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DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH STUDY OF FOUR EFFECTIVE TEACHING METHODS

Ьу

Gail Ryan

A report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Psychology

Plan B

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY Logan, Utah

1975

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the children, who caused me to question my educational beliefs.

To Dr. Bertoch, for his suggestions, unfailing support and encouragement.

To my husband, for his understanding.

Gail Ryan

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Method of the Study

During my years in the public school system, I have felt that a basic deterrent to the child's personal and emotional growth has been the inability of educators to effectively communicate with children in the classroom. Gordon (1970, p. 298) states that teachers and other adults "lack the basic attitudes and skills to be effective training agents in an interpersonal relationship with a child or adolescent." Flanders (1971) feels that teachers, while behaviorally influencing children and determining the learning situation, actually have little knowledge about those methods of influence.

I am concerned with the need to train teachers to work more effectively with individual personalities within the classroom. The present study investigates four distinctive methods of training teachers with their relative effectiveness within a classroom environment. Each of the four teaching methods will be summarily described in theory, including relevant outcome of each in actual classroom applications, and a comparative analysis of the four methods will be made as to similarities, differences and effectiveness.

Limitations

It should be noted that the present paper is a descriptive, rather than a statistical study.

Another limitation is in the apparent lack of research done on two methods presented here. The author failed to uncover any statistical research done on the actual effectiveness of Dr. Gordon's and Dr. Dreiker's methods. One possibility could be the general psychological methodology of these two methods as opposed to the more behaviorally specific nature of the two researched methods. The two unresearched could be less structurally conducive to statistical study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since the study deals with an analysis of several teaching methods, the review of the literature will discern the merits and relevant research pertaining to each system studied.

Flanders Interaction Analysis

Interaction analysis is a type of system used to observe and code the verbal interchanges between the teacher and his pupils. The analysis is used to sensitize teachers to their classroom verbal behavior and the influence which this behavior exerts on their students. It is not a teaching technique, nor is it meant to indicate whether learning is taking place. It is only a means of identifying certain observable behaviors in the interaction of teacher and students which influence the climate in which learning takes place.

The first research into this type of measurement was initiated by John Withall (1949). There are several interaction analysis systems in use today, but the Flanders system appears to be the most widely used in inservice training and research. While Flanders, like other interaction authors, presents only a method of behavioral observation and not a theoretical methodology for optimum child growth, he does offer a moral preference based on research. This preference is shown in his classification system of teacher behavior as either direct or indirect.

Flanders feels that teachers do not know how children perceive them in the classroom. The interaction analysis method helps the teacher to

gain that insight. The teacher then may want to change his behavior either because he was not achieving what he thought he was, or he was not achieving what he wanted to on the basis of new insight about child learning (Amidon, 1971).

Flanders lists the conditions he feels must be created before a teacher can learn to understand and improve his classroom behavior (Amidon, 1971, pp. 3, 5).

- 1. Teachers must desire to understand and improve their own behavior.
- 2. A climate of acceptance and support must be established that is objective and nonthreatening for the teacher participating.
 - 3. Teachers must have an opportunity for behavioral involvement.
 - 4. There must be an effective system of feedback to the teacher.

That feedback is achieved by Flanders' interaction matrix. The matrix summarizes the teacher's verbal behavior in the classroom in such a way that he is free to make his own value judgments about his classroom behavior. Only verbal behavior is observed, because it can be observed with higher reliability than can nonverbal behavior (Amidon, 1971, p. 6). The data is collected in the teacher's classroom and is gathered either by trained observers or by the teacher who analyzes tape recordings of his own teaching.

The Flanders' teacher observation categories are classified as direct or indirect, depending on the amount of freedom the teacher grants to the student. Direct minimizes the freedom of the student to respond; indirect maximizes those student responses. Teacher talk, indirect influence, has four subdivisions or observation categories (Amidon, 1971, pp. 8-10):

1. Accepts feelings: The teacher accepts, clarifies, predicts, or recalls students' feelings in a nonthreatening manner. The students' feelings may be positive or negative.

- 2. Praises or encourages: The teacher praises or encourages student behavior or action. Examples of such are jokes that release tension and are not at the expense of an individual, nodding the head, saying "um hm," "go on," "fine," etc.
- 3. Accepts or uses ideas of student: The teacher clarifies, builds, or develops on suggested student ideas. The teacher's repeat of a student response is included here. If the teacher begins bringing more of his ideas into the discussion, not the student's, the observer shifts to category 5.
- 4. Asks questions: The teacher asks questions about content or procedure with the intent that a student answer.

 Teacher talk, direct influence, has three subdivisions (Amidon, 1971, pp. 10-11).
- 5. Lecturing: The teacher gives facts or opinions about content or procedure. He may be explaining, expressing his own ideas, giving personal examples, asking rhetorical questions, etc.
- 6. Giving directions: The teacher gives directions, commands, or orders which the student is expected to comply with.
- 7. Criticizing or justifying authority: The teacher makes statements intended to change student behavior from non-acceptable to acceptable patterns. The teacher may also be bawling someone out, defending or justifying himself against the student, or using extreme self-reference.

The second major observation category is that of student talk. There are two subdivisions here (Amidon, 1971, p. 12):

8. Student talk-response: This is talk by the student in response to the teacher. The teacher initiates the talk or solicits student statements and sets limits (usually a right answer) to what the student says.

Included in this category are "unison responses" and oral reading by a student.

9. Student talk-initiation: This is talk by students which they initiate; students initiate or express their own ideas. Here students ask questions and introduce their own ideas.

The third and last major observation category is silence or confusion (Amidon, 1971, p. 10):

10. Silence or confusion: Included here are pauses, short periods of silence, and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.

