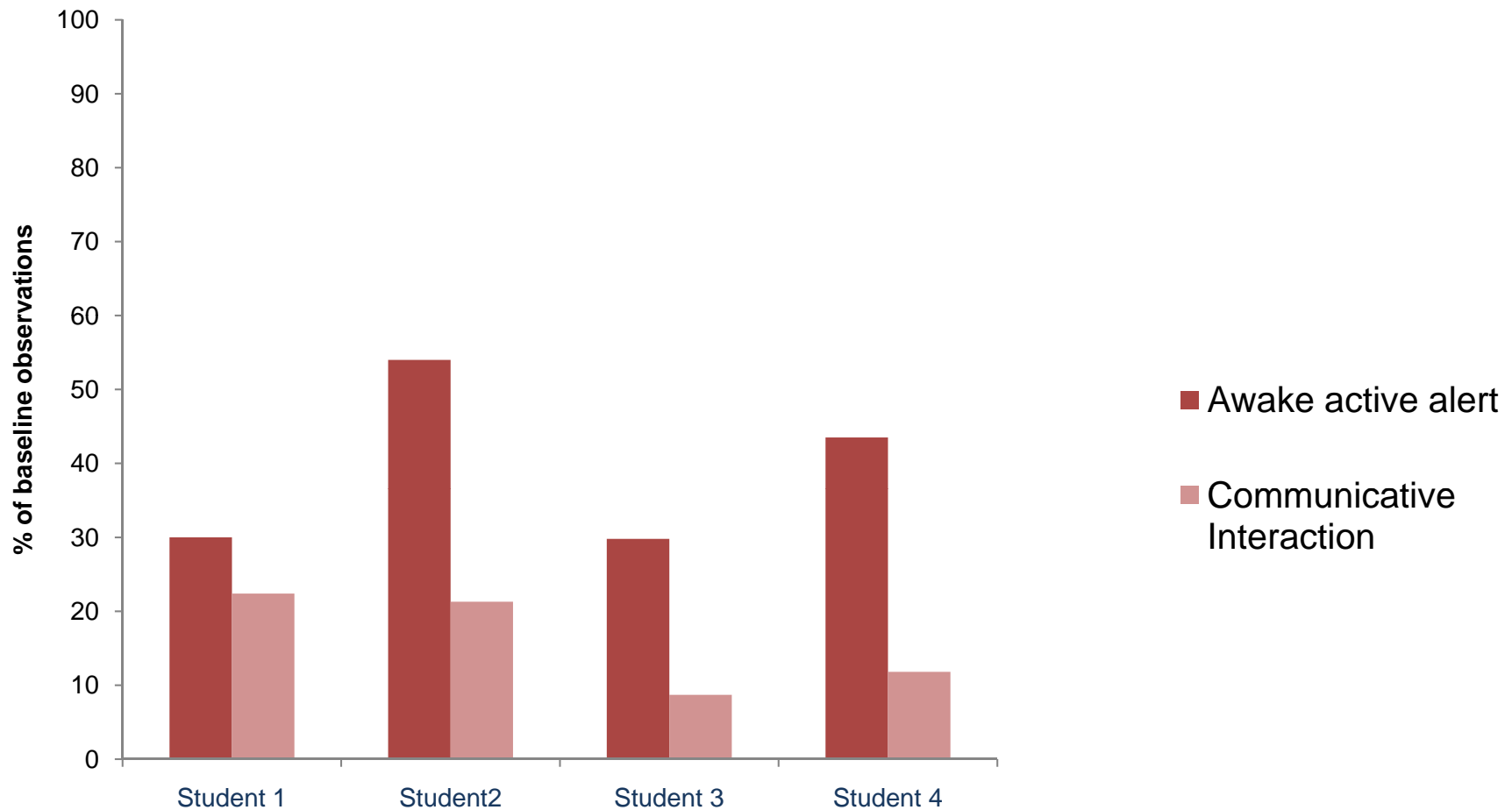
- Eight observers have been trained to collect the observational data. Each observer had 2 training sessions using video footage and scenarios and 3 training sessions in the participating classrooms.
- Observers were required to reach a level of agreement of 80%, over 2 separate training sessions.
- Observer training served to desensitize the participants to the presence of the observers in their classroom, prior to the collection of baseline data.
- The communication strategies in the partner interaction codes were not coded prior to intervention.

# Observations

- A **multiple baseline** approach was used across participants and replicated across settings.
- Two 90 minute Observations per week were taken on students and communication partners to establish a **stable baseline**.
- **During the intervention**, data was collected twice a week for 90 minutes each time.
- The intervention continued **until a change was observed** in the student.
- Once a change occurred with student 1, the **intervention moved** to student 2 and the corresponding partners.
- Post-intervention, **maintenance data** was collected twice a week for two weeks.
- Where possible, two sessions of **follow-up data** were collected.

