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A Survey of Strategies Used by Public School Teachers in Clark County, Illinois to Decrease Unacceptable Behaviors in Elementary School Children

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A Survey of Strategies Used by Public School
Teachers in Clark County, Illinois to Decrease
Unacceptable Behaviors in Elementary School Children
(TITLE)

BY

Cheryl D. Thompson

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in Education
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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Abstract

Teachers are presented with the task of classroom behavior management day after day. Teachers must have a broad repertoire of strategies for controlling behaviors they deem undesirable. The purpose of this study is to investigate teacher reported strategies for increasing or decreasing behaviors. It is the intent of this study to present these strategies to others for the purpose of increasing their repertoire and possibly aiding in classroom behavior management. The procedure for determining the strategies that the public school teachers say they use with given behaviors was a survey. This survey was piloted on public school teachers in Mattoon, Illinois. The survey was distributed to teachers through their school mailboxes. The subjects for this study were public school teachers, grades one through six including Special Education, from schools in Clark County, Illinois. The number of subjects that the survey was distributed to was 80. Analysis of the data includes a frequency count and crosstabulations. These analyses are intended to show if there is a difference in the type of strategies chosen between grades and sex, and, if there is a difference, if the difference is significant.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family and to those special friends, Jean, Kelly, Marsha, and Karol, who gave me help and support throughout this study.

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A Survey of Strategies Used by Public School
Teachers in Clark County, Illinois to Decrease
Unacceptable Behaviors in Elementary School Children

A person's behavior has been classified into two categories: respondent (unlearned) and operant (learned) (Blackham & Silberman, 1975). Some behaviors are acceptable, and some behaviors are unacceptable to teachers. When students exhibit unacceptable behaviors, teachers must use strategies to change or decrease those unacceptable behaviors. If unacceptable behaviors are allowed to continue, classroom control becomes harder and harder to maintain. For this reason, teachers must examine their methods of classroom management and develop ways of controlling student behaviors. The behaviors discussed in this paper are: showing off, clowning, vandalism, "I can't" attitude, tattling, swearing, telling bizarre stories, rushing through work just to get finished, cheating, picking on others, arguing, lying, stealing, laughing when others are in trouble, criticizing the work of others, name-calling, fighting, breaking the rules of games, students not doing their homework, and students tearing up assigned work or refusing to do work. Definitions of these behaviors are not provided so as not to bias the interpretations made by the teachers.

There are many reasons why students exhibit the behaviors they do. According to Collins & Collins (1975) many times students will exhibit unacceptable behaviors as a way of obtaining attention. Showing off is one way every child

tries to seek attention. Every child does so at one time or another (Collins & Collins, 1975). When showing off is ignored, the behavior will greatly decrease (Benson, 1969; Blackham & Silberman, 1980; Brown, 1971; Clarizio, 1971; Collins & Collins, 1975; de Zafra, Mitchell, & Berndt, 1963). When ignoring does not decrease the behavior, time out, "the removal of an individual for a short period of time from a reinforcing situation to decrease or eliminate an undesirable behavior" (Benson, 1969, p. 69), should be utilized. This is due to the fact that placing a student away from others where the behavior is not only ignored but is also not seen will decrease the behavior (Blackham & Silberman, 1980; Lockabitch, 1979; Mikulas, 1972). Placing a student in time out away from an audience will greatly decrease showing off behavior more so than just using verbal reprimands (Buckley & Walker, 1970; Levitt, 1963; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Zimmerman & Zimmerman, 1966). When placing a student in time out is undesirable, placing them in a place that is still away from others, such as a study carrel, will still eliminate an audience and reduce the behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Daley, 1969; Lockabitch, 1979).

Clowning around in the classroom is often a student's way of trying to get attention. If the student receives the wanted attention, the behavior will increase; however, if the behavior is ignored, it will decrease (Swift & Spivack, 1975; Zimmerman & Zimmerman, 1966). Sometimes a teacher will ignore a student's clowning behavior, but the other

students will not do so. They are still attending to the clowning behavior. Placing a student in time out will take away the reinforcement of the audience and therefore reduce the clowning behavior (Swift & Spivack, 1975). When the class clown first emerges on the scene, or if the class clown is rarely seen, proximity control can reduce the behavior. Walking into the area of the clown or placing a hand on the clown's shoulder might be enough (Swift & Spivack, 1975).

Vandalism, writing graffiti, and general property destruction are other ways in which a student can seek attention. It has been suggested that swift action should be taken in order to combat this type of problem. Collins & Collins (1975) suggest placing a fine on the student, such as assigning extra work. When graffiti are the major problem, the use of a "graffiti board", a place where students can write all they like, can be helpful according to Collins & Collins (1975).