Flanders outlines in detail the procedure used to categorize teacherpupil interaction. Category numbers corresponding to the above verbal behaviors used during a lesson are recorded every three seconds by the observer. After the lesson is categorized, the data is summarized for interpretation. This is done by entering category numbers in the form of tallies into a 10-row by 10-row matrix resulting in a graphic picture of the lesson. The completed matrix gives the observer a picture not only of the percentage of interaction in each category, but also the general sequence of responses. The matrix, by preserving the sequence of adjacent numbers, illustrates which behaviors immediately precede or follow others. The observer determines what the proportion of the total interaction in the observed classroom situation is found in each category. Then, percentages of teacher talk, student talk, and silence or confusion are calculated. The number of indirect teacher statements is compared to the number of direct behaviors, and computation of indirect-direct (I/D) ratios are made. There are nine different I/D ratios computed; all are concerned with the extent the teacher expands (indirect) or limits (direct) student participation. The interaction analysis system can give the teacher a method of gathering objective data about his own behavior in the classroom. The extent to which the teacher uses that data to change his classroom role is up to the teacher himself. Flanders lists the following procedures as an aid to teachers who use the interaction matrix and who wish to change their behavior role. (Amidon, 1971, pp. 94-96):

- 1. The teacher or an independent observer collects observation data about his existing classroom behavior pattern.
- 2. The teacher analyzes his pattern in light of his own goals, determining what seem to be strengths and weaknesses.
- 3. The teacher experiments with specific areas of the matrix that seem to present problems, substituting alternative behavior for that previously used.
- 4. The teacher evaluates through further observation data his success in specific attempts to change his pattern.
- 5. The teacher continues to work on unchanged portions of the matrix in which change is considered desirable.

It is helpful for the teacher to have knowledge of different patterns of teacher verbal behavior and their resulting effects on pupil classroom behavior. The teacher can then select the behavior pattern he desires and practice that pattern in simulated social skill training before practicing in the classroom and testing it with the interaction matrix (Flanders, 1970).

Research as to effectiveness

Criticisms given to Flanders' interaction analysis as opposed to other available interaction systems center on the following areas (Swanson, 1971, pp. 21-22):

- 1. Limitations imposed by the number and nature of the 10 categories: Some experts working in the field of interaction analysis feel that the number of categories is too few.
- 2. Lack of nonverbal categories: Much classroom influence is achieved outside the verbal conversation role.
- 3. Insufficient student-talk categories: Amidon (1966) feels that the dimension of predictable or unpredictable response to pupil talk should be added.
- 4. Disregard for differences in subject matter: The subject matter taught in the classroom may affect results of the matrix separately from the effect of the teacher's personality itself.

Other criticisms include the morality directed at the teacher when Flanders concentrates on directness versus indirectness and the inclusion of silence and confusion categories together when there are times in the classroom that confusion can occur simultaneously with other category labels (Amidon, 1966).

Other interaction analysis systems have been developed in an attempt to overcome these criticisms. Today, there are over 20 such systems (Amidon and Hunter, 1966). As the number of categories increases, however, teacher training in observation becomes more complicated; and the ability of the teacher to learn and observe himself via tape decreases.

Merits of the Flanders system as opposed to other such systems are listed by Hough (1966):

- 1. The system has only 10 categories and is thus easily learned by teachers.
- It is designed for direct observation of classroom verbal interaction and does not require typescripts or videotape.
- 3. It preserves the interactive, cause-effect quality of classroom verbal interaction.
- 4. The system is easily expandable into more than ten categories when detailed analysis is desired.

Flanders (1970) does present research completed on his system.

Generally, the statistical analysis shows that trainees learning how to observe and interpret Flanders' system do increase their responsiveness to pupil ideas and initiative. If this is a satisfactory classroom goal, then the Flanders' system should increase the probability of that type of behavior occurring in the classroom.

Behavior Modification

Behavior modification as a working philosophy came into being in 1913 when John B. Watson published a treatise entitled <u>Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It</u>. He argued that the concept of consciousness and method of introspection should be the domain of philosophers. Psychology itself should be a purely objective experimental branch of natural science whose goal is the prediction and control of behavior. Behaviorally-oriented treatment procedures had little prominence until the 1960's, after

Skinner's book <u>Science and Human Behavior</u> (1953), in which he reconceptualized learning principles with implications for human problems.

Behavior is treated not as a symptom of a problem but as the problem itself. The causal factors of the problem are ignored. Respondent or classical conditioning refers to the learning where a stimulus preceding a behavior or group of behaviors controls these behaviors. Such behaviors are often called involuntary, because when the stimuli are presented the behaviors almost invariably occur. A respondent behavior is generally not controlled by the stimuli which follow it. Examples of fearful behavior seen in schools which could be classically conditioned include fear of dogs and fear of speaking in front of others.

Operant behaviors are influenced by the stimuli which follow them.

Here the focus is on the consequences rather than the antecedents of behavior. Stimuli which increase the frequency of the behaviors they follow are called positive reinforcers. Stimuli which reduce the frequency of these behaviors are called punishing stimuli. All behavior modification procedures are attempts either to increase or decrease behavior.

The behavior modification approach represents a concrete attempt to make explicit those procedures by which a teacher can change behavior. She can learn a set of principles for observing and changing behaviors on her own in a systematic manner. It is financially unfeasible to ask professionals to deal with all the major behavioral problems that arise in a school. Madsen and Madsen, in their book Teaching/Discipline (1972), outline the basic principles of behavior modification as they apply to a classroom teacher. Behavior refers to anything that can be observed. All behavior is learned; thus behavior modification is just a process for

learning. The teacher must structure the external environment so that students will seek the structured contingent rewards for their academic work tasks. The desired outcome is that after initial manipulation the rewards for learning will come from the reinforcement of the learning material itself.