# Awake active alert and Communicative Interaction Baseline

## Students 1- 4



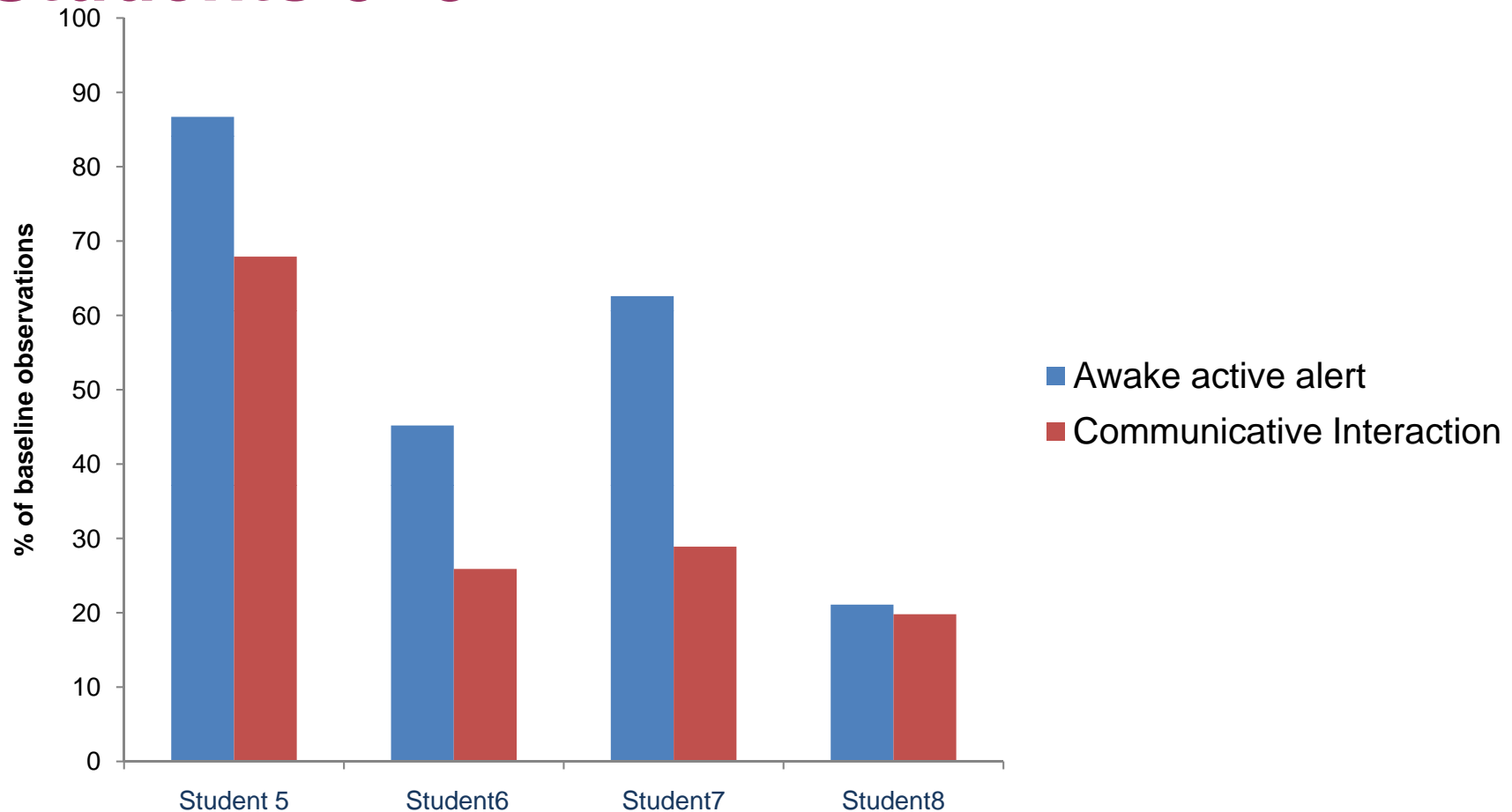
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# Awake active alert and Communicative Interaction Baseline

