

THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER USE OF
THE VERBAL I-MESSAGE
ON DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR
IN PRIMARY GRADE CLASSROOMS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been hypothesized that the personal orientations needed by teachers to keep a group controlled and moving toward work goals differ from those involved in satisfying the expressive needs of the same group. Considerable strain and tension might exist in any profession in which the two types of leadership were basic requirements (Bales, 1956).

National polls of neophyte and experienced teachers proclaim "discipline" as a paramount concern (Fraser, 1975). "Discipline problems" count significantly among reasons given by teachers for leaving the field (Gnagey, 1973). In 21 studies of sources of anxiety in both beginning and experienced teachers, "discipline" or "problems with student" were listed as chief sources of tension in 16 of the studies (Coates & Thorenson, 1974). While the incidence of anxiety may be no greater for teachers than for other professional groups (Bentz, Hollister, & Edgerton, 1971), the evidence is impressive that teachers experience considerable strain, tension, and anxiety in the classroom. The need to perform dual roles as both disciplinarians of students and facilitators of affective growth may be a source of such strain (Fuller, 1969; Gordon, 1974).

Historical considerations of disciplinary trends have indicated a swing toward a more humanistic philosophy embracing the acceptance of a variety of behaviors within groups and even within the individual (Cronbach, 1963). Increasing effort has been directed toward the development of student-oriented models of teaching which emphasize the importance of both the affective and cognitive domains (Aspy, 1972; Brown, 1971). In these models, the teacher is less likely to be described in terms of his or her ability to maintain control and more likely to be described in terms of his or her ability to improve interpersonal conditions in the classroom (Carkhuff, 1969; Roebuck, 1975; Rogers, 1957). Evaluations of both new and experienced teachers usually include a teacher-pupil relationship dimension (Withall & Lewis, 1963). School districts charge their teachers to teach "the student explicitly and by example the conduct that is expected at school," while at the same time giving the teacher responsibility for "maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning" (Code of Conduct, Dallas Independent School District, 1975).

Statement of the Problem

Maintaining control or "discipline" has never been a sufficient goal for the majority of teachers (Jackson & Belford, 1965). Placing interpersonal qualities such as warmth, patience, and consideration for students at the

heart of their warrant for teaching, teachers may feel endemic tensions within the controlling aspects of their role (Lortie, 1975). They continue to look for ways to cope with these tensions which will not destroy the classroom climate, their relationships with students, nor their ability to maintain discipline. Lortie (1975) suggests that teachers, often with little training in appropriate skills, search for a point in their classroom behavior where the two competing requirements of maintaining discipline and meeting interpersonal needs find an acceptable balance. For teachers to believe that one need must be sacrificed to the other may be to believe that they are either inadequate or unfit for the job (Knoblock & Goldstein, 1971).

Are there skills which teachers could learn which would serve to enhance their chances of maintaining discipline and at the same time sustaining good relationships with their students? In particular, could teachers' verbal responses when confronting student behavior unacceptable to them be improved in order to have a higher probability of influencing students to change that behavior while lowering the probability of damaging the teacher-student relationship? It was to the investigation of the effectiveness of one such verbal skill that this study was directed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gather evidence concerning the possible effectiveness of a teacher's use of the verbal skill called the "I-Message" to reduce disruptive student behavior.

The I-Message is a basic technique taught in Teacher Effectiveness Training. Devised by Dr. Thomas Gordon, Teacher Effectiveness Training is a course for teachers which focuses on improving teacher-student relationships. The I-Message is used by teachers to influence students to modify behavior, such as disruptive classroom behavior, which causes the teachers a problem. A complete I-Message contains a description of the students' unacceptable behavior, the feeling experienced by the teacher, and the tangible effects or consequences of that behavior on the teacher.

Major Procedures of the Study

In carrying out the study to fulfill the above stated purpose, the major activities were:

1. Devising a short training program to instruct the teachers in the use of the I-Message.
2. Implementing the program with the teachers.
3. Conducting research into the effects of the use of the I-Message on the frequency of disruptive student behavior.

4. Gathering both oral and written reactions from the teachers on their use of the I-Message.
5. Securing evidence as to which teachers had continued the use of the I-Message after the conclusion of the observation procedures.

Research Question

The activities described above were devised by the investigator to fulfill the purpose of this study and to answer a specific research question. The question posed was: Will consistent teacher-use of the I-Message in confronting disruptive student behavior be accompanied by changes in the frequency of student disruptive behavior?

Survey of the Literature

Relevant references to related literature are cited throughout the study in support of procedures, limitations, conclusions, and other elements. The rationale for this study is supported by the concise survey of significant related literature presented in this section.

Although discipline is a word which is defined in many different ways (Cronbach, 1963), it is usually understood to be that set of procedures which teachers use to deal with disruptive student behavior and to enforce school and classroom rules (Robison & Schwartz, 1972). It is most often perceived by parents as control of students or a system of law enforcement (Hymes, 1955).

There is no shortage of techniques which teachers may use to decrease disruptive or inappropriate student behavior (Gnagey, 1973). Teachers may range from examination of the philosophical and ethical questions involved (Redl, 1965) to the importance of using preventive measures (Good & Brophy, 1973) or the application of specific solutions which are found listed by classification of behavior (Becker, 1971; Blackham & Silberman, 1975; Dollar, 1972; Madsen & Madsen, 1971). The methods of choice in coping with disruptive students in the classroom, however, are usually behavior modification and analysis methods (Gold-Fein, 1974; Lipe & Jung, 1971).