Behavior that goes unrewarded will extinguish. To change specific, inappropriate behavior the teacher must find and eliminate the payoff (which will differ with each child). The payoff is what is keeping the behavior alive. When the "reward" is abolished, the child will get initially worse and then the behavior will extinguish. Consistency on the part of the teacher must be maintained at all times. The teacher, to begin with, sets up a hierarchy of class deviancy and starts with the deviant behavior that most interferes with learning. The teacher must start off with one behavior at a time. She begins by setting up a set of easily understood rules for the classroom. She then makes up contingencies (structures the rewards). These contingencies, or new payoff for desirable behavior (for classroom rules, it is following those rules) must be known, tangible, and close enough to the student's own behavioral responses to motivate the student to seek it. The child should achieve success quickly when the program begins, after which the time between behavior and reward may be stretched for longer periods while pairing with appropriate personal responses from the teacher, such as praising, smiling, and touching.

Teacher approval or self-approval may be enough. Anything the student will work toward is a reward. A student may be given a voice in his choice of rewards.

O'Leary and O'Leary give a detailed listing of procedures used to increase or decrease behaviors. The procedures used to increase behavior include (1972, p. 26):

- Praise and approval: This can be done by words or nonverbally (touching, expressions, etc.).
- 2. Modeling: The teacher should be a good example of appropriate behavior.
- 3. Shaping: This is the procedure of reinforcing successive approximations to some desired terminal behavior. It is the central procedure in teaching any academic or social behavior.
- 4. Passive shaping: One aids the child by guiding him through the physical motions of the desired behavior.
- 5. Token reinforcement programs: They include reinforcers not natural to the classroom environment such as prizes, money, pop, candy, etc. (extrinsic reinforcement) and reinforcers that are natural to the classroom environment such as special privileges or special activities (intrinsic reinforcement). All token reinforcement programs involve three factors.
- a. A set of instructions to the class about the behaviors that will be reinforced.
- b. A means of making a potentially reinforcing stimulus, usually called a token, contingent upon behavior, and
- c. A set of rules governing the exchange of tokens for backup reinforcers.
- 6. Self-specification of contingencies: Here a child may engage in his high probability behavior (such as running around the room) only if he

first engages in the low probability behavior (such as staying in his seat). This is the Premack Principle. It seems to work more successfully when children themselves specify the behaviors to be reinforced (Lovitt and Curtiss, 1969).

- 7. Self-reinforcement: The child is given control over the tokens. Modeling plays an important part in the transmission of self-reinforcing behavior (Bandura and Kupers, 1964, p. 35).
- 8. Establishment of clear rules and directions: Rules must be made explicit and children must be reinforced for following them.

Procedures used to decrease behavior include:

- 1. Extinction: When a teacher stops attending to certain behaviors, those behaviors tend to extinguish or decrease. All ignoring of inappropriate behavior should be coupled with praise for appropriate behavior (Madsen, Becker and Thomas, 1968, p. 5).
- 2. Reinforcing behavior incompatible with undesired behavior: One should reinforce the desirable behavior which would make the undesirable behavior less probable. The child cannot do both behaviors.
- 3. Soft reprimands: If ignoring the behavior does not reduce it, a reprimand audible only to the child misbehaving may prove effective (O'Leary, Kaufman and Drabman, 1970, p. 10). It is also best to reprimand just as the child begins to display the undesired behavior (Walters, Parke and Cane, 1965, p. 8).
- 4. Time-out from reinforcement: This includes being physically isolated and eliminating the source of positive reinforcement for a period of time.
 - 5. Relaxation: A child can be taught to relax when he becomes

frustrated, agitated or angered, but this is not a procedure to be implemented by teachers.

- 6. Gradual presentation of fearful stimuli in vivo: This is the technique of gradually (by small steps) presenting the fearful situation.
- 7. Desensitization: This technique is not to be done by the teacher.

 The patient is relaxed and then is asked to visualize a series of scenes which he finds anxiety provoking.
- 8. Response cost: This is used in token programs when a teacher can subtract points for misbehavior.
 - 9. Medication: Only use this under doctor care.
- 10. Self-instruction: Students can be taught to say something (such as "relax" when they get angry) to control their own behavior.
- ll. Self-evaluation: Before a child can be taught to reinforce himself for a behavior, he must learn to evaluate his behavior correctly.

The basic premise in reinforcement teaching is the structure of approval and disapproval external reinforcers, in time, to shape desired behavior toward specific, measurable goals. The crux of the problem is arranging contingencies of reinforcement so the student will want to do what the teacher expects. Madsen and Madsen (1972, pp. 29-30) list the five techniques that can be most often used in structuring contingencies. They include:

- 1. Approval: They are rewards.
- 2. Withholding of approval: They involve holding back rewards.
- 3. Disapproval: This is punishment.
- 4. Threat of disapproval: This is fear.
- 5. Ignoring: This is not attending in any manner.

Contingencies must be structured. Rewards must come initially immediately after the fact, and the teacher must know before the fact what the contingencies are to be. The initial stages of control are the most important. The child must be properly trained before time periods between action and consequences can be lengthened. The different time schedules include (Madsen and Madsen, 1970, p. 33) fixed time, fixed interval, variable time, variable interval, and mixed.