## Students 5- 8

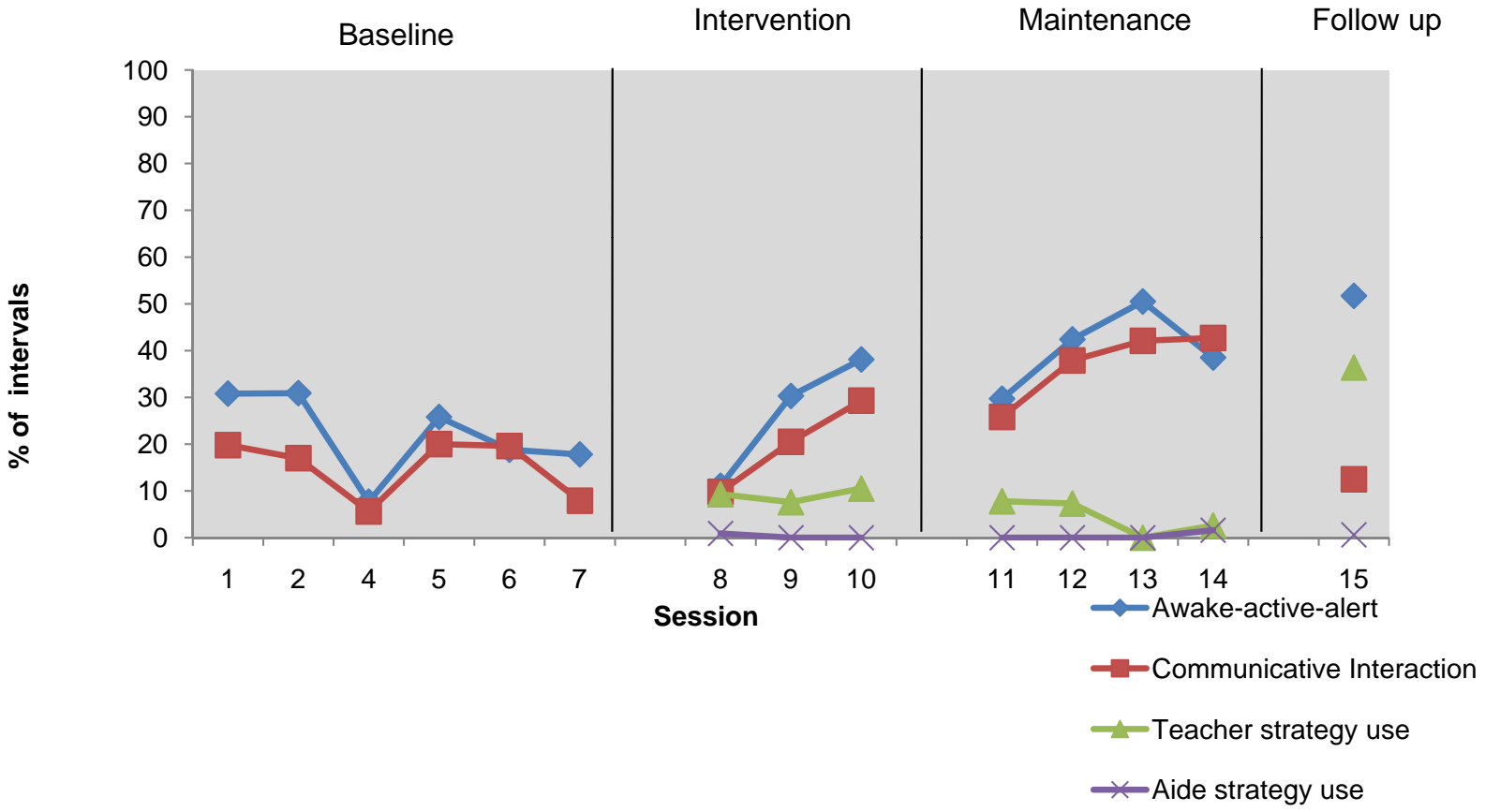


