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Shaping Appropriate Social Skills of Multiply Handicapped Children in a Group Learning Situation by Contingent Teacher Attention and Maintaining them with Low Rates of Reinforcement

Mark L. Sundberg
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SHAPING APPROPRIATE SOCIAL SKILLS OF MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN A GROUP LEARNING SITUATION BY CONTINGENT TEACHER ATTENTION AND MAINTAINING THEM WITH LOW RATES OF REINFORCEMENT

by

Mark L. Sundberg

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1976
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Mark L. Sundberg
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER  PAGE
I  INTRODUCTION ........................................ 1
II  METHOD .............................................. 5
      Students ........................................... 5
      Setting ............................................ 6
      Materials ........................................ 6
      Student Behaviors ............................. 6
      Teacher Behaviors ............................. 8
      Observation Procedure ..................... 8
      Experimental Procedure and Design .... 12
III RESULTS ............................................ 15
      Reliability ...................................... 15
      Group Data ..................................... 15
      Individual Data ................................ 20
IV  DISCUSSION ....................................... 25
V   BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................... 30
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM, TABLES, AND FIGURES</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIAGRAM 1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 3</td>
<td>22</td>
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</table>
INTRODUCTION

Educational methods have gone through some major changes since the early days of forced schooling. Teachers are no longer maintaining an abundant supply of hickory sticks in their "learning" corners. Partially due to the development of educational centers and journals (which teachers have used to share their knowledge, experiences, and ideas), new techniques are constantly being explored and presented; and education has continued to mature.

Behavior modifiers have been instrumental in identifying and manipulating the variables which control classroom behavior. They have identified inattention, disruptive behavior, and poor academic performance as being major problems within the classroom. Then, they developed and shared several different methods for the classroom teacher to use in order to ameliorate those problems. Research on the contingent use of teacher attention in a normal classroom setting has provided us with some fundamental aspects of classroom control (Hall, Lund, and Jackson, 1968; Kennedy and Willcut, 1964; Madsen, Becker, and Thomas, 1968; Thomas, Becker, and Armstrong, 1968). All of these investigators have shown us the importance of teacher attention and its influence on student behavior when used contingent on that behavior. Other investigators found the principles to hold for "special" classroom situations as well as regular classrooms (Broden, Bruce, Mitchell, Carter, and Hall, 1970; O'Leary, Kaufman, Kass, and Drabman, 1970). Again, these investigators found the contingent use of
teacher attention to be a very powerful tool in classroom management.

Simultaneously, other investigators were experimenting with and using token economies to shape classroom academic behaviors in groups of retarded students (Birnbrauer, Wolf, Kidder, and Tague, 1965; Zimmerman, Zimmerman, and Russell, 1969), academic and social behaviors in groups of retarded students (Ackerman, 1972; Kaufman and O'Leary, 1972), and academic and social behavior in groups of normal students (Iwata and Bailey, 1974; O'Leary and Drabman, 1971). All these investigators found tokens to be strong tools for shaping and maintaining classroom academic and social behaviors. Group contingencies were also being used to control classroom behaviors--some in the form of games (Barrish, Saunders, and Wolf, 1969; Harris and Sherman, 1973), others in the form of group consequences (Bushell, Wrobel, and Michaelis, 1968; Packard, 1970; Schmidt and Ulrich, 1969). These researchers found classroom behavior could also be controlled using these methods.

All of this research has been instrumental in understanding and developing the variables which control classroom behavior. However, when dealing with groups of retarded students, researchers have relied heavily upon tokens and backup reinforcers. As Iwata and Bailey (1974) pointed out, "... the teacher must continuously rely on the token system for control in the absence of a system of social reinforcers toward which she can fade." The present study is an attempt to shape appropriate social behaviors in retarded students without tokens or backup reinforcers, only teacher attention. The children in the present study were students at the Kalamazoo Valley Multihandicap Center. The Center is designed for children whose severity and

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multiplicity of handicaps preclude them from adequate functioning in other special educational settings. The Center's primary objective is to teach the children the skills necessary to gain entry into the public school's special education sequence. In some cases, the children had the academic skills in their repertoire, but lacked the appropriate social behavior needed for the small group teaching tactic used in a majority of the special education classrooms. One of the Center's most attractive features is the one-to-one therapy which has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are well known, but some disadvantages were discovered in practice. Prior to the study, two children had been screened out of the program into other programs. However, after the follow-up was discontinued, the new teachers reported that the children were very disruptive and inattentive in the classroom. Follow-up was reinstated, and some data were collected. It appeared that the children had become very used to one-to-one therapy; and when forced to share teacher attention, they used every method possible to gain it. The most effective technique was inappropriate behavior since the teachers reprimanded inappropriate social behavior at a much higher rate than praising appropriate social behavior (approximately 80% reprimands to 20% praise). These data are consistent with that reported by Madsen and Madsen (1973) who found that 2500 teachers sampled in the Southeastern United States had an approval ratio of 23.3% for social behavior. (Approval ratio equals number of praises for appropriate social behavior over reprimands and mistaken reinforcement for inappropriate social behavior.)