Behavior that is partially reinforced is the most difficult to extinguish. Consistency is the most difficult aspect of discipline. It is impossible for the student to maintain two contradictory responses at the same time; therefore, the teacher should program to elicit responses incompatible with deviant behavior. This is one of the most effective behavioral techniques, because the student unlearns inappropriate behavior and relearns correct responses at the same time. Madsen and Madsen further state that it is the teacher's responsibility—not the student's—to insure that learning actually takes place. The art of teaching seems directly contingent upon the behaviors of the teacher as a person. Modeling effects from good teachers are still the most powerful means of change.

Lindsley, in a paper entitled <u>Teaching Teachers to Teach</u> (1966), listed four principles for teachers to follow when beginning a behavior modification program in the classroom. They are:

- l. Pinpoint: Explicitly pinpoint the behavior that is to be eliminated or established. If the behavior cannot be measured, you do not know if it has been learned or unlearned.
- 2. Record: List behaviors, establish a baseline, and keep accurate records of behavior occurrence.

- 3. Consequate: Set up external environmental contingencies and reinforcers.
- 4. Evaluate: Stay with the program long enough to ascertain its effectiveness. Correct mistakes and try again.

General principles that behavior modification adherents seem to feel are Universalities for teachers to follow are (O'Leary, 1972, p. 42):

- 1. Make classroom rules clear.
- 2. Give academic work commensurate with each child's skills.
- 3. Frequently praise children for their successes.
- 4. Ignore children when they are involved in minor disruptions.
- 5. Make explicit the consequences of severe disruptions.
- 6. Deal with each child consistently.

Most successful programs involving teachers unfamiliar with learning theory principles and its applications must utilize personnel trained in these methods to initially train and then advise and supervise the teacher attempting the program.

Research as to effectiveness

It appears that the personality of the teacher involved in the behavior modification attempted is a large determinent in the success of that program. The teacher who has an average or above average organizational ability, even to being mildly compulsive, works more successfully with behavior modification than does a teacher who is nondirective, highly intuitive, or very existentially oriented (Abidin, 1971, p. 39). The teacher must be able to follow advice consistently.

It has also been found that when a teacher has no prior knowledge, training or experience in behavior modification, a trainer may expend up

to 30 hours in assisting her to carry out a behavior modification program for one child. However, on subsequent programs the time demands may be cut to seven hours (Abidin, 1971, p. 39). The time is spent in planning sessions, teaching the teacher, classroom observation, weekly follow-ups, crisis consultation, etc. A program which develops behavioral skills in a teacher while it treats an immediate problem tends to be of greater advantage to the classroom and of greater efficiency (timewise) than a program which merely focuses on a short-term outside problem-solving situation (McNamara, 1971, p. 439). But it has also been noted that changing a teacher's behavior towards a few target children has actually changed the whole atmosphere of the classroom, as well as the teacher's enjoyment of that classroom (Madsen, Becker and Thomas, 1968).

Teachers are more successful in applying behavior programs to acting out behaviors than any other type program found in the classroom. The least change was found in working with withdrawn and inattentive behavior (Ward and Baker, 1968).

There has been much research done on the techniques of behavior modification that seem most effective in changing classroom behaviors. It has been found that punishment should be used sparingly because the teacher can become a less effective modifier of behavior. He may lose his positive reinforcing value, lose his control by punishment as the child adapts or becomes immune to the type of punishment being used; and if he is consistently punishing a particular situation, the situation itself becomes aversive (O'Leary, 1970, p. 152). Punishment is effective under certain conditions, but one should be careful to avoid negative side effects by (O'Leary, 1970, pp. 151-152):

- 1. Use punishment sparingly.
- 2. Make clear to the child why he is being punished.
- 3. Provide the child with an alternative means of obtaining positive reinforcement.
- 4. Reinforce the child for behaviors incompatible with those you want to weaken.
 - 5. Avoid physical punishment.
- Avoid punishing while you are angry or in an emotional state (the punishment must be impersonal).
- 7. Punish at the initiation of a behavior rather than at its completion (Walters, Parke and Cane, 1965, p. 8). Punishment that occurs near initiation of the act results in an association between the agent's preparatory response and the emotion of fear.
- 8. Relate the form of punishment to the misbehavior. The teacher should not assign extra work as punishment if it is unrelated to the act for which the student is being punished (Clarizio, 1971, p. 126).

To the question of intrinsic versus extrinsic reinforcement, O'Leary (1970) feels that intrinsic reinforcement should always be tried first in the classroom. Osborne (1969) was successful in having the teacher reinforce in-seat behavior with free time, while McKenzie et. al. (1968) tried recess, free time, special privileges, teacher attention, and weekly grades. They discovered that when intrinsic teacher rewards such as recess, free time activities, and weekly grades were given, students increased their attending to reading to 68 percent. However, when parental allowances were made contingent upon grades, the attending to reading increased to 86 percent.

Extrinsic reinforcers seem best used when a rapid behavior change in people who appear "unmotivated" is attempted. Its success, especially with special education classes, has been well researched. O'Leary et. al. (1969), however, found a token program to be more effective when it was combined with rules, structure, praise and ignoring. The reinforcement was used on the entire class. An arqument often advanced against the classroom use of behavior modification is that too much time is spent on disruptive behavior to the disadvantage of the other students in the class. O'Leary and Becker (1967) trained a teacher to use a token reinforcement through a rating procedure. There were 17 emotionally disturbed students in the classroom. The teacher found she had more actual time to work with the students after the disruptive behavior was qone. Also, the reinforcement transferred to teacher attention, praise and grades (intrinsic). Ward (1968) found that the behavior of the other pupils in a class did not deteriorate when the teacher's attention was diverted to treating a particular target behavior child.