When a student says "I can't" and asks for help, the student may really need help. Sometimes, however, the student is trying to get attention and sympathy according to Collins & Collins (1975). In this case planned ignoring of the behavior can reduce it (Buckley & Walker, 1970; Collins & Collins, 1975; O'Leary, Becker, Evans, & Saudargas, 1969; Walker, 1979; Zimmerman & Zimmerman, 1966). Madsen, Becker, & Thomas (1968) conducted a study to test the effect of ignoring on control of classroom behaviors. Teachers

were instructed to ignore certain classroom behaviors. Results showed that ignoring can reduce the "I can't" behavior.

In the case of a student who is afraid to try his/her work for fear of being wrong, praise for any independent school work that is done should be applied (Collins & Collins, 1975). Contracting for a certain amount of work to be done can help to eliminate the "I can't" syndrome (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Collins & Collins, 1975; Homme, Csanyi, Gonzales, & Rechs, 1969; Homme & Tosti, 1971).

According to Collins & Collins (1975) tattling is common among younger students. It is another behavior used as an attention getter. The persistent tattler will stop at nothing to get this attention. If punishment is meted out along the way, the persistent tattler sees it as a small price to pay for the attention received (Collins & Collins, 1975). Role playing a situation that involves tattling gives the student a chance to see his/her own behavior in a new light (Collins & Collins, 1975; Glasser, 1965; Kerr & Nelson, 1983). In some mild cases of tattling behavior, peer modeling of nontattling behavior might reduce tattling (Collins & Collins, 1975; Kerr & Nelson, 1983; Knoblock, 1968; Patterson, 1965; Swift & Spivack, 1975). In the case of persistent tattlers, peer modeling may need a little help to decrease the behavior (Collins & Collins, 1975). Contracting is widely used with a variety of behaviors. Tattling behavior could be reduced through the use of contracts (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Knoblock, 1968;

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Swift & Spivack, 1975; Ullman & Krasner, 1965; Walker, 1979).

Blackham & Silberman (1975) suggest that swearing is usually an attention seeking behavior because it makes children feel important. In the literature the most commonly reported method of eliminating swearing is ignoring the behavior. If it is ignored, the reason for swearing, attention, is not achieved and the swearing is discontinued (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Collins & Collins, 1975). However, ignoring works only if everyone ignores the behavior. In the classroom, other students may not be able to ignore the behavior. Time out has been found to be an effective method of cutting down on the swearing behavior. Placing the student in time out removes all possibilities for attention (Bijou, Birnbrauer, Kidder, & Tague, 1967; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Burchard & Barrera, 1972; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Walker, Mattson, & Buckley, 1969). In cases where the swearing behavior has just started or is not very severe, proximity control can work to decrease the behavior. The teacher just walks over to the student at the time the swearing occurs, letting the child know that the behavior is unacceptable (Reinert, 1980).

Attention seeking is not the only reason a student might exhibit unacceptable behavior. Sometimes in an effort to avoid reality, unacceptable behavior occurs. Telling bizarre stories is typically used as a way of avoiding reality (Collins & Collins, 1975). Bijou (1966), Ayllon & Michael (1959), and Blackham & Silberman (1980) have stated

that if these stories are ignored when students tell them, the occurrence of these stories will be reduced. When the student finds that no one else is listening to the stories, he/she will tire of telling them. Buckley & Walker (1970), Walker (1979), and Zimmerman & Zimmerman (1966) have stated that if ignored, the behavior will decrease and, over a period of time, will disappear completely.

Glasser (1965) stated that conversation with a person who tells bizarre stories should be steered so that one can ask for proof of the story and ask why the story was told. When the person telling the stories is confronted with these questions and must think about the answers, the person can then try to understand why he/she is telling the stories and hopefully decrease the behavior. Buckley & Walker (1970), Ullman & Krasner (1965), and Walker (1979) agree with Glasser on this strategy.

Some behaviors occur more often than others. To praise accuracy and neatness instead of speed often will help a student to see that rushing through work just to get finished is often not to their advantage. It can help students to see that even though it is important to finish work on time, it is also important to do that work so that others can read it so that extra work will not be necessary (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Reinert, 1980; Walker, 1979; Zimmerman & Zimmerman, 1962).