Research in the teacher's use of praise and approval (Becker, Madsen, Arnold, & Thomas, 1967; Madsen, Becker, & Thomas, 1968) and token reinforcement (O'Leary, Becker, Evans, & Saudargas, 1969; Osborne, 1969) represents some of the most concrete attempts to make explicit the procedures by which teachers can deal with behaviors which they consider disruptive. To date, however, there is limited evidence supporting the applicability of behavior modification procedures to entire classrooms (GoldFein, 1974). Despite the apparent simplicity of the techniques, the implementation of the procedures is not easy, especially where one teacher must affect the behavior of large numbers of children (O'Leary & O'Leary, 1972). Even when

attempts have been made to teach the most successful techniques to teachers, little effort has been made to guide them in actual classroom practice (Klein & Hapkiewitz, 1973).

Considerable controversy has arisen concerning the goals and ethics of the principles involved in behavior modification (O'Leary & O'Leary, 1972; Winnett & Winkler, 1972). Whelan and Haring (1966), two of the most frequently cited behavior modification advocates, have stressed the need for an understanding of the consequences of any classroom behavior strategies which ignore the student's feeling of self-worth and deny to that student the satisfaction of assuming responsibility for his or her own behavior. The authors warn against any superficial or surface controlling behavior on the part of the teacher which ignores the deeper level of attitudes, both positive and negative, which contribute toward the classroom climate. What Whelan and Haring call "classroom climate" has become the most popular vantage point for the study of teaching (Hymes, 1974).

Reference to "climate" is often a reference to intangibles which are complicated to assess and not usually related to books, learning strategies, or equipment, although all of those things may have some influence (Bernard & Huckins, 1974). Most often the concern is with the quality of personal interaction and the emotional tone or

atmosphere in the classroom (Gazda, Asbury, Balzer, Childers, Desselle, & Walters, 1973). Flanders (1965), in summarizing research projects on classroom climate, described it as "generalized attitudes which the participants share about each other" (p. 3). These attitudes seem to arise from the many contacts and transactions between the teacher and the students in the school day.

Anderson and Brewer (1945) conducted a series of research projects on classroom climate and concluded that the teacher more than any other person sets the emotional tone in the classroom and that the general behavior of the children is a response to the behavior of the teacher. Studies since 1945 have supported these conclusions and proposed that the teacher-pupil relationship may affect students at deeper psychological levels than was earlier supposed (Good, Biddle, & Brophy, 1975; Flanders, 1951; Kearney & Rocchio, 1955; Perkins, 1951; Withall, 1949). This emphasis on the importance of the teacher in the setting of classroom climate has led to what Rosenshine and Furst (1973, p. 175) call "a maze of instrumentation" to discover the specifics of interaction and teacher behavior which produce the most effective teaching. The behavior which has proven to be the most pervasive is verbal behavior (Hughes, 1962; Meachem & Wiesen, 1974).

Whatever concept of teaching prevails, teacher-talk is

accepted as a part of it (Hyman, 1974). Teaching, however, involves talking in a special way. Verbal exchanges take place with students whose bonds in the relationship are marked by a low degree of volunteerism; who are immature; and who must be dealt with in a group context (Johnson, 1970).

Despite pressures to individualize instruction, teachers are continually constrained by "classness" (Lortie, 1975, p. 124). Actions and communications with one child are usually visible and audible to others. Even those who do not participate in a given episode of interaction with the teacher may respond to that teacher's behavior (Kounin, 1970; Kounin & Gump, 1958). The teacher's verbal attention exercises an impressive amount of control over the behavior of all of the students (Meachem & Wiesen, 1975).

There is little evidence to date, however, that teachers are aware of their verbal teaching behavior or the impact of that behavior upon students. They have often been unable to describe accurately even the percentage of time which they spend in talking (Emmer, 1967). Despite evidence that effective classroom teaching is enhanced when teachers are able to analyze their own reactions to the inputs of students and their subsequent responses to the students (Bernard & Huckins, 1974), teachers appear to be generally ignorant of precisely what they say and do (Adams & Biddle,

1970).

Jackson (1968) has pointed out that teachers, especially those in early grades, may engage in more than 1000 interpersonal exchanges in a day. The teacher is in constant conversation with groups and individuals; many of the conversations occupy only brief spans of time (Robison & Schwartz, 1972). Involved as they are in a process in which the emotional involvement can be great, teachers may be unable to perceive the degree to which their interactions are governed by traditions, expectations, and learned responses. Even decision-making regarding classroom control is primarily an intuitive judgment (Ausubel, 1965).

By the time people begin teaching, they have been exposed to conventional teacher roles for more than half their lives (Hoyle, 1969). This exposure takes place during ages of high impressionability; the ages when "significant others" (Combs, 1962) are used as standards for future behavior. Gewinner (1968) found that student teachers tended to change strongly in the direction of authoritarian attitudes once in the classroom. Hoy (1967) pointed out that beginning teachers changed from a humanistic to a custodial approach which stressed bureaucratic control over others. Iannacone (1963), in analyzing daily logs of student teachers, found that, although they initially showed strong disapproval of their cooperating teacher's methods which contrasted with

their training emphases, they used the same unacceptable methods when they began teaching. A well-established stereotype and set of expectations seems to have developed about what actions teachers should take, what feelings they should have, and what they should say. The majority of teachers have introjected these images or myths (Greenberg, 1969). Subsequently, teachers often respond according to prescribed roles rather than by expressing what they really mean or feel (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967).