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of peers as therapeutic agents in the classroom. They are influential because they (O'Leary, 1970):

- 1. Serve as models of both appropriate and inappropriate behavior.
- 2. Respond contingently to a child's behavior.
- 3. Serve as competition.

Peers seem to be best used as reinforcement when the entire class receives a reward dependent upon how well the target children behave (Barrish, Saunders and Wolf, 1969) and when peers are directly responsible for contingency management by doing the actual observing, recording and reinforcement dispensing. The attitude and actions of an entire group

The method can be used for any number of people. Parents learn specific skills to keep channels of communication open with their children and are shown how to resolve conflicts by a method that will strengthen the parent-child relationship. Parents are taught a method of encouraging their children to accept responsibility for finding their own solutions to their own problems by "active listening" (Gordon, 1970, p. 7). The Gordon method requires a change in parental attitudes and values; one must accept the idea of being a separate person who can express his own values and not force them on another; one who is a good model. Before the method can be implemented at home parents must first learn the skills of nonevaluative listening and honest communication of their own feelings. An effective parent must be a "real" person (Gordon, 1970, p. 27). You do not have to be consistent, but you do have to know what you are feeling. The parent's true feelings can seldom be hidden from the child; a parent cannot falsely accept a child and his behavior. A child has difficulty differentiating between accepting him as a person and accepting his behavior; the two cannot be separated. Gordon's definition of parents who are real persons include the concepts that real parents cannot remain consistent; they will inevitably feel both accepting and Unaccepting toward the same child behavior. Parents should not hide their true feelings, nor need they put on a "united" front. Parents need to send clear and honest messages that match their true feelings. Children need to see their parents as real people.

The most essential ingredient for an effective helping relationship is the "language of acceptance" (Gordon, 1970, p. 30). A person who can feel and communicate genuine acceptance of another possesses the capacity to be a powerful helping agent for the other. Acceptance enables the

child to actualize his potential. It frees children to share their feelings and problems. Feeling accepted is feeling loved. Parents must learn specific skills in order to be able to demonstrate their acceptance so that children feel it. Parents can communicate acceptance by nonverbal messages (Gordon, 1970, p. 35). This is shown by not intervening in the child's activities, permitting separateness. Silence or "passive listening" (Gordon, 1970, p. 37) is another nonverbal method. How parents talk to children is crucial; they must learn to communicate acceptance verbally. Most parents say something about the child when they talk to him; they use one of the "typical twelve" (Gordon, 1970, p. 41) responses. These include commanding, moralizing, ridiculing, praising, interpreting, lecturing, criticizing, advising, consoling, humoring, interrogating, etc. An effective way of responding to a child's feeling-message is "the invitation to say more" (Gordon, 1970, p. 48). They convey acceptance while keeping the focal point on the child. An even more effective method is "active listening" (Gordon, 1970, p. 50), because both the sender of the message and the receiver of the message are involved. In active listening the receiver encodes or tries to understand what the sender is feeling or what his message means. He then codes or puts his understanding into his own words and then feeds it back for the sender's verification (decodes). The receiver feeds back only what he feels the sender's message meant; he puts aside all "I-messages" (his own thoughts and feelings). Active listening is important because it encourages people to express their feelings openly; it helps children become less fearful of negative feelings; it promotes a relationship of warmth between parent and child; it facilitates problem-solving by the child to be more willing to listen to parents' thoughts and ideas; and it

"keeps the ball with the child" (Gordon, 1970, p. 58).

The active listening method will not be effective without a belief in the following attitudes (Gordon, 1970, p. 59):

- 1. You want to hear what the child has to say.
- 2. You must want to help the child with his problem at that time.
- You must accept the child's feelings even if they differ from yours.
 - 4. You must trust in the child's capacity to solve his own problems.
 - 5. You must accept that feelings are transitory, not permanent.
 - 6. You must see your child as someone separate from you.

Active listening is best used when the child reveals that he has a problem; it influences children to find their own solutions to their own problems.

When the child's behavior affects the parent in some direct way, the parent then owns the problem. The parent tells the child how some unacceptable behavior is making the parent feel; this is an "I-message" (Gordon, 1970, p. 115). "I-messages" are parent-oriented; "you-messages" are child oriented. "I-messages" are effective because they place responsibility within the child for modifying his behavior. "I-messages" are honest; they influence the child to send similar honest messages whenever he has a feeling. The sender of the "I-message" becomes known as he really is. In an "I-message" one must state what he felt specifically; such messages should be used to convey both negative and positive feelings. The message should match the intensity of the inner feeling. Instead of anger, parents can learn to send their primary feelings to their children; anger is a secondary feeling. It is something generated as a consequence of an earlier feeling such as fear or embarrassment. Anger is assumed by a

person to blame or teach a lesson because of behavior caused by some other feeling (Gordon, 1970, p. 127).

Unacceptable behavior can also be altered by changing the environment. This can be used for children of all ages. Environmental modification includes enriching the environment, impoverishing it, simplifying it, restricting it, child-proofing it, substituting one activity for another, preparing the child for changes in his environment, and planning ahead with older children (Gordon, 1970, p. 139).

All parents will encounter situations where conflicts between the needs of the parent and the needs of the child occur. These are problems in the relationship, so the relationship owns the problem.

Neither confrontation nor changes in the environment will alter the child's behavior. The critical factor in the relationship is not that conflicts occur, but how they are resolved. In such situations Gordon uses Method III, a method employed to resolve conflicts between individuals who possess equal or relatively equal power (Gordon, 1970, p. 195). This is termed the "no-lose" method because the solution reached in a conflict must be acceptable to both child and parent. There is no "cookbook" solution applicable to all families; there is only a method of resolving conflict that is usable with children of all ages. "Method III is a method by which each unique parent and his unique child can solve each of their unique conflicts by finding their own unique solutions acceptable to both" (Gordon, 1970, p. 200).