Thus, the purpose of this study was threefold: first and foremost,
to shape appropriate classroom social behaviors in the children and to maintain them with very little reinforcement; second, to examine what effects reprimands had on student behavior; and third, to see if a combination of reprimands and praise (common to many classrooms) could result in good classroom behavior when reprimands were faded in.
METHOD

Students

Seven students were selected from the Elementary Component at the Kalamazoo Valley Multihandicap Center, six males and one female. The Center is part of the Kalamazoo Valley Intermediate School District and services multiply impaired children up to 25 years of age. These children were chosen because pilot studies and prebaseline observations indicated that a high rate of nonattending accompanied by disruptive behavior occurred when they were involved in group teaching activities. All of the children had well developed verbal repertoires and two or more of the following handicaps: mental retardation; emotional disturbance, cerebral palsy, hearing impairment, vision impairment; speech impairment; or physical impairment. Some of the students had other medically based problems including congenital brain disease, kidney transplant, and agammaglobulinemia. The children ranged in age from 6 years to 13 years, with a mean age of 10.3 years.

The teacher was a graduate student in psychology and had worked part time at the Center for two years prior to the start of the study. He was selected as teacher because of his experience and participation in the pilot studies. He received his regular pay for conducting therapy and three graduate credits in psychology for participation in the study.
Setting

The study took place outside the regular classroom in a carpeted room which was 8.13m x 5.26m x 2.82m with a small observation room in the back (see Diagram 1). There was a Panasonic zoom camera in the back right corner of the classroom which was connected to a Roberts video tape recorder and T.V. receiver. Inside the observation room, the observers collected the appropriate data as they viewed the classroom over the monitor.

Materials

The stimulus cards from the Peabody Language Kit Level #1 were used. These were selected because the pilot studies indicated all the children could and would respond to the cards. There are a total of 440 pictures covering the following areas: activities; animals; clothing; colors; fruits; vegetables; foods; household items; people; toys; and transportation. The cards used were randomly selected each day by the teacher.

Student Behaviors

There were three dependent variables: attending; disruptive behavior; and correct answers. Attending was defined as looking at or having face and body oriented toward the teacher or the child called upon by the teacher. Disruptive behavior was broken down into two categories: major and minor disruptives. The response definitions were similar to those used by Thomas, Becker, and Armstrong.
Briefly, major disruptives were defined as any of the following: **Gross Motor**, e.g., getting out of seat, walking around, rocking chair, moving chair, etc.; **Verbalizations**, e.g., talking out, screaming, yelling, whistling, laughing, etc.; **Aggression**, e.g., hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping, pinching, striking with objects, throwing objects. Minor disruptives were defined as any of the following: **Self Stimulation**, which was defined in a way similar to that of Lovaas, Koegal, Simmons, and Long (1973), e.g., rocking, sucking thumb or fingers, rubbing crotch, legs, or head repeatedly, hitting or slapping self, etc.; **Noise**, kicking or slapping chair, tapping feet, clapping hands, etc. A **Correct Answer** was defined as giving the response that appropriately answered the question asked by the teacher (e.g., Q: "What is this?" A: "Sailboat.").

**Teacher behaviors**

The behaviors of the teacher were in two general classes: reprimands for disruptive behavior and praise for nondisruptive behavior. **Reprimands** consisted of statements, such as, "Sit down," "Be quiet," "Sit still," "Turn around," and physical prompts, such as escorting a child back to his seat and sitting him down. **Praise** consisted of comments, such as, "You're sitting very nicely," or "... looks really good," and physical contact, such as touching, hand slapping, rubbing, tickling, etc.