While the bulk of investigations on human relations in teaching has focused on skills for helping another person, one aspect of the teacher's role has been relatively neglected (Fine, 1975). There has been little instruction to equip a teacher to break free of stereotypic "role" functioning and to verbally express individual feelings in the classroom (Aspy, 1972). By avoiding the emotional aspects of learning in teacher education, in-service activities, and supervisory procedures, teachers may be poorly prepared to deal effectively with emotions in the classroom (Goldhammer, 1969). Teachers should be able to deal with both intrapersonal as well as interpersonal problems in order to establish meaningful relationships with students. They must be free to admit to having a variety of feelings (Glidewell, 1951). Research indicates that the subjects of inducing learning, encouraging the love of learning, eliciting

positive feelings and high effort in students while also maintaining discipline arouse strong feelings in teachers (Lortie, 1975). These are subjects close to the heart of the teachers' definition of mastery of their craft.

Rationale

1. Teachers are charged with dealing with disruptive or inappropriate student behavior.
2. Teachers are considered to be the dominant force in the establishment of a classroom climate conducive to learning.
3. Teachers want both appropriate relationships with students and appropriate behavior from them.
4. Teachers express frustration with the apparent contradictions in their roles.
5. Teacher-talk is the most pervasive type of communication in the classroom.

What may be needed by teachers, then, are specific communication skills which offer complementary interaction between and mutual enhancement of the needs for both the appropriate student behavior and the appropriate teacher-student relationships.

Background of the I-Message

Teacher Interpersonal Communication Skill Models

Interpersonal communication has been recognized as an important dimension of the teacher-student relationship and,

as such, would seem to be an area rich in methodological opportunities (Barbour & Goldberg, 1974). Currently, the most publicized models for the training of teachers in interpersonal communication skills are based on the works of two authors. They are Robert Carkhuff's Helping and Human Relations (1969) and Life Skills Series (1972-1975) and Thomas Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training (1972).

Both of these models were developed in part from Rogerian theory. Carl Rogers (1951) proposed a shift from content-oriented education to process-oriented education. He took the position that a meaningful relationship between the learner and the teacher was crucial, and that such a relationship would depend on mutual understanding in a non-threatening, non-evaluative, accepting atmosphere. Mutual understanding could only develop where there was an adequate communication of facts, feelings, and personal meanings (Rogers, 1957).

Investigations of the Carkhuff model and variations of it in the educational context have indicated that, in general, training teachers to be more responsive to the students' affective needs is positively correlated with gains in student achievement, positive attitude changes in students, and increased student attendance (Aspy & Hadlock, 1966; Aspy & Roebuck, 1976; Carkhuff & Berenson, 1969; Kratochivil, Carkhuff, & Berenson, 1969). Aspy and Roebuck's

research (1976) particularly gives promise that large groups of teachers can be trained successfully to use interpersonal skills in the classroom and that those skills can be translated into improved student performance.

Training modules developed from Carkhuff's model do not deal with disruptive student behavior directly but approach it tangentially by training teachers to accept student feelings, to increase student involvement in the classroom, and to use praise constructively (Aspy & Roebuck, 1976). Thomas Gordon's model, however, does present and discuss a mode of verbal response which he claims can be used effectively by teachers at all grade levels as a response to disruptive student behavior.

Thomas Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training

Teacher Effectiveness Training (Gordon, 1972) is a commercially distributed course for teachers aimed at the prevention of classroom problems by teaching specific communication skills. It is a 30-hour didactic and experiential laboratory workshop program which uses concepts from Rogerian theory, from S. M. Jourard (1964), and from Gordon's theory of non-authoritarian leadership, described in his books, Group Centered Leadership (1955), Parent Effectiveness Training (1970), and Teacher Effectiveness Training (1974).

The following is a brief description of what is taught in Teacher Effectiveness Training (Gordon, 1971):

1. Teachers are taught to differentiate between those situations in which the student is making it difficult for himself or herself to meet his or her own needs as a person separate from the teacher, and those situations in which the student is making it difficult for the teacher to meet his or her own needs.
2. Teachers are given skill-training in those forms of verbal communication which have been shown to be most effective in helping another person overcome difficulties in meeting his or her own needs. Teachers are taught the particular forms of communication utilized by professional counselors. These skills are based on methods for keeping the locus of responsibility for problem-solving with the student who actually owns the problem.
3. Teachers are given skill-training in methods of preventing conflicts between teacher and child; such as enriching or modifying the classroom, preparing the student ahead of time for change, and conducting participative decision-making meetings for setting rules and policies that will govern the students' behavior in future situations.
4. Teachers are given skill-training in using a method of resolving conflicts between teacher and students whereby teacher and students mutually search for a solution that

will be acceptable to both.

5. Teachers are given skill-training in those forms of verbal communications that have been shown to be most effective when one person wants to influence another person to modify behavior that is interfering with the needs of the first person; methods of confrontation that have a low probability of producing guilt and resistance and a high probability of maintaining the other's self-esteem. Teachers learn how to confront the student with "I feel . . ." messages and to keep the locus of responsibility for the problem with themselves. It is this last skill - the I-Message - which provides the focus for this study.

Thomas Gordon (1972) believes that teachers can and should give up the use of power. He grants that physical power may have to be used in emergency situations, but he opposes the use of psychological power. Power is rejected on the grounds that it is damaging to people and relationships and because it undermines his method of conflict resolution (Brown, 1976).

Gordon proposes that in the long-term, interactional relationships in the classroom, conflicts between teacher and student will certainly occur. There will be student behavior which cannot be handled effectively by accepting the student's feelings or simply ignoring the behavior.

The student's behavior will actually or potentially interfere with the teacher's legitimate needs and goals.