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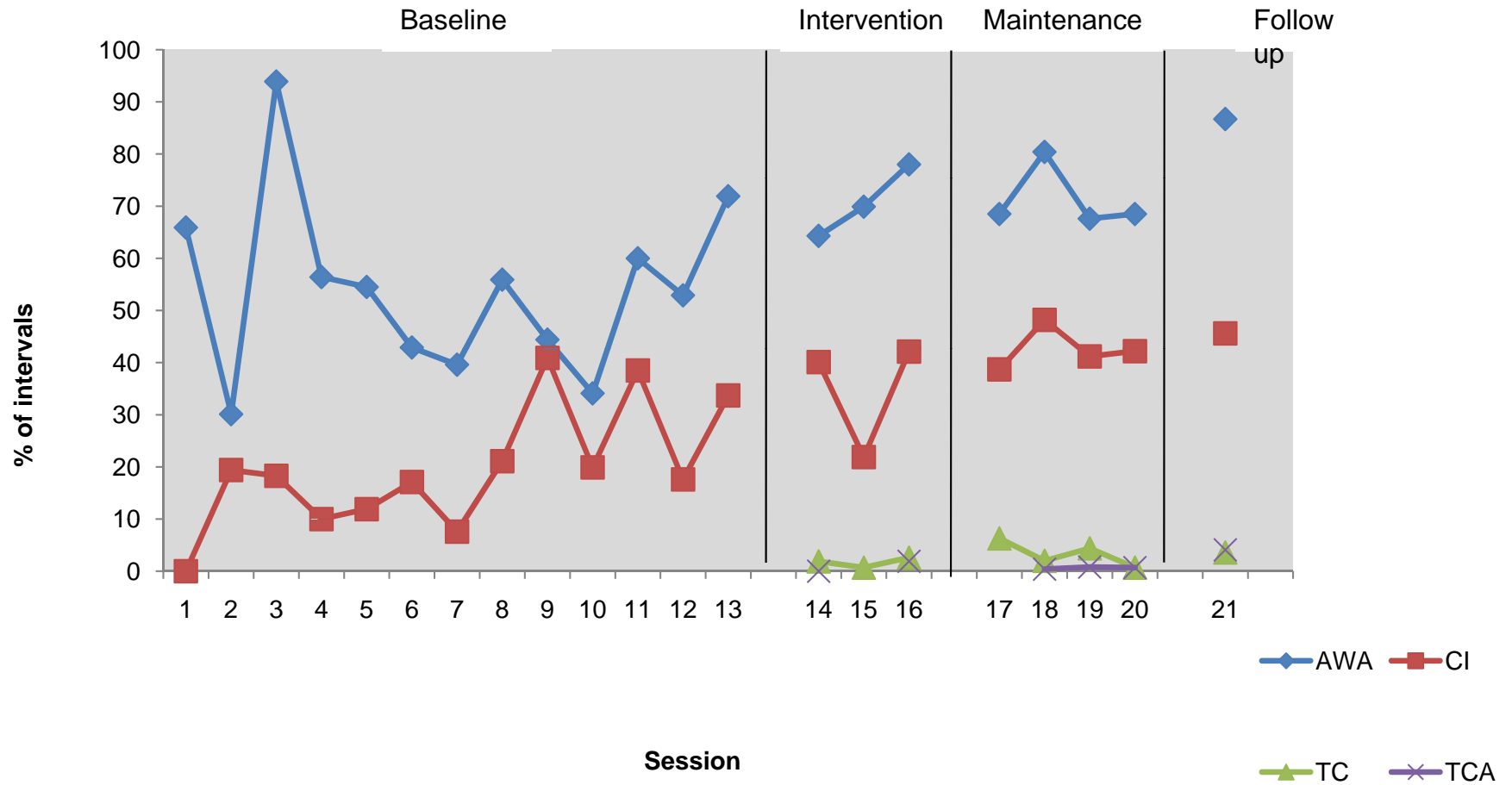
# Data