In the case of a student rushing through work just to get finished, if the work the student is attempting to do is

appropriate for that student, then setting up a contract which has the student doing a certain amount of work in a certain amount of time may help to reduce the behavior. It would be important to remember that if the contract is fulfilled, the student would then receive a reward in return (Addison & Homme, 1966; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Homme, Csanyi, Gonzales, & Rechts, 1969; Lovitt, Guppy, & Blattner, 1969; Williams, Long, & Yoakley, 1972).

Reinert (1980) suggests that students are greatly influenced by their peers. To cut down on rushed work, peer inspection can be used. Having a student check another student's work tends to cut down on messy and rushed work (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Reinert, 1980; Walker, 1979).

Cheating is another behavior that occurs often. "It is a product of pressure" (Collins & Collins, 1975, p. 45). The use of alternate versions of a test and giving oral tests make it difficult for a student to cheat (Buckley & Walker, 1970; Collins & Collins, 1975; Walker, 1979). Another way of making it difficult for students to cheat is by using study carrels (Tyler, 1965; Wahler, 1969; Walker, 1979).

Picking on others is a common event among children. Unless the behavior is stopped, it could carry over into adulthood and be a serious problem. The use of simple proximity control can reduce the behavior if used in the "initial stage" (Collins & Collins, 1975). Placing a student in time out serves to isolate him/her from other students

and cut down on the behavior (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Collins & Collins, 1975; Tyler & Brown, 1967). Wahler (1969) conducted a study with two children and their parents. The children had been referred by their parents because of oppositional behavior. One of the specific behaviors exhibited by the children was hitting and picking on others. Parents were instructed in how to use time out when their children exhibited these behaviors. Children were isolated in their bedrooms by their parents after the occurrence of undesirable behaviors. Results indicated that the use of time out as a means of reducing types of oppositional behavior tended to not only decrease the oppositional behaviors, but also tended to increase social approach behavior. Bostow & Bailey (1969) also conducted a study with aggressive children who demonstrated behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, scratching, and generally picking on others. Observers were instructed to use recordings of the behaviors at 1 minute intervals as baseline. Time out was utilized after baseline when the inappropriate behaviors described previously were exhibited. Results showed that the inappropriate behaviors decreased over a period of time when time out was utilized. Contracting is another way of encouraging students to stop the picking behavior. It gives them an added incentive, as in the case of more "pronounced behaviors" (Swift & Spivack, 1975; Walker, 1979).

Collins & Collins (1975) suggest that arguing occurs quite often in the classroom. It usually starts out as a slight disagreement, but grows into a more serious discussion

Forming a "gripe session", that is, setting aside a certain time for argumentation, allows for students to air their disagreements, but at a set time which helps to alleviate argumentation during other tasks (Collins & Collins, 1975; Swift & Spivack, 1975). Contracting can also be used as a way of controlling a student's argumentativeness. A contract can be utilized in several ways. One example would be with someone who argues often. A contract could be set up to reduce the amount of time the student argues (Johnson, 1977; Swift & Spivack, 1975; Walker, 1979). When the arguing is fierce, placing the student in time out will allow the student time away from the stimulus which causes the arguing, therefore settling the student (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Smith & Smith, 1966; Swift & Spivack, 1975; Tyler, 1965; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Walker, 1979).

Besides those behaviors that occur often, there are those behaviors that are more serious than others. Lying can become a very serious problem if it is allowed to continue. "Practiced enough, it becomes reflexive" (Collins & Collins, 1975 p. 118). When lying occurs, the student should be confronted with it immediately (Collins & Collins, 1975; Glasser, 1965; Reinert, 1980). Time out can be utilized as a way of allowing the student to think about what he/she really did (Reinert, 1980; Swartz, Stanley, & others, 1981). In the Wahler (1969) study with two children and their parents, the behavior discussed previously was that of hitting and picking on others. Lying was another behavior looked at in this study. Again, children were isolated in

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their bedrooms after displaying the undesired behavior. Results indicated that over a period of time, time out tended to decrease the lying behavior. Once a student understands that lying is inappropriate, but may have trouble refraining from lying, maybe because it has become reflexive, the use of contracts can be helpful (Atkins, 1981; Enright & Roit, 1979; Stephens, Hartman & Lucas, 1978).