When working with teachers in the early development of the model, Gordon discovered that most teachers expressed a desire to have close relationships with students but feared to do so because they felt that they would lose both the students' respect and control over the class. Subsequently, they tended to develop two personalities; one for teaching and one for discipline.

Like Ginott (1972), Gordon found that when most teachers confront students about their behavior, they tend to fall into habitual language patterns. They have been conditioned to respond to unacceptable behavior by using types of responses which Gordon calls "You-Messages" because all such messages contain the pronoun "you" or, as a result of the structure of the language, the "you" is implied (see Appendix A for a more complete description of You-Messages). You-Messages tend to be primarily solution responses or put-down responses.

In solution responses the teacher tells the students exactly how to modify their behavior, what they must do, had better do, should do, or might do. In these responses the teacher hands out the solutions and expects the students to accept them. A positive behavior change may be accompanied by a negative attitude change. This type of response

contains information about the students, but never about the teacher. The students only know that the teacher has decided that the students must change in a specific way.

Put-down responses carry evaluations, criticism, ridicule, and judgment. Such responses have the effect of placing blame and responsibility on students for causing the teacher a problem. The student who has a positive concept of himself or herself may discount the message, but when it is said to a young child, the message is heard when the self-concept is in its formative stage. To a large extent, the teacher's language determines the student's destiny (Ginott, 1972).

According to Gordon (1974, p. 130), consistent use of these responses or messages has a high probability of producing one or more of these effects or outcomes:

1. The student will resist changing.
2. The student will feel that the teacher doubts his or her worth.
3. The student will feel that the teacher has little consideration for his or her needs.
4. The student will feel guilty, ashamed, or embarrassed.
5. The student will feel a lessening of self-esteem.
6. The student will feel defensive.
7. The student will feel provocation for seeking revenge.
8. The student will feel discouraged and give up.

The I-Message

Gordon suggests that the teacher use a type of verbal response to unacceptable behavior which he calls an I-Message as a positive alternative to the You-Message. The I-Message contains the following three elements (Cline, 1970):

1. A description by the teacher of the student's disruptive or unacceptable behavior.
2. The teacher's feelings in reaction to the student's disruptive or unacceptable behavior.
3. An explanation of how the student's behavior interferes with the teacher's ability to answer his or her own needs.

Example: (You-Message) "Henry, stop being so rude and be quiet."

(I-Message) "Henry, when you interrupt me while I am speaking (1), I get frustrated (2) because I cannot concentrate on teaching (3)."

According to Gordon, I-Messages meet the criteria for effective confrontation. They have a high probability of promoting a willingness to change. They contain a minimal negative evaluation of the student. They do not injure the relationship between teacher and student. Furthermore, the student's commitment to behavior change may be more powerful when the teacher's language is free of destructive dialogue.

I-Messages leave the responsibility for the students'

behavior with the students. Since the I-Message avoids a negative impact, students are freed to be considerate and helpful, not resentful, angry, or devious. The overall goal of this technique and of Teacher Effectiveness Training as a whole is to assist teachers in decreasing the proportion of their time which is spent in dealing with unacceptable student behavior.

Research on the I-Message

Gordon's concepts are taught nationally and are incorporated and applied by psychologists (Burns & Jenson, 1974; Piaget, 1972; Shoemaker & Paulson, 1972). Effectiveness Training Associates, Gordon's corporate training organization, regularly publishes abstracts of research done in the field on Teacher Effectiveness Training. Research to date, however, has been limited primarily to the effects of training in the entire model on the attitudes of pre-service and regular classroom teachers (Feedback, 1976). Only two sources have studied the I-Message in isolation.

Cline (1970) compared the effects of I-Messages and You-Messages on a group of fifteen university students by exposing them to two types of job interview situations. A confederate in one condition interviewed each subject for a non-existent job and confined himself to the use of You-Messages for the duration of the interview. A different confederate in the second condition also interviewed each

subject but confined himself to the use of the I-Message during the interview. The interviewer using the I-Messages was perceived by the subjects as "significantly more accepting" and as better meeting the conditions of the helping relationship than the interviewer using the You-Messages. There was also a tendency for the subjects to be less verbally defensive with the interviewer who used the I-Message.

Carducci (1974) compared the I-Message to commands in reducing the frequency of speaking-out and out-of-seat behavior in two fifth-grade classrooms. Per-minute frequency of those behaviors was reduced during the I-Message condition in both classrooms. Carducci concluded that the teachers' exclusive use of the I-Message as a direct response to both speaking-out and out-of-seat behavior was more effective than commands.

Carducci did not request the teachers to use the I-Message consistently during their teaching day. Rather, he instructed them to respond to every speaking-out or out-of-seat behavior during the periods of observation with either a command or an I-Message. The exact I-Messages used were not described so that it is not known if the teachers used a specific message or a variety of messages. Neither the teachers' reactions to the use of the I-Message nor any intention on their parts to continue its use were reported.

Need for the Study

The conceptualization of teaching has been undergoing some change. The humanistic orientation which holds that attitudes toward school and toward the teachers are important outcomes of education is reflected in the performance-based criteria of effective teaching (Khan & Weiss, 1973). In addition, the importance of teacher characteristics and the teacher's knowledge of teaching processes as a source of growth has resulted in specific models for developing humane interpersonal relationships.

Educators, however, find themselves the target of criticism for waste of money on time spent on "gimickry and innovation" (Biggs, 1976). The British research study reported in Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress (Bennett, 1976), although already reviewed critically (Schwartz, 1976), may give support to those who believe in the teacher-dominated classroom. Teachers face demands for stricter school discipline (Grantham & Harris, 1976). There is a continuing need for studies which capitalize on simple skills and behaviors in the classroom in order to specify what is helpful and unhelpful in effective teaching (Truax & Carkhuff, 1967).