Method III is effective because participants are more motivated to carry out reached decisions when they have participated in making them by group process; the solutions found are of a higher quality than one thought of alone; it requires children to think; there is a drastic reduction in feelings of hostility from children; it requires less enforcement because

both have agreed to the solution; it eliminates the use of power; it forces both sides to define what the real problem is; and the method communicates that both parental and child needs are important (Gordon, 1970, p. 213).

Parents are more successful in using the no-lose method if they sit down with their children and explain the method first. There are six steps involved with using the method (Gordon, 1970, p. 238).

- l. Identifying and defining the conflict: Parents need to get the child's attention and secure his willingness to enter into problemsolving.
- 2. Generating possible alternative solutions: Get the child's solutions first and accept all ideas.
- 3. Evaluating the alternative solutions: Be honest with one's own feelings.
- 4. Deciding on the best solution: Be sure all agree; decisions can be altered if they do not work.
 - 5. Implementing the decision: The details must be spelled out.
- 6. Follow-up evaluation: All must be happy with the results of the decision.
- Dr. Gordon warns parents that they should limit their attempts to modify behavior to what interferes with the parents' needs. When the conflict occurs over issues involving values, beliefs, and personal tastes, Method III should not be used. Parents can teach their values by actually living them.

He also discusses the type of parent who finds it easiest to use this method. There is a direct relationship between how accepting people are of others and how accepting they are of themselves. Parents who

satisfy their own needs through independent productive effort do not need to seek gratification of their needs from the way their children behave. In healthy human relationships each person can permit the other to be "separate" from him; no child is owned by the parent. "Don't want your child to become something in particular; just want him to become" (Gordon, 1970, p. 288). The more rigid or certain parents are that their own values and beliefs are right, the more those parents will tend to impose them on their children.

Dr. Gordon feels that people can change when they have the opportunity to have a group experience where they can talk openly and honestly with each other in an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance.

Gordon has also written a book entitled Teacher Effectiveness

Training (1968) that can be utilized in training teachers to effectively

use Method III in the classroom. The book is used as a supplement to and

skill practice for the classroom training provided in Teacher Effectiveness

Training.

Dreikurs' Adlerian Approach

Dr. Dreikurs has been a professor of psychiatry at the Chicago Medical School and director of the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago, has conducted child guidance clinics and training classes for teachers at universities, and is the author of nine books.

Dreikurs stresses that new principles of child raising are needed to replace obsolete autocratic tradition. The impact of democracy with social equality forces new child raising and educational principles of freedom with responsibility.

Every action of a child has a purpose; all behavior is goal-directed toward finding his place in the group (Dreikurs, 1968, p. 27). When a child misbehaves he feels such action will reap him social status. The child may use any four goals to achieve that status; they are attentionseeking, struggle for power, seeking revenge, or displayed inferiority. The misbehaving child will pursue one or more of these goals actively or passively (depending on self-confidence) and use constructive or destructive methods (depending on feeling accepted or antagonistic). The pattern of activity or passivity is difficult to change. It reflects the infant's evaluation of himself from early infancy. However, a child may move from constructive to destructive methods depending on his feeling of acceptance.

The two pairs of factors lead to four types of behavior patterns (Dreikurs, 1968, p. 30):

Behavior Pattern:

- 2. Active-destructive
- 3. Passive-constructive

Examples of Behavior:

- 1. Active-constructive 1. First in class, teachers pet
 - 2. Clown, bully, rebel
 - 3. Receive attention by charm
- 4. Passive-destructive 4. Laziness, stubborness

Goal 1 (attention getting) is the only goal which is achieved by all four behavior patterns. Goal 2 (power) or 3 (revenge) are generally sought through active- and passive-destructive means. Goal 4 (inadequacy) uses only passive-destructive methods. If a child's behavior deteriorates it will frequently move from active-constructive AGM (attentiongetting mechanism) to active-destructive power to active-destructive revenge. Another frequent move is from passive-constructive AGM to passive-destructive AGM to displayed inability.

The child's environment is inner (hereditary) and outer. There are three factors in the outer environment which affect the development of the child's personality. The first is family atmosphere; the relationship between parents sets the pattern for all family relationships. The second is family constellation, or relationship of each family member to each other family member. Each person in the constellation behaves according to how he sees his position in the family. His behavior, in turn, influences the behavior of every other child. The third factor is the prevalent methods of training (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 35).

Dr. Dreikurs stresses several principles to use in all contact with children. Of primary importance is encouragement.

- 1. Encouragement: Its lack is the basic cause for misbehavior.

 Discouraged children misbehave. Encouragement gives the child a sense of self-respect and accomplishment. When a mistake is made separate the deed (skill) from the doer (value of the person). Encouragement expresses confidence and faith at all times, even when the child is failing (Dreikurs, 1968, p. 100).
- 2. Natural consequences: Natural consequences expresses the power of the social order and reality of the situation and not the power of the person. It permits maintenance of order without humiliating the child or creating latent hostility (Dreikurs, 1968, p. 100).
- 3. Reward and punishment: These do not belong in a democratic society. Children may not contribute without a reward, and retaliate when it is withheld (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 75).
- 4. Be firm without dominating: Domination means trying to impose one's will on others. Firmness expresses one's own action. It is the maintenance of order (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 90).