Stealing is a serious offense in the eyes of the law. When a person is found guilty of stealing, he/she must pay for their crime. In the case of a student, making him/her pay by doing extra work has been suggested by Blackham & Silberman (1975), Collins & Collins (1975), and Kerr & Nelson (1983). The use of time out when stealing occurs has shown that the behavior will decrease. Brief out placement or confinement shows the student a mild form of what can happen if caught stealing (Bostow & Bailey, 1969; Kerr & Nelson, 1983; Tyler, 1965). Stealing was also a behavior dealt with in the Wahler (1969) study. Results once again showed that over a period of time, time out tended to reduce the inappropriate behavior. In the case of younger children or those who do not understand about stealing, that it is wrong and viewed as a crime, role playing a situation where someone was caught stealing can be useful. Showing the student what can happen will help to decrease the behavior (Collins & Collins, 1975; Glasser, 1965; Kerr & Nelson, 1983).

In addition to the behaviors previously discussed, there are also behaviors that can hurt people in ways besides physically. They can hurt people's feelings, for example.

When a student does something wrong and gets into trouble, other students might see it as funny and laugh. Those students who laugh may not stop to think how another student feels about being laughed at. Putting a student in time out gives them time to think about what they have done and how others feel (Barrish, Saunders, & Wolfl 1969; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Hunter, 1967; Reinert, 1980). In some cases, just thinking about others' feelings is not good enough; sometimes a student may not know how others would feel about something. In this case role playing is a good idea. Lerner (1967), Stephens, Hartman, & Lucas (1978), and Webster (1981) suggest acting out a situation to show students how others might feel. An alternative to role playing would be social modeling. The teacher would demonstrate appropriate behavior. As students catch on to the teacher's modeling and demonstrate appropriate behavior, they too can be used as models (Reinert, 1980; Stephens, Hartman, & Lucas, 1978; Webster, 1981).

Constant criticism of someone's work can hurt their feelings. To decrease this behavior in students, confront them and ask for an explanation of why the criticism constantly occurs (Givner & Graubard, 1974; Glasser, 1965; Guthrie, 1981). Time out can be utilized as a way of getting the student back on the track to appropriate behavior. If the student is taken out of the situation where criticism occurs, it allows the offender time to regroup (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Bostow & Bailey, 1969; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Swift & Spivack, 1975; Tyler, 1965; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Wahler, 1969; Walker, 1979; Walker & Shea, 1980). When the criticism is considered

to be only slight or when it does not occur often, sometimes planned ignoring is enough to discourage the behavior (Buckley & Walker, 1970; O'Leary, Becker, Evans, & Saudargas, 1969; Walker, 1979; Zimmerman & Zimmerman, 1966). In the Madsen, Becker, & Thomas (1968) study to test the effects of ignoring on control of classroom behavior, results showed that ignoring can reduce the inappropriate behavior over a period of time.

Name-calling is a form of aggressiveness meant to hurt the one to which it is aimed. Unless it succeeds in getting a response, it usually will not last long (Collins & Collins, 1975). Planned ignoring, therefore, is the way to avoid a response and eliminate the behavior (Collins & Collins, 1975). In the case of younger students who do not understand that name-calling can hurt someone, role playing situations that involve name-calling may help those students to better understand how others are hurt by names and result in a reduction in the behavior (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Collins & Collins, 1975). The really aggressive student will need something stronger to reduce the behavior. Time out can be that something (Buckley & Walker, 1970; Walker, 1979).

Other behaviors that are seen as unacceptable might include fighting, breaking the rules of games, and problems with completing homework and assignments. To some students, fighting proves that they are tough. After a period of time, it can become a way of life. The student may think anger solves everything and may not know any other way to solve problems. Showing the student that other things besides anger and fighting solves problems is ideal. Isolating

those involved in the hope that they will talk and come to a verbal agreement is one way to do this (Collins & Collins, 1975). If one student is always involved in the fighting, contracting to reduce the behavior may be used (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Keirse, 1965). If contracting with the student does not work, it is possible that the student's self control may be only minimal. In this case, time out has been used effectively as a cooling off period (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Wolf, Risley, & Mees, 1964).

When games are played, there are rules that go along with them. These rules are vital if there is to be any organization to the game. Those who disobey the rules of games can confuse the game and make it chaotic. When this happens, praising students when they obey the rules has been suggested by Bandura & Walters (1963) and Stumphauzer (1973). Isolating the offending student(s) from the game allows for a chance to have the student(s) think about the rules and their uses and hopefully see how the game goes smoothly while others obey the rules (Bostow & Bailey, 1969). Tyler & Brown (1967) conducted a study in which time out procedures were used with fifteen boys. Everytime the boys broke the rules of the game, in this case pool, they were immediately placed in time out for fifteen minutes. Results showed clearly that the behavior declined. In mild cases, using proximity control when rules are broken will be enough. In cases where getting close to the student is impossible, an

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alternative to this would be signaling to students when rules are being broken (Collins & Collins, 1975).

