

THE EFFECTS OF CONTINGENT REWARDS ON THE DECREASE OF IMPROPER VERBALIZATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to implement a contingent rewards system to reduce the number of improper verbalizations made by two special education high school students. The effectiveness of the intervention was examined in an ABAB design. The participants were two; eighth grade males with learning disabilities. The study was conducted in a middle school resource room in a rural school district. The behavior measured was the number of inappropriate verbalizations. An inappropriate verbalization was defined as any verbalization during classwork that was out of turn, without being called upon, or disruptive to the rest of the class or teachers. Also, yelling, shouting, swearing, or repeated use of a teacher or teacher's aide's name were marked as improper verbalizations. Our results indicated a reduction in the number of improper verbalizations through the use of the contingent rewards system. The number of improper verbalizations increased during a brief return to baseline. The benefits of employing this procedure to reduce the number of inappropriate verbalizations were discussed.

Keywords: inappropriate verbalizations, efficacy, ABAB reversal design, learning disabilities, rural middle school, resource classroom

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