**Observation procedure**

**Observers.** The observers used were selected because of their
5.26M x 8.13 Metres x 2.82 Metres

DIAGRAM 1
experience in operant psychology and participation in pilot studies. They received their regular pay for conducting therapy if a paid staff member or college credit if they were a non-paid staff member. The observers were trained in a prebaseline period which consisted of 20 sessions. All the observers were given descriptions of all the behaviors they would be recording. There were three primary observers and two reliability observers. The primary observers recorded student attending; disruptive behavior; and during the fading procedure, number of teacher praises and reprimands. The reliability observers checked these behaviors as well as the teacher's own recording of correct and incorrect answers and his use of instructions versus questions.

The sessions occurred at approximately 9:10 each school morning and lasted from 8 to 15 minutes during all phases with the exception of the 100% reprimand phase. Each session consisted of 24 trials. A trial started when the teacher began asking the question and ended upon consequation of a student's response. Each observer had a pre-made data sheet which contained seven rows, one for each child, with columns arranged to produce 24 boxes. At the beginning of each trial, the observers began recording the behaviors as they occurred. For example, an observer recording nonattending behavior would slash (/) the appropriate box if a nonattending behavior occurred for a particular child. Only one instance of the behavior was recorded each trial. Therefore, a behavior could occur several times during a trial but be recorded only once, resulting in a total of 24 possible occurrences of a behavior per student during a session.
This method enabled the observers to immediately record obvious infractions and time to carefully watch for less obvious ones. The teacher consequated student answers equally throughout the study. Correct answers were followed by teacher praise, such as, "That's right," "Very nice answer," etc. Incorrect answers were followed by teacher reprimands, such as, "No," "That's wrong," etc., or verbal prompts that consisted of statements, such as, "Almost, look again," "Not exactly," etc. The teacher recorded all student answers and the consequences delivered on a data sheet similar to the sheets used by the observers. When prompts were required, answers were scored as incorrect. Children were required to raise their hands in order to be called on. In the middle of the study (Session 43), a change was made in the recording of disruptive behavior. The observers were instructed to individually record major and minor disruptive behaviors. This change was the result of the comments made by a teacher from the public school system who came to observe a student in the group for possible placement in her classroom. After observing the session, she told us the group was one of the best behaved groups she had seen. Thus, it appeared that the procedures being used were effective in producing the type of student behaviors desired by a public school teacher; but this was not indicated by the data. Initially, the data on all disruptive behaviors were recorded in one category. When these data failed to show the obvious differences that were observed, the video tapes of the sessions were rescored in order to separate major from minor disruptive behaviors. Thus, change in the recording showed the change in student
behaviors that were obvious to the casual observer. Session 12 was the first to be video taped, and the breakdown begins there. Unfortunately, the data from some of the sessions were unobtainable due to poor video tape quality. Beginning with Session 43, the observers were given the breakdown of the behaviors and began recording them in vivo.

Reliability. Two types of reliability were calculated. The first type was the traditional interval by interval (I-I) method (Bijou, Peterson, and Ault, 1968) in which agreements over agreements plus disagreements resulted in a reliability score. This method was used to obtain scores on student attention, disruption, and correct answers and on teacher questions, instructions, praise, and reprimands. In the second type, not one, but two reliability coefficients were computed: one for occurrence and one for nonoccurrence of the behavior (Bijou, Peterson, and Ault, 1968; Hawkins and Dotson, 1975). For occurrence reliability, all intervals in which neither observer scored the behavior as occurring were ignored in calculating agreement scores. Only an interval in which both observers recorded the presence of the behavior was counted as an agreement. This score is then divided by the sum of agreements plus disagreements to arrive at a reliability score. The same formula was used for nonoccurrences (intervals in which both observers scored the behavior as occurring were ignored). These reliability measures were obtained for attending, total disruptive behaviors, and major disruptive behaviors.
Experimental procedure and design

Pilot studies. There were two structured group periods prior to the present study. Briefly, the first consisted of sessions in which the material was randomly changed from day to day. The purpose of this study was two-fold: first, to determine if the students had group skills (hand raising, attending, responding and being nondisruptive); and second, to determine what method of presentation would be desirable and what material should be used. The second pilot study further manipulated variables such as settings, teachers, time intervals, and consequences, all of which generated the present study. The pilot studies covered a total time period of four months.

Prebaseline. During these sessions, observers were trained; and the students were given time to adjust to the room, teacher, and camera. The teacher was instructed to conduct class in his usual manner and not to attend specifically to social behaviors. These sessions were discontinued following several days of consistently high reliability scores (80% or better) and a consistent level of student behaviors based upon a casual observation.