The inability of students to complete homework is sometimes due to the fact that the assignments are confusing and often offer no success. If this is the case, assignments should be adjusted and clearly explained. Reinert (1980), and Walker (1979) suggest praising any work that does get finished. Sometimes students just need some motivation to do the work. Token reinforcers are one way to achieve this. Any number of items can be used, so long as the student perceives them as motivating (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Collins & Collins, 1975). In a study conducted by Phillips (1968) money was used as a motivator for completing homework. The study was done during the summer when school was not in session. Assignments were given out on a 3-by-5 index card at 8:00 a.m. each day and graded at 5:00 p.m. on the same day. Twenty-five cents a day could be earned if assignments were completed with less than 25% errors. Results showed that the money reinforcement increased homework preparation. Another type of motivation would be a contract. The student does the work, then gets a reward for that work (Addison & Homme, 1966; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Daley, Holt, & Vajanasoontorn, 1966). Phillips (1968) not only used money but also employed contracting as a means of increasing homework assignment completion. Under the same conditions previously described, Phillips employed the use of contracts as motivators. Results indicated that contracts also tended

to increase the completion of homework assignments.

When a student tears up assigned work or refuses to do work, swift action should be taken. Placing the student in time out can be used as an incentive for the student to do the work and be placed back into the classroom activities (Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Bostow & Bailey, 1969; Buckley & Walker, 1970; Tyler, 1965; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Wahler, 1969; Walker, 1979; Wasik, Senn, Welch, & Cooper, 1969). Similar to time out, having the student stay until the work is finished adds the incentive to do the work in order to either leave or to join in recess or other activities (Buckley & Walker, 1970; Tyler & Brown, 1967; Walker, 1979). Contracting is another way of trying to motivate the student to do assigned work. If the work is done, the student gets something in return, thus motivating him/her to do the work (Addison & Homme, 1966; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Daley, Holt, & Vajanasoontorn, 1966).

This paper has presented some of the strategies found in the literature that are reported to be successful with specific behaviors. However, no documented studies were found describing what strategies teachers actually use with specific behaviors. Teachers are presented with the task of classroom behavior management day after day. For this reason, it might be helpful for teachers to have a broad repertoire of strategies to use when certain behaviors are exhibited. Literature fails to supply readers with strategies teachers have stated that they find successful. It is,

therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine what public school teachers say they use as strategies with specific behaviors. This paper also proposes to determine if there is a significant relationship in the type of strategies chosen between grades and sex, and if a significance is established, to determine a pattern for the choices made.

Method

Subjects

The subjects for this study were public school teachers, grades one through six, including Special Education, from schools in Clark County, Illinois. A total population of 80 teachers was used for this study from the following schools: Martinsville Elementary School, Martinsville; Monroe Elementary School, Casey; North Elementary School, Marshall; Roosevelt Elementary School, Casey; South Elementary School, Marshall; and Westfield Elementary School, Westfield.

Procedure

The procedure used for determining the strategies that the public school teachers say they use with given behaviors was a survey. Each teacher received a survey in his/her school mailbox. Each was given one week to complete the survey, knowing that the survey would be anonymous. Upon completion, teachers returned the survey to the principal who held them until they were collected at the end of the week.

Survey Design

The survey was originally developed with four choices of strategies under each behavior, the first three from the review of literature, and the fourth as a write-in strategy. This survey was piloted on public school teachers in Mattoon, Illinois. From this pilot, a revised survey was formulated. The revised survey used in this study has five choices of strategies for each behavior, the first three from the review of the literature as presented earlier in this paper, and the last two from the write-in section on the pilot. This was done so that from looking at the frequency that a strategy was chosen, it could be ascertained if the strategies chosen parallel those presented in literature. A copy of the survey is found in Appendix I of this paper.

Analysis

The data were analyzed through the use of FREQUENCIES and CROSSTABULATIONS contained in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1975). A Chi-square was performed on each behavior considering the grade, sex, and other behaviors.

Results

A total of 80 surveys were distributed with a 72.5 percent return. The analysis of the data included a frequency count, which is presented in Table 1. A frequency count was done for the purpose of finding out how often a particular strategy is reported to be used.

Legend

Table 1

Table 1 is a graphic representation of how often a particular strategy is reported to be used. The frequency is listed as a percentage. Where a number is not listed, the strategy was not chosen for that behavior.