Today's teachers show concern for the affective aspects of their work but they are uneasy about adopting affective-oriented techniques (Lortie, 1975). The value of any

technique is suspect until the teacher has tried it in the classroom and decided that it works for him or her (Southern Association of Education, 1973). Unfortunately, many of the theories and techniques concerning enhancing or changing student behaviors vary and are infrequently examined in actual practice. They are written about, however, as if they are correct (Blackham & Silberman, 1975).

The Bicentennial Commission on Education for the Profession of Teaching (Howsam, Corrigan, Denmark, & Nash, 1976) has described the teacher of the next decade as a person "who possesses a broad repertoire of skills" (p. 88) and is a "humanistic professional" (p. 135). The subject of discipline may be of great concern to teachers of the next decade also. It cannot be ignored as an area demanding effective and humanistic strategies. Without a repertoire of successful techniques in student control, teachers may be more open to methods of control which offer no long-range benefits to themselves or their students.

The I-Message is a verbal technique which Gordon has presented as a way for teachers to confront students about behavior which the teachers find unacceptable. However simple the technique may appear, it is a unique verbal response not normally found in classroom use (Fine, 1975). Its use as a pragmatic technique will be judged by the teachers on the basis of whether or not it works for them.

It will not be accepted by teachers without evidence that its use will not cause an increase in unacceptable student behavior. If it did not cause a measured increase in such behavior, or even more importantly, if its use caused a measured decrease in the frequency of disruptive student behavior, it could be offered to teachers as an effective technique to improve their classroom interactions.

Limitations of the Study

The constraints on the design of the study which limited the size of the sample, the amount of time and the number of days which observers could spend in the classroom presented limitations on the generalizability of the results of the study to larger populations.

A further discussion of the limitations of this study are presented at the conclusion of Chapter 3.

Summary of the Chapter

In this introduction the problem, purpose, and the major procedures of the study have been stated and a significant research question has been identified. The rationale for the study has been supported by a concise survey of related literature. The background of the I-Message, including a brief description of Thomas Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training and related interpersonal-skills training for teachers, has been indicated. The I-Message and the You-Message have been defined and certain

limitations have been noted.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Planning the Study

A proposal to conduct the study was submitted to and accepted by the Dallas, Texas, Independent School District. The investigator was assigned to carry out the research at an elementary school in the district subject to the agreement of the school's principal and to certain other constraints (see Appendix B). The school is one of five schools in the district designated as Learning Centers in the Dallas Teacher Education Center Project. Subsequent to a meeting with the principal, the investigator was invited to conduct the research at the school. The design and conduct of the study was guided at all times by the necessity of establishing and maintaining good relationships with the teachers, the principal, and the school district.

Subjects

The subjects for the study were the 110 children in the school's four second-grade classrooms. Although district policy specified that only volunteer teachers could participate in extra-district research, the second-grade teachers volunteered to take part in the study after hearing only a brief description of the procedures involved. They were

told that they would be asked to use a specific form of verbal response to certain kinds of student behavior. They were not informed of the exact nature of the experimental condition.

Three of the teachers who volunteered were under 30 years of age and the fourth was under 35 years of age. Their experience ranged from six to eight years, and three had done all of their teaching at the school. All four of the teachers were female.

The decision to use the second-grade students and teachers was made after a conference with the principal revealed that paraprofessionals were used extensively in all kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, but that their participation in the study could not be secured. In addition, the number of observers required to study a sample consisting of both the second and third grades was more than the principal wished to accept into the school.

Design of the Study

The design of the study was subject to the constraints which existed in using the naturalistic setting. These constraints included a limitation on the size of the sample, the number of days which teachers could be expected to participate in the study, and the number of days on which observers were permitted in the classrooms.

The study was conducted in what was essentially a four-group, pretest-post-test control group design with repeated measures. Three intact classrooms with their teachers were randomly assigned to the experimental condition and one classroom with its teacher to the control group.

A baseline observation measure of disruptive student behavior (and the following procedures described in detail elsewhere) was taken in all four classrooms for five days. Following instruction in the use of the I-Message, the three teachers assigned to the training introduced its use into their classrooms. The teachers had three days in which to practice the I-Message under the supervision of the investigator before the observers returned to all four classrooms and resumed the observation procedures used during the baseline data collection period. Teacher-use of the I-Message and the observation procedures were continued for 10 days. Three weeks following the conclusion of the 10-day experimental condition period, an observer returned to all four classrooms to obtain an audio-tape recording of the teachers' verbal behavior in order to ascertain whether or not there had been any lasting effects of the training in the use of the I-Message on the teachers' responses to disruptive student behavior.

The Instrument

Using a form devised by the writer (see Appendix C for

a facsimile), the categories selected for rating student behavior as either disruptive or nondisruptive were those developed by O'Leary and Becker (1967) (see Appendix D for complete categories). Briefly, the general categories of behavior which were rated as disruptive were as follows:

(a) motor behaviors; standing up and moving about the room, disruptive movement; (b) noise with objects; noise made with objects that could be heard by the observer; (c) directly disturbing others and aggression; striking another student, throwing objects, grabbing objects off another's desk; (d) orienting responses; turning to look at another student or showing objects to another student; (e) vocal noises; making comments loudly, singing, laughing loudly; (f) talking; carrying on conversations with other students when it was not permitted; and (g) other; ignoring a direct question or command.