## Student 1



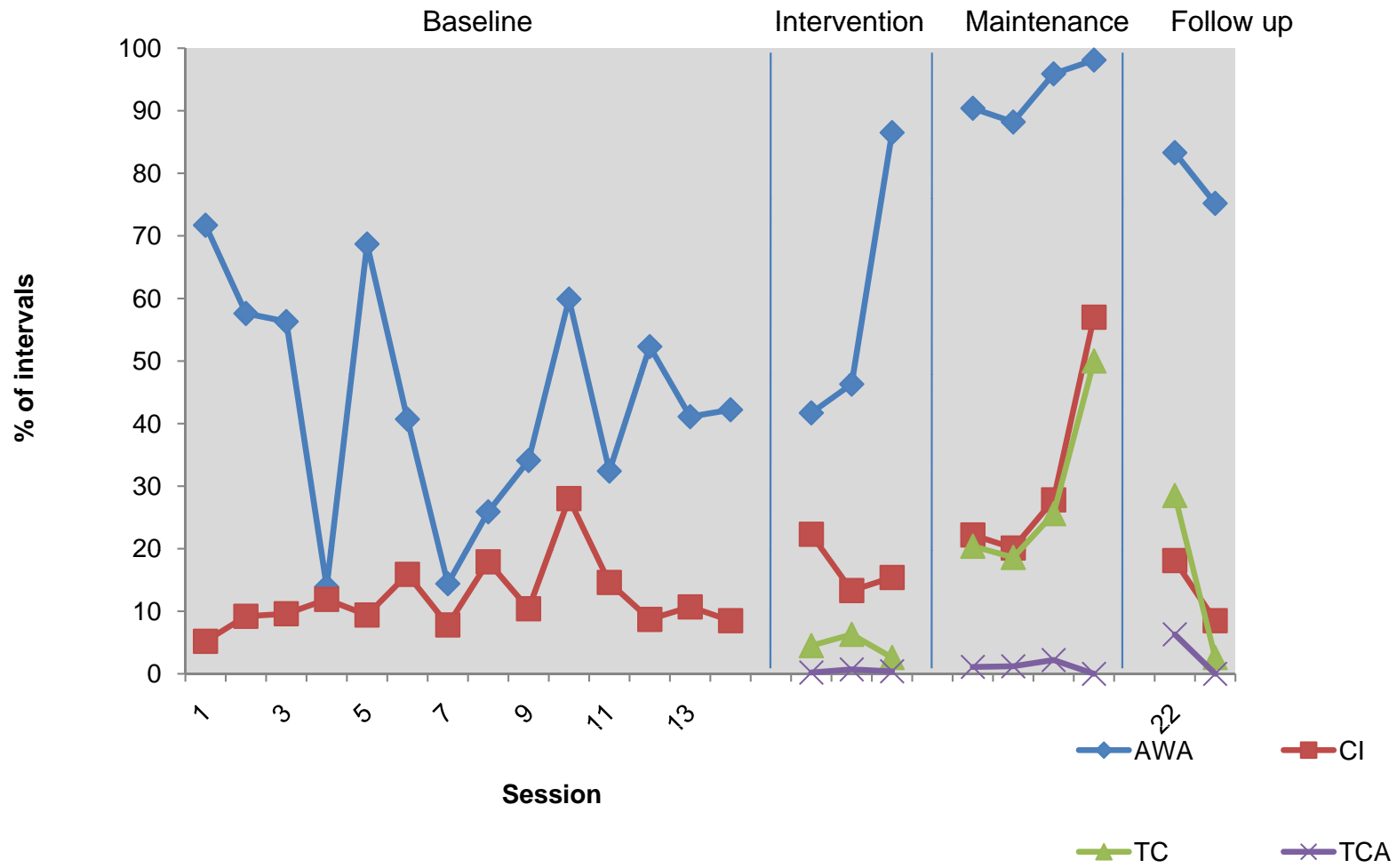
# Data

## Student 2



# Data

## Student 3



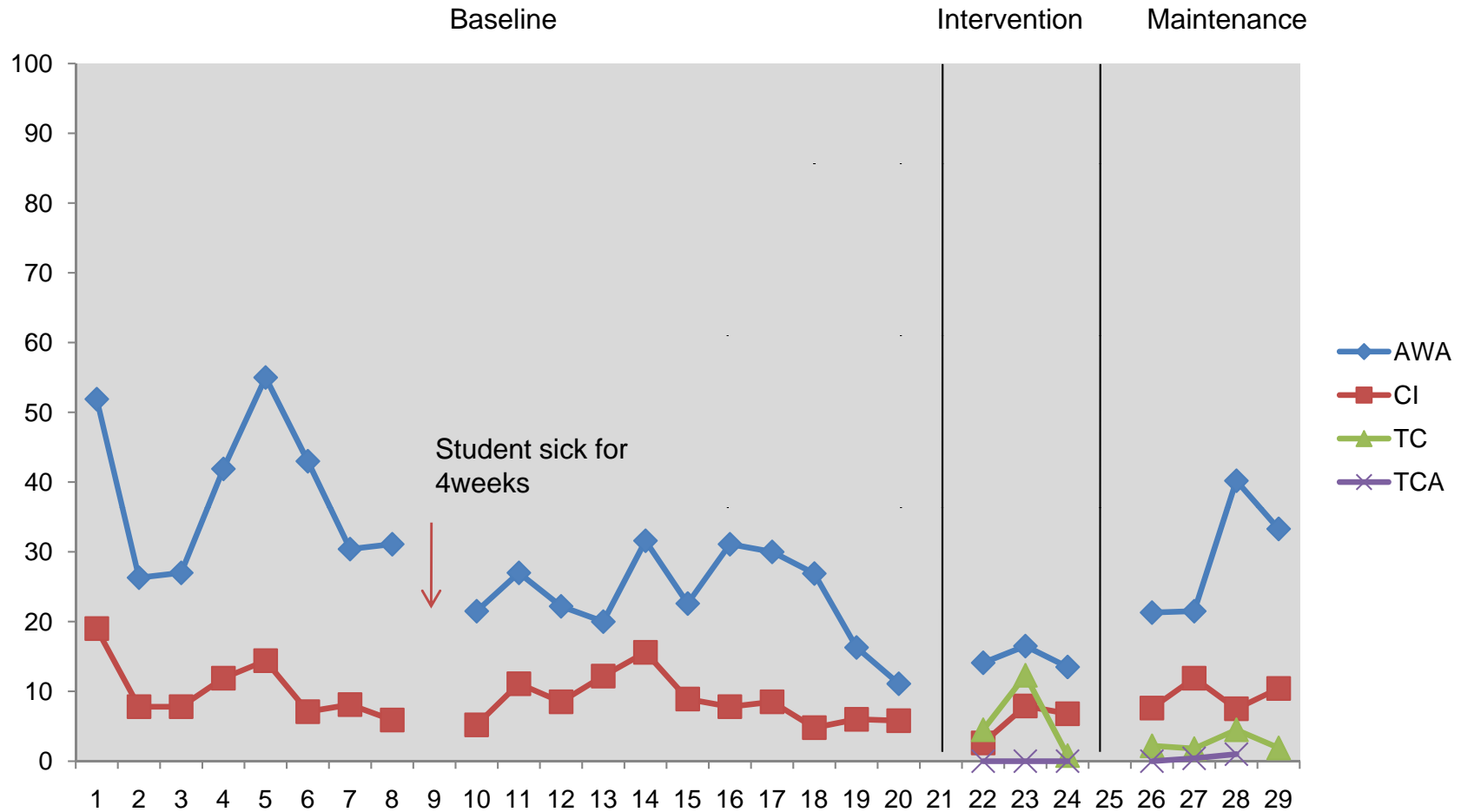
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# Data