A Chi-square analysis considering the grade was conducted for each behavior to see if there existed a significant relationship in the strategy that was picked and the different grade levels. Behavior 11, property destruction, etc., and behavior 23, doesn't do homework, both showed significant differences based on grade level ($p < .001$). Even though there was a significance in the type of strategy picked with behaviors 11 and 23, there was not a strong pattern in the types of strategies chosen for these behaviors.

A Chi-square analysis considering sex was conducted for each behavior to see if there existed a significant relationship in the strategy that was picked by either males or females. Behavior 1, tells bizarre stories, was significant ($p < .05$), and behavior 21, fighting, was significant ($p < .05$). The Chi-square would appear to show a pattern of males choosing strategy 5, let the child know that you think they are kidding, more than 50 percent of the time, whereas females chose strategy 4, have a discussion with the child, more than 50 percent of the time for behavior 1. The Chi-square would also appear to show a pattern of males choosing strategy 4, assertive discipline, more than 50 percent of the time, whereas females chose strategy 1, isolation, more than 50 percent of the time for behavior 21.

A final Chi-square analysis considering the strategy chosen for each behavior was conducted to see if there existed a significant relationship in the strategies chosen for the different behaviors. The results of this Chi-square are presented in Table 2.

Legend

Table 2

Table 2 is a graphic representation of a Chi-square Analysis considering the strategies chosen for each behavior (p < tabled figure). Each behavior is listed down the side and numbered across the top. The figures listed are the significances (p < .05) found from the Chi-square.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine what strategies public school teachers say they use specifically with given behaviors. Literature contains many reports of strategies that have been used when students exhibit a variety of undesirable behaviors. Literature, however, appears to be limited in reports of specific strategies used with specific behaviors that are undesirable. Studies conducted to document what teachers say they use as strategies appear to be non-existent in the literature. From this survey, it should be possible to report specific strategies to use with specific behaviors according to what teachers say they use in addition to what the literature suggests.

Table 1, a percentage count, shows an analysis of what strategies were chosen with what specific behaviors. A visual analysis of Table I would appear to show that 80 percent of the time teachers reported that they use strategies chosen by other teachers, as determined by the pilot survey, rather than the strategies reported in the literature. There could be numerous reasons why this might be so. One reason might be that the literature is outdated. Today's society is a fast-paced one where things are constantly changing. Behavior problems are becoming more apparent and teachers are faced with the problem of controlling these behaviors. It may be that what used to work no longer works, and teachers are faced with having to

come up with new strategies for controlling the undesirable behaviors. Another reason might be that the strategies in the literature are specific to geographical areas different from where the survey was conducted. It could be that the teachers who completed the survey have never read what the literature suggests for strategies, or that if they have read the literature, they freely choose to use something else for various reasons. Another reason might be that teachers use what they have seen work through experience or what they are comfortable with using regardless of outcome. As stated previously, there could be numerous reasons why the data suggests that strategies from the literature are not used as frequently as strategies reportedly used by other teachers.

Table 1 would also appear to suggest that teachers choose to have a discussion with the student concerning their behavior more than 50 percent of the time rather than choosing any other strategy. The strategy of discussing the behavior with the student was chosen most frequently 14 out of 25 times. Literature, however, most frequently suggests time out 21 percent of the time over other strategies. Planned ignoring and contracting, combined with time out, make up over 50 percent of the strategies suggested by the literature. A conclusion that could be drawn from this is that the literature suggests a broad range of strategies, whereas teachers would appear to use the same strategies repeatedly. Reasons for this might include the fact that

once a teacher finds something that works, they stick with it and keep using it, or that the teachers do not know of any other strategies to use.

When such an attention-getting behavior as telling stories, lying, showing off or clowning around occurs, teachers most frequently say they simply have a discussion with the student about their behavior as a way of reducing that behavior. A review of the literature tends to suggest that planned ignoring of the behavior or time out be used as a strategy to reduce those particular types of undesirable behaviors. Reasons for the discrepancy in the types of strategies being chosen might include the fact that the literature is trying to suggest strategies that might work when used with all types of children (geographical location, age, sex), with varying degrees of behavioral severity, whereas the teachers in this survey are saying that they use this strategy because they might be thinking of its use with one particular student with one particular degree of severity. Another reason might be the fact that the strategies suggested by the literature and those that the teachers are using have not been compared to test for the best strategy.