- 5. Action instead of words: It is always more effective to act at the time of conflict, not verbalize (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 169).
- 6. Eliminate criticism and minimize mistakes: We build on strength not weakness. Criticism discourages the child. Give the child constant encouragement. We must have the courage to be imperfect (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 108).
- 7. Sidestep the struggle for power: Be firm about what you will do in the situation, not what you will make the child do.
- 8. Withdraw from the conflict: There can be no battle nor winner if one has left the scene of the conflict (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 160).
- 9. Do the unexpected and avoid first impulse: First impulse reactions usually reinforces the child's mistaken assumptions (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 186).
- 10. Stay out of fights, stimulate independence, and don't feel pity:
 Often fights are an attempt to involve the adult. Pity teaches the child
 that life owes him something.
- 11. Be consistent: It is a part of order and establishes boundaries that provide the child with a sense of security (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 256.)
- 12. Have family councils: Majority opinion holds and all problems are family problems. Parents do not make decisions by themselves nor are the only ones presenting problems and offering solutions (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 305).
- Dr. Dreikurs applied the above principles as possible techniques in dealing with misbehavior problems faced by parents in the book <u>Coping</u>

 <u>With Children's Misbehavior</u> (1972). Examples of each of the four methods of misbehaving are listed with techniques of coping with those problems.

Also in <u>Psychology in the Classroom</u> he translates his principles of child guidance to practical use in the classroom. He deals with specific and nonspecific methods of behavior correction. He feels that any teacher can acquire the knowledge and sensitivity to understand the behavior of children.

Specific methods of correction are geared to the needs of any particular child. These methods include:

- 1. Observing the child: An accurate observation of any particular child necessitates the interplay of the whole class. The behavior and actions of the child in the class gives insight into his motivations. Every act is purposive and expresses the child's attitudes, goals and expectations.
- 2. Psychological investigation: This can be done through knowledge of the child's family constellation, contact with mother, written assignments, talks to understand the child's life style, attitudes and goals, and sociometric devices.
 - 3. Recognizing the child's goals:
- a. Through the meaning of behavior: A knowledge of the four goals of misbehavior is necessary to fit the child into his behavior patterns.
- b. Through the spontaneous reaction of the teacher: The teacher must learn to observe her emotional response to the child's misbehavior; this response is generally what the child wants her to do.
- c. Through the child's responses to correction: The purpose of the child's behavior will decide his reaction to the teacher's correction. For example, if a child misbehaves and the teacher curbs him, that child's behavior will stop if seeking attention but will get worse if involved in a power struggle.

4. Psychological disclosure: Short private conversations and class discussions can be used to let the child see the purpose of his misbehavior, never the why of it. Such an interpretation should always be preceded by asking the child whether he would like to know why he is doing a certain thing.

Nonspecific methods of correction are applicable to all children.

They include:

- l. Winning the child: A friendly relationship must first be established. To do this one must display sincerity. The relationship requires mutual respect, trust and equality.
- 2. Encouragement: Express faith and confidence in the child at all times.
- 3. Use of the group: The group can be used to influence the child and exert corrective influences.
- 4. Integration of the class: This can be done by creating interest, high morale, and a sense of purpose. Group spirit is broken down if there is a strong competitive spirit in the classroom.
- 5. Group discussions: The purposes served by group discussions are that everyone has to learn to listen, the discussions help children to understand themselves and each other when all talk is centered on the goals of the child's behavior, and discussions stimulate each child to help the other. Children learn more from each other than from what the teacher says.
- Dr. Dreikurs then concerns himself with the practical application of his psychological techniques to alter misbehavior, as well as cites many classroom case histories as instructive examples.

CHAPTER III

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF METHODS

One of the oft criticized basics of behavior modification is its use of reinforcement procedures. Many consider it to be mere bribery. Dreikurs states that reward and punishment teaches the child not to do something unless there is something in it for him. Good behavior on the part of the child should spring from his desire to belong, to contribute usefully, and to cooperate (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 74). Rewarding children with material things denies our children those feelings of contribution. Dr. Gordon feels that most children become fearful under such an adult power system. Using power to control children works only when the adult does possess the power (attractive reward and strong enough punishment to warrant avoidance) and the child does depend on the rewards. As the child becomes less dependent and helpless, the parent and teacher gradually lose this power. It especially is an unsuccessful method of training complex behaviors such as honesty, cooperation, kindness, etc. The mere fact that the use of reward and punishment requires extreme consistency, which Gordon claims parents cannot display toward their children, is a detriment to its use (Gordon, 1970, p. 173). O'Leary (1972, p. 260) says that token reinforcement can only be termed bribery, in the sense that reinforcement is a definite influencing process. Reinforcement principles are not dishonest nor immoral when they are used to establish behavior which is beneficial for the receiver of those reinforcement procedures.

Consistency is another fundamental rule in behavior modification (O'Leary, 1972, p. 41). Dreikurs also considers it to be a basic principle of parental behavior (1964, p. 256). The differing opinion is held by Gordon (1970, p. 14), who states that the parent does not have to be consistent in order to be effective. Parents are human--real people-not gods. Because their feelings change from situation to situation, they will be inconsistent. Dreikurs also feels that the child needs constant encouragement in order to gain a sense of self-respect and accomplishment. When the child fails the parent must "separate the deed from the doer" (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 38). "Courage to be imperfect" refers to the feeling that a person can make mistakes without lowering his selfesteem. The implication is also clear in the preferred use of behavior modification techniques of praise and approval and the elimination of emotion from punishment (O'Leary, 1970). But, here again, Gordon says that a real person does not have to pretend to feel accepting or loving toward a child when he genuinely does not feel that way (Gordon, 1970, p. 14). Parents sometimes feel accepting and unaccepting of the same child behavior. Children can sense the false acceptance by their parents; the child receives "mixed messages" (behavior that tells him it is all right to stay up but nonverbal cues that tell him the parent does not actually like him for staying up). A behaving child is the true child; the child's feelings of acceptance as a person are determined by how many of his behaviors are accepted by parents. If the parent admits that he does not accept the child as a person when he is misbehaving, the child will learn to perceive the parent as open and honest.