The categories had been tested and revised in actual classroom use by O'Leary and Becker until it was possible for them to get rater agreement at or about the 80% level. As they have finally evolved, the categories are considered by the authors to reflect behaviors which teachers usually do consider disruptive; which do involve behaviors that violate the usual rules of permissible behavior; and which do refer to observable behavior that can be rated without the need for making inferences.

Following a pilot study to see if the instrument would prove practical for the purposes of the study (see Appendix E), one new category was added. This category was called "gazing" (see Appendix D). A rating under this category indicated that the student being observed was not engaged in behavior described as disruptive nor was he or she attending to the task. In most instances, the child was looking off into space or around the room. The teachers in the pilot study indicated disapproval of this behavior if engaged in by many of the students or by one student for a long period of time.

Measure of Teacher-Use of the I-Message

Consistent use of the I-Message by the teachers was requested throughout the day. Understandably, the teachers did not want to have observers in their rooms all day. In order to estimate the degree to which the teachers followed the instructions on the use of the I-Message and to provide some data on the changes in their patterns of responses to disruptive student behavior, an audio-tape recording was made during each baseline and experimental condition observation.

It was impossible to assess the teachers' verbal behavior without their knowledge. They were aware at all times that they were being listened to by the investigator and recorded by the observers. The teachers' knowledge of the procedures and their frequent meetings with the investigator

helped to maintain consistency in their verbal behavior. The teachers were told that the records of their verbal behavior would be used only for the purpose of monitoring responses to student disruptive behavior and would be destroyed when they were no longer needed for that purpose.

Observers and Observer Reliability

Two observers were trained in the reliable use of the observation instrument for four days prior to the recording of baseline data. Both observers were experienced classroom teachers who were not presently teaching. One observer had taught for 17 years at all elementary grades. The second observer had taught for five years in both kindergarten and the primary grades. The observers were paid \$5.00 a day for the 20 days they were required to be at the school.

The investigator served as a reliability checker for both observers in all four classrooms. She had had experience in using the instrument and had been present in the classrooms prior to the entrance of the observers so that her presence was deemed less distracting to the teachers and students than the presence of two unknown observers.

The reliabilities of student observations were calculated according to the following procedure. A perfect agreement was scored if both observers recorded the same category of behavior within the same interval. A disagree-

ment was scored if the observers failed to record the same category of behavior within the same interval. The number of intervals of agreement were then divided by the number of intervals observed and multiplied by 100. There were two simultaneous but independent reliability checks in each classroom during the pre-baseline period; one during the baseline period, and one during the experimental condition period. The four reliability checks were consistently above 95%.

The investigator listened to the audio-tape recordings each afternoon and wrote out all responses by the teachers. These written records were used by the investigator to give specific feedback to the teachers concerning their daily use of the I-Message. The tapes were then delivered to one of the observers. The observer had had experience working with the I-Message. She listened to the tapes and wrote out the responses she heard. The written records were then compared on the following day.

Observation Procedures

The observers entered the classrooms each morning during a previously arranged time. This time had been designated by the teachers as a time requiring classroom silence and in-seat, independent work. Each of the four teachers occasionally took students to small groups in the back of the room while the rest of the class was engaged in the seatwork.

None of the teachers felt it necessary to explain the presence of the observers to the students. They commented that visitors were a weekly occurrence and that the students were accustomed to them. Both observers took care not to interact with any of the students in order to minimize their effect on the students' behavior.

Using a scanning sequence determined for each classroom during the pre-baseline period, the observers noted the time, started a tape recorder, and began the rating of seated students on a four-second observe, one-second record basis. When each seated student's behavior had been rated, the observers began again at the start of the sequence. Cessation of rating for any reason was indicated by a slashed line and the time. The time was again recorded when the rating was resumed. Observers remained in the classroom until they had rated approximately 30 minutes of student behavior. The time varied from day to day because of changes in the classroom schedules, but no time sample of less than 18 minutes was ever recorded. The general method of scanning for this study was based on procedures elaborated by Haring and Lovitt (1971) for use in gathering data on student attending behaviors.

Conducting the Study

The study was conducted in essentially the following six phases:

1. The observation procedures were explained to the teachers in an after-school meeting preceding the observers' first day in the school. At that meeting, the teachers listed the times when the observers could come into their classrooms and helped to select a place in the rooms where the observers could sit and receive an unobstructed view of the students. Each teacher also described what she considered permissible and non-permissible student behavior during the period when the observers would be present in her classroom. No attempt was made to influence the teachers' behavior, and they were asked to conduct their classes in their typical way.
2. The observers met with the investigator in the week preceding their first visit to the school. The general observation procedures were discussed and they familiarized themselves with the recording instrument and rating categories. Each observer randomly selected the two classrooms in which she would observe. Since the observers' written and verbal comments about activities in the

room could alert the investigator to possible problems, and the students were more likely to become accustomed to the presence of the same observer, it was deemed important that they remain in the same rooms for the duration of the study. The observers spent four mornings at the school practicing the rating procedures in the classrooms, anticipating possible problems, and discussing solutions with the investigator.

3. After the initial four-day training period, the students were observed on five consecutive days in order to estimate a baseline frequency of disruptive student behavior under the usual classroom conditions. Beginning at this time, the investigator made it a practice to visit briefly before school with the principal and with each teacher. In that way, possible deviations from the regular schedule caused by the presence of visitors, the occurrence of an assembly or special event, or the absence of the regular teacher could be planned for and the observers alerted to the slight alterations in the time schedules. The investigator was also

able to make sure that the observers' chairs were in place and that the teachers were prepared for their arrival.