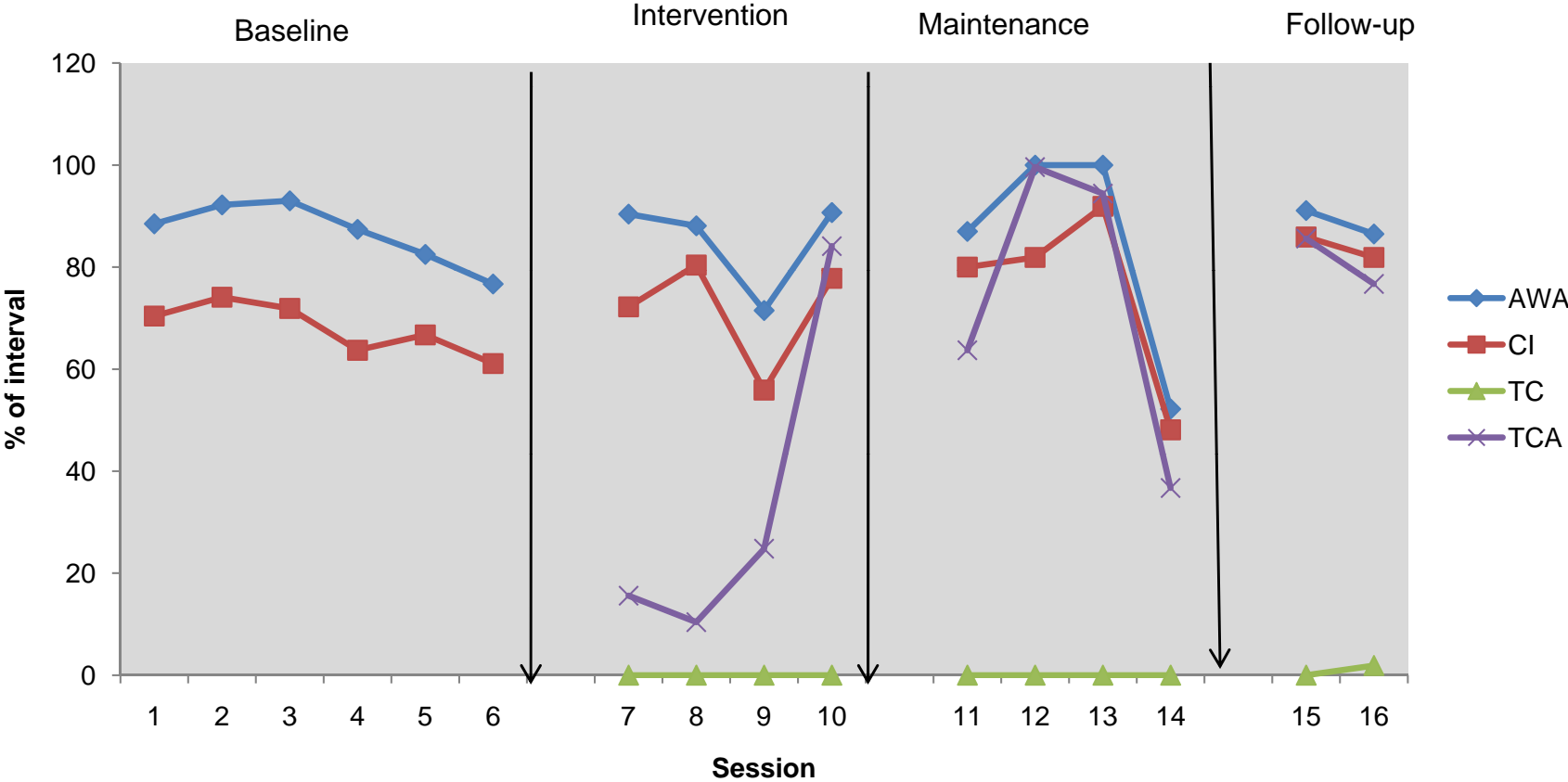
## Student 4



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# Data Student 5

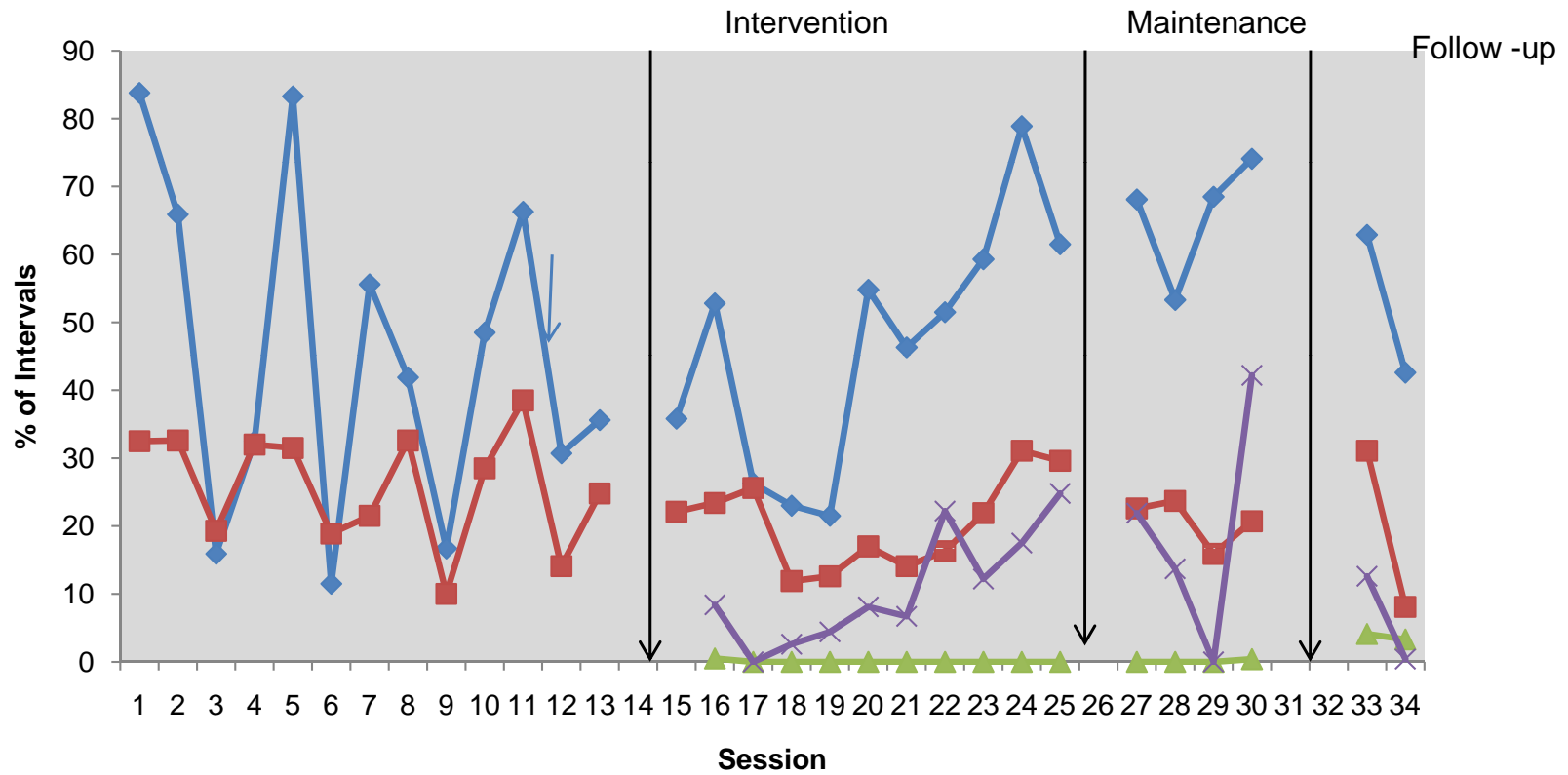