Design. The experimental design used was a reversal (ABACD) design (Baer, Wolf, and Risley, 1968). The two pilot studies and a prebaseline period described above preceded the present study. The phases were in the following order: baseline; 100% reprimands for disruptive behaviors; return to baseline; social reinforcement in the form of praise for nondisruptive behavior while ignoring any
disruptive behaviors; and finally, the fading in of reprimands for disruptive behavior.

**Baseline I.** During this phase, the teacher was instructed to consequate only academic behaviors. No specific consequences were delivered for social behavior. Twelve sessions provided a baseline for the occurrences of attending and disruptive behaviors as well as the percent of correct answers.

**Reprimand.** The teacher was instructed to continue reinforcing academic behavior and also to reprimand any inappropriate social behavior.

**Baseline II.** All conditions were the same as for Baseline I.

**Teacher praise for nondisruptive.** The conditions remained the same for academic behaviors but again changed for social behaviors. At this point, the teacher was instructed to give social praise for nondisruptive and ignore any disruptive behavior.

**The fading in of reprimands.** The fading procedure occurred in four steps: 20% reprimands—80% praise; 40% reprimands—60% praise; 60% reprimands—40% praise; and 80% reprimands—20% praise. The teacher was instructed to consequate social behavior in approximately the following way: during 20% reprimands, praise, praise, praise, praise, reprimand; during 40% reprimands, praise, reprimand, praise, reprimand, praise; during 60% reprimands, reprimand, praise, reprimand, praise, reprimand, praise, reprimand; during 80% reprimands, reprimand, reprimand, reprimand,
reprimand, reprimand, praise. To signal the teacher when to praise or reprimand, a third observer was placed outside the room behind the group facing the teacher. For this observer, a wireless F.M. receiver and a F.M. radio were used to monitor the session. The observer recorded the number of praise and reprimand statements made by the teacher. A green and a red card were used to signal the teacher as to which consequence to use. Academic behaviors were continuously consequated with teacher praise, prompts, or reprimands.
RESULTS

Reliability

Table 1 shows the mean interobserver reliability for all behaviors observed for each condition. The interval by interval (I-I) scores appear first in each category, followed by scores of occurrences, then nonoccurrences. In column 9, the mean scores for all conditions of each behavior are presented. For attending, the I-I score was 81.2%; occurrences, 54.4%; nonoccurrences, 73.5%. For disruptives, the I-I was 79.4%; occurrences, 70.2%; nonoccurrences, 58.4%. For major disruptives, occurrences were 52.2%; nonoccurrences, 90.7%. For student answers, I-I was 88.6%. For questions versus instructions, I-I was 97.9%. For praise, I-I was 82.3%; and for reprimand, I-I was 87.5%.

Group data

As can be seen from Figure 1, during baseline attending behavior fluctuated with a mean of 63.2% and a range of 45% to 70%. The mean for total disruptive behavior was 57.8%, and the range was 40.5% to 75%. Only one session of the major/minor disruptive was recorded during this phase and resulted in 34% major disruptives with minor disruptives occurring during 24% of the trials. For correct answers, the mean was 75.8% with a range of 58% to 91%. The time required to complete the trials ranged from 8 to 15 minutes.

The introduction of reprimands produced some noticeable changes
Table 1
Interobserver Reliability

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student Behaviors</th>
<th>100% Baseline (1)</th>
<th>100% Baseline II (3)</th>
<th>Praise for Appropriate Behavior (4)</th>
<th>20% Reprimand (5)</th>
<th>40% Reprimand (6)</th>
<th>60% Reprimand (7)</th>
<th>80% Reprimand (8)</th>
<th>Total N=X (9) (10)</th>
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in the students' behavior. Initially, the reprimands maintained fairly good social behavior (Sessions 13 and 14) but continued use of reprimands resulted in a rapid drop in attending, down to 10% on Session 17. Major disruptives increased to 61.5%, making up the majority of the total disruptives scored (88%). Minor disruptives fell to 26.5%. Correct answers dropped to 56%. The last session of the phase (Session 17) was terminated at Trial 21 due to excessive disruptive behavior (kicking and pushing the teacher, hair pulling, running out of the room, etc.). The whole phase was terminated at this point, feeling the data were an accurate measure of the effects of reprimands. (Anecdotally, the following morning one of the mothers came in and reported that her child was extensively reprimanding her younger brother. She was shown the video tape of the session.) In addition, the length of the sessions required to complete the trials increased to 60 minutes with a mean of approximately 35 minutes for the five sessions.