Gordon also conflicts with another basic tenet of behavior modification and Dreikurs. That is the principle of using action, not words

(Dreikurs, 1964, pp. 160, 169). Dreikurs feels that action rather than words is more effective in disciplining and that if one withdraws from the conflict there can be no winner. He also advocates staying out of fights. Gordon's P.E.T. philosophy centers on learning the correct form of communication to meet all circumstances. His training in active listening skills, "I-messages," and "no-lose" methods are concerned with family communication. There will be no active "winner" with Gordon, only understanding, compromise and acceptance. This is an important difference between Gordon's method and Dreikurs versus behavior modification.

The flexibility of Gordon's method allows each child to be treated as an individual personality. This is a danger in using a common set of rules to consistently follow with each child: if the program does not succeed, the contingencies, organizational plan, or consistency is blamed (never the fact that individual children differ). Here Flanders indicated a preference by his classification breakdown into direct and indirect influence and his statistical research indicating increased child growth by the indirect method (Amidon, 1971, pp. 86-88).

All three methods concur as to effectiveness of group process in decision-making. This is a recommended democratic procedure for the family (Dreikurs, 1964, p. 301), and the classroom teacher (Dreikurs, 1968, p. 185). He generally agrees with Gordon's ground rules (1970, p. 238) of equality, majority decisions and stress on family problems (not individual ones). Gordon uses his Method III as a basis for resolving conflicts as soon as they occur. The conflict may involve from two members to the entire family. While Dreikurs feels that a family conference should occur at definite times (consistency), Gordon prefers "on the spot" handling of conflicts. Behavior modification experts also see the

effectiveness of the peer group; the group is a strong reinforcer and modifier of troublesome behavior.

A final question, which may well be the most important, is the question of responsibility for the child's behavior. It is on this basis that authoritarian and indirective advocates do differ in belief. Gordon says that when a child reveals a problem, the parent, by active listening and decoding, can only help the child find solutions to his own problems. When the parent owns the problem he can try to modify the child directly, modify the environment, or modify himself. This is done by "I-messages." When the relationship owns the problem (when both parent and child are involved in the problem), only a "no-lose" method of solving the conflict is possible. Behavior modification does not agree. It is in fact a criticism often raised against them -- the fact that they assume responsibility for the child's behavior when they initiate reinforcement programs. Dreikurs, while advocating a new democratic method of child-raising based on freedom and responsibility, demonstrates (in his concentration on specific solutions to all situations) that he seems to be fearful in practice of what he teaches in theory. Dreikurs states (1964, p. 77) that parents do not have the right to assume the responsibilities of their children, nor should they take the consequences of their children's acts. His use of logical consequences is meant to show the child the child's consequences as a result of his actions. No threats or emotion may be shown. His use of natural consequences represents the pressure of reality without any needed parental action and is even more effective. Behavior modification people would applaud these techniques. Dreikurs thus turns from authoritarian control of children and imposition of will to his democratic guidance of children.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

All methods described in this paper are effective under certain conditions; Dreikurs and Gordon have testimonial effectiveness only, while behavior modification and Flanders have recorded tested effectiveness. All methods are advocated within the education field today.

Author's Opinion

What follows is the opinion of this writer and is the subjective attempt to find the method that will best work for me in a classroom and in doing consultant work with other teachers to improve the learning environment. I have found behavior modification to effectively alter students both behaviorally and in attitude when applied individually and for the entire group. I have observed, however, that behavior modification does not seem to be universally effective for every individual student or teacher. All students simply do not react similarly under the imposed program. Teachers, even when trained to apply behavior techniques, do not do so identically. This author feels that the individuality of both teacher and student do not make behavior modification techniques universally applicable.

Cordon's teacher training effectiveness method does allow each teacher to alter his verbal approach with students in such a manner that long-lasting attitudinal changes can occur for both teacher and student. The author feels that if such a change can occur in teachers, it is decidedly preferable to learning techniques that are applied situationally and are not always effective.

In the author's experience, after having done consultant work with individual teachers and problems they have in the classroom, not all teachers are open to such a change in their verbal behavior. Many teachers would feel such an asked for change to be a personal threat to their teaching ability and worth as an individual. Flanders may be an effective tool to use here to demonstrate to teachers the reality of their verbal communication in the classroom. Once that reality is shown, teachers may be more open to active involvement in the teachertraining program. Teachers need to see the need to change their classroom environment before any training can be effective.

State of Development

Gordon's effectiveness training is the most totally developed training program for an entire school to use, provided monies are available. The author, however, would like to see tested effectiveness (both immediate and long-term) of desired verbal teacher change after completion of the program.

Flanders' program, while being effective in showing the reality of present teacher verbal communication, offers no program to train teachers to alter communication results once they are known. This is why the author feels that a total program involving Flanders and Gordon would be desirable.

Dreikurs and behavior modification are techniques that could be effectively applied to individual classroom situations, but the author feels that they are not a total panacea for the teacher.

In the author's opinion what is needed in education today are teachers who are flexible and open to change, open to children, and actively desire to do the best they can. It is not as much a knowledge criteria as it is a personality criteria. Facts are subject to change; it is more important for a teacher to be able to interpersonally deal with children in an effective, therapeutic manner. If the existing teachers in a school cannot do so, every effort should be made to give them the necessary skills.

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