The observers met with the investigator briefly before entering the classrooms and for a longer period following the observation sessions. During this second daily meeting, events occurring in the classrooms were discussed, the observers completed filling out the comment section of the recording instrument and left both the instrument and the audio-tape with the investigator before leaving the school.

4. Following the five-day baseline data collection period, three teachers met with the investigator for a one-hour, after-school session on the construction and application of the I-Message. None of the teachers were familiar with the I-Message or with Thomas Gordon's books. None of the teachers were using an I-Message as a response to disruptive student behavior at that time. The investigator is a credentialed trainer for Thomas Gordon's Effectiveness Training Associates. The information used, however, was taken from

Gordon's book, Teacher Effectiveness Training (1974), and no materials not readily available to other researchers were used.

The training session included modeling by the investigator of the I-Message delivery in response to classroom situations suggested by the teachers and practice by the teachers in response to various behaviors to which they felt they typically responded. The investigator gave the teachers a sheet which described differing intensities of feelings in response to unacceptable student behavior (see Appendix F) and the teachers practiced verbalizing these feelings. The teachers were also given a sheet with the I-Message formula on it (see Appendix G). They were requested to begin using the I-Message as a response to unacceptable student behavior on the following day. They were also requested not to discuss the I-Message or its use with the control teacher. The control teacher, Teacher C, was individually asked not to institute any new procedures designed to change student behavior. Specific instructions to the teachers were as follows:

1. Use your normal patterns of response to unacceptable student behavior. If you would ignore a behavior, continue to ignore it. If, however, you would normally respond to that behavior, use an I-Message.
2. Try to use a complete I-Message each time you respond. If you cannot, an incomplete I-Message is better than no I-Message at all.
3. Use a corrected message if you respond with your usual response. If you say, for example, "Sit down and be quiet," simply add an I-Message right after it, such as "When you stand up and talk, I am frustrated because I will be late starting my work."
4. Use a firm but not harsh or angry voice when delivering the I-Message.
5. For the duration of this study, please do not institute any new procedures related to changing unacceptable student behavior other than use of the I-Message.

During the following four days, the investigator

continued to visit with each teacher before school. In addition to that time, the investigator spent about 30 minutes a day in each of the three classrooms. The teachers' voices could be heard clearly through the transoms of each classroom. The teachers were aware of the investigator's presence, and it was often not necessary for the investigator to actually enter the classrooms in order to monitor the teachers' use of the I-Message.

At the conclusion of the first full day of the teachers' attempts to use the I-Message as a response to unacceptable student behavior in their own classrooms, the investigator began a practice of writing each teacher a note. In the note the investigator quoted good attempts at delivering the I-Message and suggested improvements for poor ones. Each teacher was also encouraged to continue using the I-Message and thanked for her daily participation in the study.

After the first day, the morning meetings gave the teachers an opportunity to respond to the note and to discuss any problems

individually. The teachers met with the investigator as a group two more times during the study.

5. Following the four-day training and practice period, the observers returned to all four classrooms and resumed the observation procedures begun during the baseline data collection period. Teacher-use of the I-Message as a response to disruptive student behavior and the observation procedures were continued for 10 days.

At the conclusion of the study the three teachers who had participated in the experimental condition were given a reaction form (see Appendix H). The investigator returned to the classrooms the following week and picked up the forms, thanking all four teachers for their participation in the study. She also gave each teacher a sheet bearing the average percentage of intervals of non-disruptive student behavior for her class during both the baseline and experimental condition periods.

6. Three weeks following the conclusion of the observations of student behavior, an observer

previously unassociated with the study returned to the school. The teachers were not informed of her relationship to the study, and she was introduced to them as a visitor. As visitors were a weekly occurrence in the school, the teachers were accustomed to a request to have a visitor spend some time in their classrooms. This observer made a 30 minute audio-tape recording of each of the four teachers during the same approximate times when the previous observations had taken place. She also made a written record of responses given by the teachers during that time. The tape was used for the purpose of determining whether or not any of the three teachers trained in the use of the I-Message had continued its use.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of the Data

The purpose of this study was to secure a measure of student behavior which would indicate any changes in the frequency of disruptive student behavior when teachers responded to such behavior with an I-Message rather than with their normal response. Tables 1-4 on the following pages display the data secured by the observers in each of the classrooms. On any one day of the study the percentage of each of the categories of student behavior was calculated by dividing the number of intervals in which a particular category of behavior occurred by the total number of intervals observed on that day. Percentages rather than frequencies were used because of deviations from the 30-minute time base caused by the presence of visitors, announcements, and special events.

Considerable thought was given to the presentation of that category of the rating instrument labeled "gazing." It was not disruptive student behavior as defined by O'Leary and Becker (1967) nor was it behavior that disturbed the learning of other students. However, recent research seems to indicate that the more time students spend working on

TABLE 1

STUDENT AND TEACHER BEHAVIOR BY BASELINE
AND EXPERIMENT DAYS
CLASSROOM A

		STUDENT BEHAVIOR			TEACHER BEHAVIOR	
		Dis- rup- tive	Gazing	Total	Non- Dis- rup- tive	I- Mes- sage Other
BASELINE DAYS	1	16.01	4.57	20.58	79.41	0 10
	2	17.00	1.49	18.50	81.40	0 7
	3	19.10	5.00	24.10	75.80	0 10
	4	12.23	2.10	14.34	85.66	0 8
	5	13.55	6.77	20.33	79.66	0 8
EXPERIMENT DAYS	1	38.38	2.02	40.40	59.59	3 M 2
	2	41.33	6.22	47.55	52.44	* *
	3	16.32	2.04	18.36	81.63	0 0
	4	13.42	.92	14.35	85.64	1 I 1 CI
	5	12.03	2.77	14.81	85.18	1 M 1
	6	8.03	.83	8.86	91.13	1 I 0
	7	11.21	3.03	14.24	85.75	2 I 1
	8	9.54	3.73	13.27	86.72	1 I 1 CI
	9	8.33	.55	8.88	91.11	0 1 CI
	10	13.07	.32	13.39	86.60	1 I 1