A return to baseline followed, and social behavior returned to approximately Baseline I level. Session length also returned to its Baseline I level and remained there throughout the rest of the study.

Praise for nondisruptives produced some unexpected results. Namely, it did not appear to be reducing total disruptive behavior; but attending increased slightly after an initial decrease. Attending rose steadily with a mean of 58% and a range of 24% to 80%. Correct answers remained about the same with a mean of 78% and a range of 62% to 91%. Disruptives increased slightly and had a mean of 65.6% and a range of 58% to 82%. Major disruptives fell considerably during
this phase. The mean was 18.7%, and the range was 4% to 36%. Minor disruptives accounted for the overall increase in total disruptives by increasing to a mean of 46.1% with a range of 30% to 62%.

The fading in of reprimands began at Session 48 and lasted five sessions per step. Attending increased stepwise from a mean of 75.4% during the 20% reprimands step to a mean of 90.4% during the 80% step. Total disruptives dropped from a mean of 58% during the 20% step to 35.8% during the 80% step. Major disruptives fell from a mean of 11.4% during the 20% step to a mean of 8.2% during the 80% step. Minor disruptives dropped from a mean of 45.6% during the 20% step to a mean of 27.2% during the 80% step. Correct answers fell slightly from a mean of 84.4% during the 20% step to a mean of 81.6% during the 80% step.

The group data indicated that reprimands alone increased inappropriate social behavior, whereas praise alone resulted in moderately appropriate social behavior. However, a combination of praise and reprimands accomplished by fading in the reprimands produced an increase in appropriate classroom social behaviors. The actual percentages of reprimands reported by the third observer during the fading phase were 18.3%, 37.0%, 54.8%, and 72.1% respectively.

Individual data

The data for all seven of the students are accurately represented by the group means. Two of the students exhibited behavior that differed slightly from the group, and these data are presented in Figures 2 and 3. Student seven's data (Figure 2) differed from the
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others in that his major disruptive behavior increased during the first three steps of the fading phase and decreased again during the final step of the fading phase. The initial increase was comparable to that observed for this student during the 100% reprimand phase with the decrease during the final step of the fading, bringing this student's major disruptives down to the group's mean for this step. His increase in major disruptive behavior plus a consistently high level of minor disruptives resulted in his level of total disruptives remaining above that for the group's mean. However, his level of attending and correct answers roughly matched those of the group's means.

Student one's data are also presented individually (Figure 3). This student was unanimously chosen (by the observers and the data) as the most disruptive and inattentive student in the group. The breakdown of major and minor disruptives made this distinction very obvious in his case, as was his increase in attending from the praise phase through the fading phase. He exhibited a high rate of disruptive behavior through Baseline I, even higher during 100% reprimands, with it dropping slightly back down during Baseline II. The major disruptives began to decrease during the praise phase and continued to decrease throughout the fading phases. Attending was low during Baseline I but dropped even further during reprimands. Baseline II was similar to Baseline I; but during the praise phase, attending began to increase and continued to climb throughout the fading phase. During Baseline I, 100% reprimands, Baseline II, and the first part of the praise phase, major disruptives made up the majority of total
disruptive behavior. Major disruptives began to fall during the praise phase and continued to fall throughout the fading phase. Minor disruptives initially increased as majors decreased but then steadily decreased through the fading steps. This student's correct answers fluctuated widely throughout the study with the lower level of the infractions increasing slightly during the fading phase.

The overall individual data were very well represented by the group means. All the children's attention dropped, and disruptives rose during the 100% reprimand phase. This reversed during the fading phase: attending rose and disruptives fell.
DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates an effective method for teaching children to behave appropriately in a classroom with minimal reinforcers. The study also demonstrates that reprimands alone increased inappropriate social behavior in a classroom setting. These results concur with those presented by Thomas, Becker, and Armstrong (1968). Finally, the study showed that fading in reprimands to a combination of praise and reprimand consequences for social behavior can be effective for classroom control.

The data indicated that group skills could be shaped using only the social consequences delivered by the teacher. This method is economical in that only one teacher is needed and tokens or backup reinforcers are nonexistent. Not utilizing tokens was especially important in that most of the students studied were transferred to classrooms where this method was not used. In this case, to have shaped the students' behavior with the use of tokens would probably have been a mistake.