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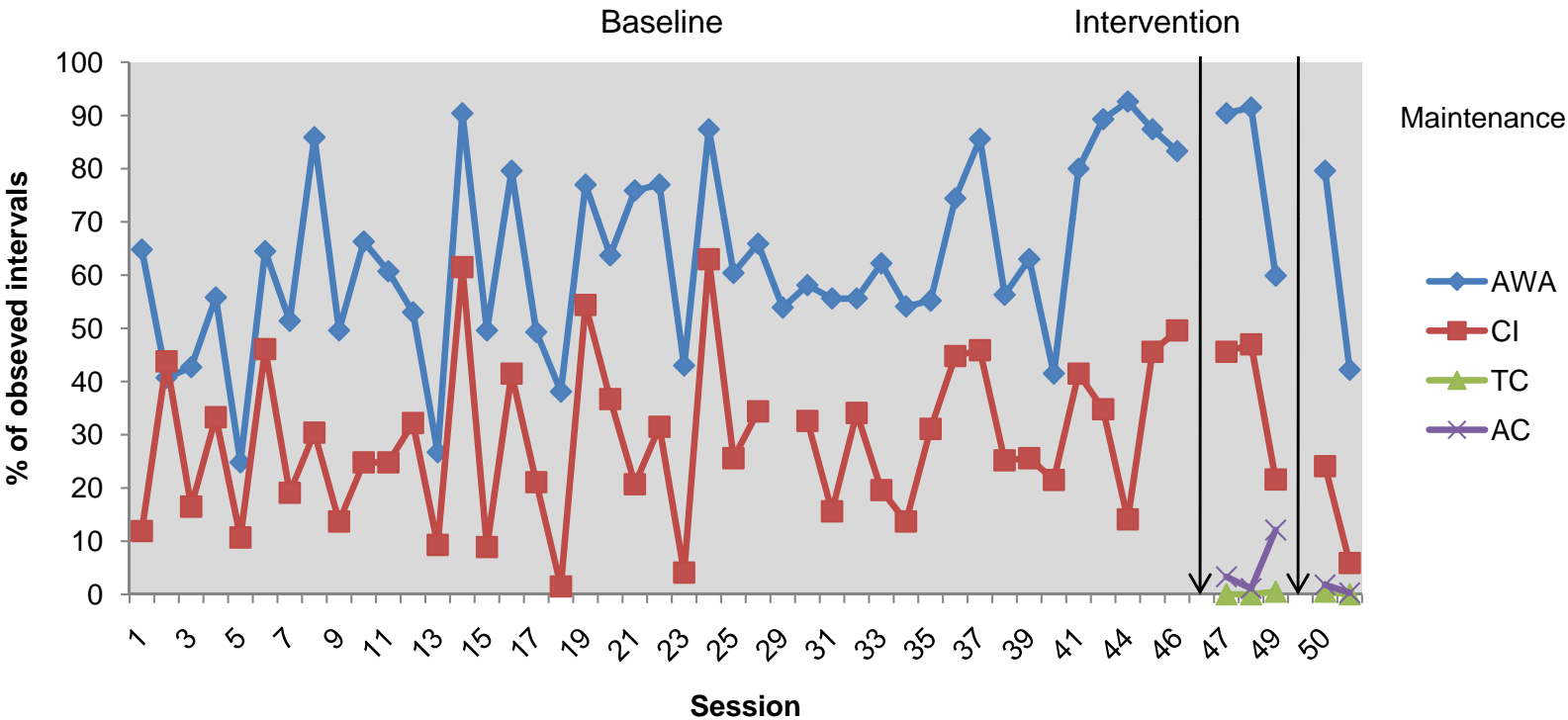
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# Data Student 6