When such behaviors as laughing when others are in trouble, disobeying rules of games, and mimicking someone else occur, teachers, again, most frequently say that they simply have a discussion with the student about the behavior as a means of decreasing those behaviors. The literature would tend to suggest time out or the use of proximity control

as ways of reducing the undesirable behaviors. Reasons for this discrepancy, again, might be the fact that the literature is trying to suggest strategies that work for all types of students with varying degrees of behavioral severity, whereas teachers are thinking of particular students with a particular degree of behavioral severity. Another reason, again, might be due to the fact that the strategies suggested by the literature and those that the teachers are using have not been compared to test for the best strategy.

When such behaviors as picking on others, criticizing the work of others, bullying, and name-calling occur, again teachers most frequently say they use the strategy of having a discussion with the student about their behavior as a means of reducing those undesirable behaviors. The literature, however, tends to suggest the use of time out or contracting as ways of reducing the undesirable behaviors. Reasons for this discrepancy, once again, may be due to the fact that the literature is trying to suggest strategies for all types of students with varying degrees of behavioral severity, and teachers may think of particular students with particular degrees of behavioral severity.

As reported earlier, teachers say they use the strategy of discussing the behavior with the student most frequently 14 out of 25 times. Of the remaining 11 times that teachers chose other strategies, 8 behaviors were not given the choice of discussion. One question that could be raised here would be that if the teachers were given the choice of discussion

for those behaviors, would they have chosen that strategy, and could it be possible for teachers to say that they use the discussion strategy with 22 out of 25 different behaviors? Future researchers may want to try testing this possibility. Future researchers may also want to try testing the strategies that teachers say they use to establish levels of effectiveness of the strategies. Researchers may also want to test teacher strategies versus literature strategies for specific behaviors to establish superiority across different types of students with differing degrees of behavioral severity.

Chi-square analyses by grade, by sex, and by behavior were done to see if any significant differences existed in the types of strategies chosen for different grade levels, by different teachers, and for different behaviors. The results of these analyses are presented in the results section, and do show some significant differences in the types of behaviors chosen for the different grade levels, by the different teachers, for the different behaviors.

Significances being established by the Chi-squares might indicate that male teachers prefer to use one type of strategy, whereas female teachers prefer to use another type of strategy, or that Special Educators prefer one type as opposed to regular classroom educators, or even that lower elementary teachers prefer one type of strategy while upper elementary teachers prefer another type. Significances here may also indicate that certain types of behaviors require

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certain strategies, while other types of behaviors require other types of strategies. However, it was not possible, from this data, to establish a pattern from these differences. Reasons why no patterns could be established might include the fact that the survey sample was relatively small, and was contained in one geographical area.

Since it was not possible to establish any patterns from the significances reported from the Chi-squares, future researchers may want to try testing the effects of the strategies by running a factor analysis. After having completed this phase of the research, the survey and the analysis of the survey, the next step might be to go on and try to establish patterns by going into more in depth analyses.

Several factors may have influenced the results of this study. The fact that the survey was distributed in one small geographic area would tend to lead to the assumption that the strategies are geographically specific. Another factor may be the fact that each child is different and even though two children exhibit the same undesirable behavior, the same strategies may not work on two different children. With this in mind, the teacher may have been thinking of specific children when reporting what strategies are used with particular behaviors, rather than children in general.

This study should provide impetus for future examination of the types of strategies teachers use specifically with given behaviors. Research could center on testing reported strategies with specific behaviors.

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Appendix I

Survey

January 3, 1984

Dear Colleague,

This survey is intended as a source of information regarding types of reinforcement techniques or strategies that public school teachers use with given behaviors.

As a graduate student, not only am I collecting valuable information for my future studies, but I am also collecting valuable information for the Department of Special Education at Eastern Illinois University.

I realize that filling out surveys is not one of your priorities, but please take a few minutes of your time to complete this survey. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Thompson
Cheryl Thompson

Please circle the numeral which corresponds to your answer.

The geographical area that you teach in is:

Chicago City.....	1	(Key
Suburban Chicago.....	2	Punch
Downstate Illinois.....	3	No.)

Office Use Only # _____ Computer No.	(1-4)
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The subject or grade that you teach is:

First or second grade.....	1	
Third or fourth grade.....	2	
Fifth or sixth grade.....	3	
Special Education, EMH.....	4	(5)
Special Education, LD.....	5	
Special Education, BD.....	6	
Special Education, other.....	7	

Sex:

Male.....	1	
Female.....	2	(6)

Number of years experience teaching:

Less than 1 year.....	1	
1-3 years.....	2	
4-10 years.....	3	(7)
11-15+ years.....	4	

Highest degree obtained:

Bachelor's degree.....	1	
Master's degree.....	2	
Specialist's degree.....	3	(8)
Doctor's degree.....	4	
Other (Please specify _____)	5	

Please circle the numeral which corresponds with the technique or strategy you most often use with that particular behavior.