The use of the ABACD reversal design showed experimental control over the dependent variables. When baseline conditions were reinstated, all behaviors returned to approximately the Baseline I levels. When praise was applied, there was an initial decrease in attending; but it climbed to a steady high rate. Also, during the praise phase, a clear split appeared in the major and minor disruptives, with major disruptives dropping to an extremely low rate.
Each increment of reprimands in the fading phase showed an increase in attending and a decrease in minor disruptives while maintaining the low rates in major disruptives. It should be noted that attending was at a steady level during the last three days of each step, then increased with the introduction of the new step. This shows that this phase was an effective method to fade out the praise and increase the reprimands without losing the low rates of major disruptives obtained with praise. It could be argued that the classroom situation itself was responsible for the skills obtained; however, it would seem that there would have been some behavior change during the pilot studies, prebaseline, and first baseline conditions which consumed approximately 67% of the school year. There was no major change in the social behavior of the students until the 100% reprimand phase.

A modeling effect appeared after the 100% reprimand phase. The students were reprimanding each other for inappropriate behaviors, which resulted in more disruptive behavior during the first few sessions of the praise phase. This behavior by the students further supports the notion of eliminating aversive control from the classroom. The authors do not recommend total usage of reprimands as tools of behavior control. We would much rather see the classroom totally void of any type of "hickory sticks." The data supporting usage of positive methods in the classroom are abundant although slow in reaching their target--the teachers.

Of the seven students to participate in the group, four were immediately placed in other schools. Two children went to classrooms
for the educable mentally impaired, one went to a classroom for the trainable mentally impaired, and the other went to a school for the physically impaired. One child was adopted and moved to another city, where he was accepted in a classroom for the educable mentally impaired; and the two other children were scheduled for educational planning and placement meetings in order to evaluate their progress and assess their potential in the special education sequence.

There are some supplemental data which warrant comment. First, the amount of time for the duration of the sessions remained approximately the same throughout all phases (8-15 minutes) except for the 100% reprimand phase. During this phase, the sessions went from 15 minutes to 60 minutes in duration because of the high occurrences of disruptive classroom behavior (the mean duration for the five sessions was approximately 35 minutes). Session 17 was terminated at Trial 21 after 60 minutes of running, kicking, and total loss of teacher control. The data obtained from the first two days of the 100% reprimand phase indicated that reprimands will suppress behavior initially and possibly become reinforcing for the teacher to use, although continual usage results in poor classroom control because of the attention a child receives from the many threats by the teacher which are never followed up.

Correct answers remained approximately the same throughout the entire study, although attending fluctuated to a great degree. This is consistent to the results found by Ferritor, Buckholdt, Hamblin, and Smith (1972). They found academic contingencies that increased attention and reduced disruptions did not necessarily increase
student performance. They also found that contingencies for attending alone increased attending and decreased disruptives. The present study found the converse of this to be true, i.e., contingencies for disruptive behavior decreased disruptives as well as increased attention. This shows that it is possible for a desired nontarget behavior to increase by reinforcement of a related target behavior. Further supplemental data show hand raising skills can be taught simply by initial prompting, i.e., "Raise your hand," and consistently calling on only those children who have raised their hands. The prompts can be faded out, and the teacher simply continues being consistent. There were no conclusive results obtained from the instructions versus questions data that were collected. It appeared students responded equally well under all conditions.

The percentage of attending was somewhat higher during the last fading step (90.4%) than the average rate (80%) reported by Madsen and Madsen (1973) for normal classrooms. Thus, it appeared that a combination of praise and reprimands will produce more attention and less disruptive behavior at least in multiply handicapped students.

The present study investigated the effect that teachers have on their students and methods which can help the teacher develop instructional control in the classroom. It also has demonstrated that multiply handicapped students can be taught the social skills necessary for a group learning situation without the use of primary reinforcers, tokens, or physical punishment.

It is important to again note that the authors do not recommend the procedure of fading in reprimands as a general teaching tactic.
In this setting, students experience almost totally one-to-one behavioral interventions, whereas most classroom settings require students to maintain acceptable social and academic behavior in group teaching situations. The abrupt shift from one-to-one to group situation had resulted in some of our clients being referred to the Center for further training. Since the normative data (Madsen and Madsen, 1973), as well as informal observations of the classrooms these students would be going to, indicated that most teachers currently use about 80% reprimands and only 20% praise, we decided that training our clients to survive in these classrooms was an immediate problem to be solved for their sake. Recent observations indicate that of the five children placed in other classrooms all are progressing to their teachers' satisfaction.
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