# Data Student 7



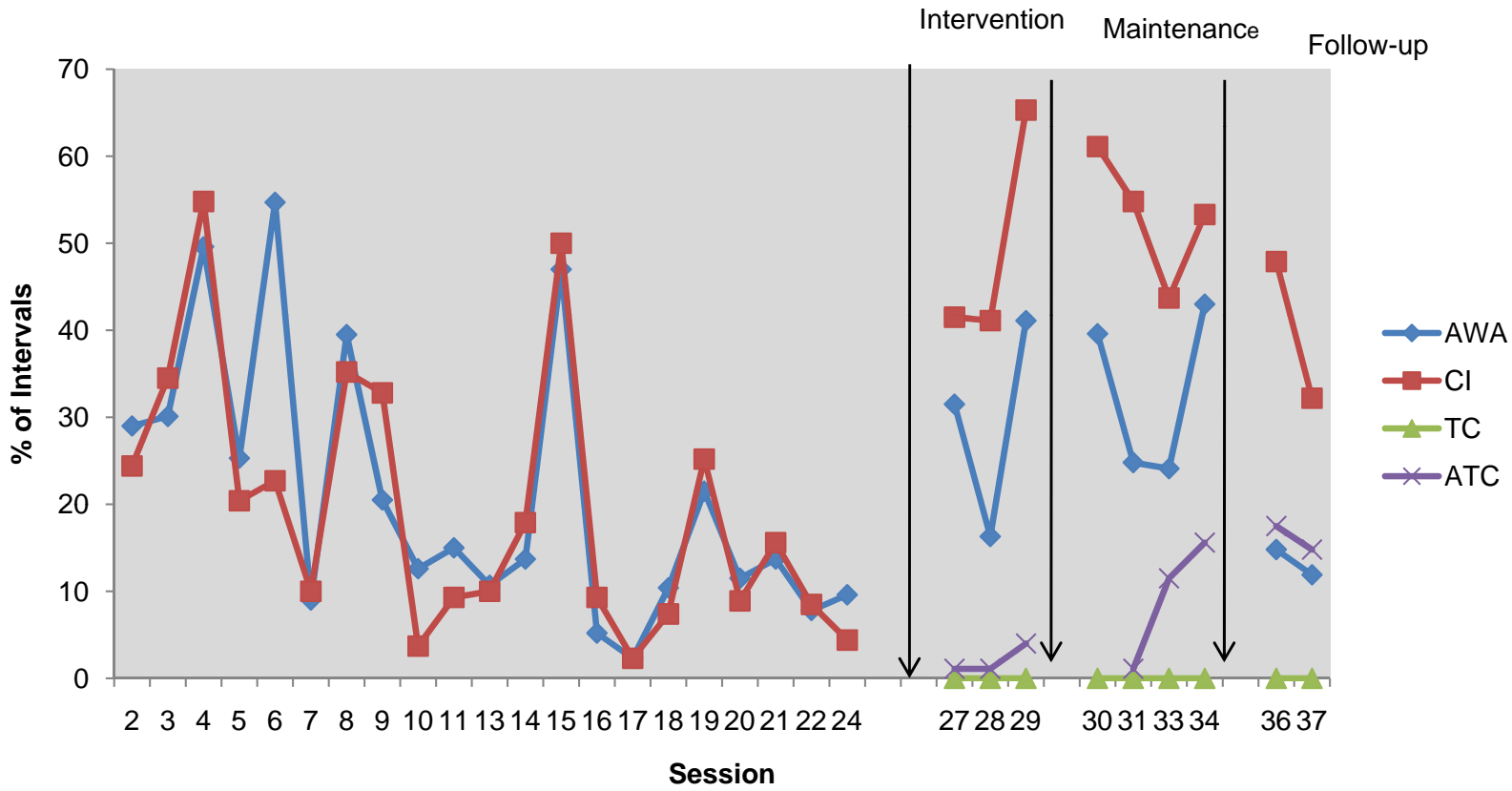
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# Data Student 8



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# Benefits

- Providing the communication partners with relief from teaching duties acknowledged their value and allowed time for concentrated focus on one student and their communicative needs
- Working within the classroom provided all team members with an understanding of the practicalities involved in strategy implementation
- Teachers Aides felt a valuable part of the classroom team.
- All team members were present to commit to the strategies.
- Time to trial and model strategies allowed the classroom staff the opportunity to discuss difficulties
- Developing the resources e.g. photos and board maker symbols

# Results.....

## Anecdotal highlights

- The **relief** for teachers in understanding a way forward for their students
- The **delight** of students when independence was felt
- The use of IPCA as a tool to **focus the team** attention onto the existing communication behaviours and providing clues as to the potential communicative way forward
- The **eagerness** of parents to adapt the strategies in the home.
- The **power of communication!**

# Research Challenges

- Establishing a stable baseline
- Live observational data collection
  - Maintaining the triad
  - Illness of participants
  - Dynamic movements of classes
- Multiple baseline design
- \* Timing of observational sessions