Behavior: Tells bizarre stories

Planned ignoring.....	1	
Ask for proof of the story.....	2	
Ask the child why he/she told the story.....	3	(9)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Let the child know that you think they are kidding.....	5	

		(Key Punch No.)
Behavior: Showing off		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Time-out.....	2	
Use of a study carrel.....	3	(10)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Rushes through work just to get finished		
Praise accuracy and neatness, not speed.....	1	
Contract for amount of work to be done.....	2	
Peer inspection before handing in work.....	3	(11)
Time-out.....	4	
Confront the child.....	5	
Behavior: Cheats on tests		
Give oral tests.....	1	
Use study carrels.....	2	
Use alternate versions of the test.....	3	(12)
Have the child take the test over.....	4	
Give no credit for the test.....	5	
Behavior: Laughs when others are in trouble		
Time-out.....	1	
Role play these situations.....	2	
Social modeling.....	3	(13)
Assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Attention seeking		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Time-out.....	2	
Use of a study carrel.....	3	(14)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Lying		
Time-out.....	1	
Contracting.....	2	
Confront the student.....	3	(15)
Administer corporal punishment.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Disobeys rules of games		
Praise when rules are obeyed.....	1	
Isolate child from game.....	2	
Signals or proximity control.....	3	(16)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Change the rules of the game.....	5	
Behavior: Stealing		
Role play stealing incidents.....	1	
Time-out.....	2	
Make the child "pay" for the offense through work.....	3	(17)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Have the child return or replace the property.....	5	

		(Key Punch No.)
Behavior: Class clown		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Proximity control.....	2	
Time-out.....	3	(18)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Praise appropriate behavior.....	5	
Behavior: Property destruction, graffiti, vandalism		
Place a fine on the child.....	1	
Provide a "graffiti board" for the child to write on.....	2	
Have the child work extra as compensation.....	3	(19)
Have the child clean up the area.....	4	
Use assertive discipline.....	5	
Behavior: Tattles		
Role play a tattletale incident.....	1	
Peer modeling of nontattling behavior.....	2	
Contracting.....	3	(20)
Planned ignoring.....	4	
Time-out.....	5	
Behavior: Mimicry		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Proximity control.....	2	
Time-out.....	3	(21)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Praise appropriate behavior.....	5	
Behavior: Picks on others		
Time-out.....	1	
Contracting.....	2	
Proximity control.....	3	(22)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Use assertive discipline.....	5	
Behavior: Criticizes work of others		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Time-out.....	2	
Confront the child.....	3	(23)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Role play one of these situations.....	5	
Behavior: Arguing		
Time-out.....	1	
Contracting.....	2	
Form a "gripe" session.....	3	(24)
Have a private discussion with the child.....	4	
Explain the difference between arguing and discussing.....	5	
Behavior: Bullying		
Time-out.....	1	
Contracting.....	2	
Proximity control.....	3	(25)
Have a discussion with the child.....	4	
Use assertive discipline.....	5	

		(Key Punch No.)
Behavior: Always asking for help; "I can't" attitude		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Praise any independent work.....	2	
Contracting for amount of work to be done.....	3	(26)
Time-out.....	4	
Have child stay until work is done.....	5	
Behavior: Tears up work, refuses to do work		
Time-out.....	1	
Make child stay until work is done.....	2	
Contracting for amount of work to be done.....	3	(27)
Praise for any work done.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Swearing		
Time-out.....	1	
Planned ignoring.....	2	
Proximity control.....	3	(28)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Fighting		
Isolation of those involved to reach a verbal agreement.....	1	
Contracting.....	2	
Time-out.....	3	(29)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Detention.....	5	
Behavior: Playing dumb		
Planned ignoring.....	1	
Praise for work done.....	2	
Contracting for work to be done.....	3	(30)
Time-out.....	4	
Have child stay until work is done.....	5	
Behavior: Doesn't do homework		
Praise homework that does get finished.....	1	
Token reinforcers.....	2	
Contracting for amount of work to be done.....	3	(31)
Miss recess.....	4	
Stay until work is done.....	5	
Behavior: Name-calling		
Role playing.....	1	
Planned ignoring.....	2	
Time-out.....	3	(32)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	
Behavior: Uses inappropriate language		
Time-out.....	1	
Planned ignoring.....	2	
Proximity control.....	3	(33)
Use assertive discipline.....	4	
Have a discussion with the child.....	5	