I - incomplete
M - mixed
C - corrected

* Substitute present

TABLE 2

STUDENT AND TEACHER BEHAVIOR BY BASELINE

AND EXPERIMENT DAYS

CLASSROOM B

		STUDENT BEHAVIOR			TEACHER BEHAVIOR	
		Dis- rup- tive	Gazing	Total	Non- Dis- rup- tive	I- Mes- sage Other
BASELINE DAYS	1	8.56	7.33	15.90	84.09	0 4
	2	8.64	5.40	14.05	85.94	0 3
	3	9.28	5.26	14.53	85.44	0 4
	4	5.52	3.06	8.58	91.41	0 4 *
	5	7.14	6.34	13.49	86.50	0 3 *
EXPERIMENT DAYS	1	6.68	2.78	9.47	90.52	2 I 0
	2	6.22	2.33	8.55	91.43	1 M 1 I 0
	3	3.48	1.58	5.06	94.93	1 2 C
	4	2.52	1.51	4.04	95.95	1 I 0
	5	4.05	2.36	6.41	93.58	2 I 1 C
	6	No data: Children taken for special project.				
	7	No data: Children taken for special project.				
	8	3.38	1.27	4.66	95.33	0 0
	9	3.48	2.14	5.63	94.37	1 I 0
	10	8.18	1.75	9.94	91.81	2 M 1 I 0

I - incomplete
M - mixed
C - corrected

* Aide

TABLE 3

STUDENT AND TEACHER BEHAVIOR BY BASELINE
AND EXPERIMENT DAYS
CLASSROOM C (control)

		STUDENT BEHAVIOR			TEACHER BEHAVIOR	
		Dis- rup- tive	Gazing	Total	Non- Dis- rup- tive	I- Mes- sage Other
BASELINE DAYS	1	29.65	4.18	33.84	66.15	0 7
	2	37.50	3.24	40.74	59.25	0 9
	3	36.81	1.64	38.46	61.53	0 7
	4	28.88	8.44	37.33	62.66	0 5
	5	37.03	.61	37.65	62.34	0 10
EXPERIMENT DAYS	1	47.00	.43	47.43	52.56	0 9
	2	48.24	3.21	52.04	48.53	0 6
	3	39.19	5.86	45.06	54.93	0 6
	4	36.36	.87	38.30	61.69	0 7
	5	43.46	7.51	50.98	49.01	0 8
	6	16.15	8.59	24.74	75.25	0 6
	7	15.12	7.80	22.92	77.07	0 8
	8	25.89	4.91	30.80	69.19	0 7
	9	24.43	.00	24.43	75.56	0 4
	10	40.64	7.89	48.53	51.46	* *

* Substitute present

TABLE 4

STUDENT AND TEACHER BEHAVIOR BY BASELINE

AND EXPERIMENT DAYS

CLASSROOM D

		STUDENT BEHAVIOR			TEACHER BEHAVIOR		
		Dis- rup- tive	Gazing	Total	Non- Dis- rup- tive	I- Mes- sage	Other
BASELINE DAYS	1	40.09	10.84	50.94	49.05	*	*
	2	4.88	4.56	9.44	90.55	0	3
	3	6.84	24.65	31.50	68.49	0	4
	4	6.19	1.76	7.96	92.03	0	4
	5	6.96	2.50	9.47	90.52	0	3
EXPERIMENT DAYS	1	5.97	5.16	11.14	88.85	4 I	1
	2	4.26	2.74	7.01	96.03	1 M 1 I	0
	3	10.82	4.77	15.60	84.39	1	0
	4	3.25	4.06	7.31	92.68	1	0
	5	4.37	3.12	7.50	92.50	1	0
	6	3.59	1.96	5.55	94.44	2	0
	7	3.62	4.22	7.85	92.14	0	0
	8	2.62	1.16	3.79	96.20	1 M 1	0
	9	5.84	1.46	7.30	94.50	1	0
	10	5.95	15.77	21.72	78.27	3	0

I - incomplete
M - mixed

* Substitute present

subject matter, the more they progress in that subject matter (Bennett, 1976). Gazing behavior might well be considered disruptive to the student's own learning. At the first meeting with the three teachers who participated in the use of the I-Message, all stated that they did indeed consider a great deal of gazing on the part of any or all the students incompatible with their goals and therefore unacceptable to them. Teachers were overheard responding to such "non-attending" behavior in the following days. Therefore, Tables 1-4 show disruptive behavior and gazing as separate categories and then totaled.

It has been pointed out earlier in this study that one of Thomas Gordon's goals in teaching teachers the use of specific facilitative communication skills to respond to unacceptable student behavior is to decrease the frequency of such behavior. Time not spent by the student in disruptive or gazing student behavior is increased teaching time for the teacher. The totaled percentage of intervals of disruptive and gazing student behavior in each of the classrooms is displayed in Figure 1. Figure 2 displays the percentage of intervals of nondisruptive student behavior in each of the four classrooms.

The average percentage of intervals in each category during both the baseline data collection period and the Experiment Days for each of the four classrooms is presented

FIGURE 1
 PERCENTAGES OF INTERVALS
 OF TOTAL DISRUPTIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR
 FOR ALL CLASSROOMS

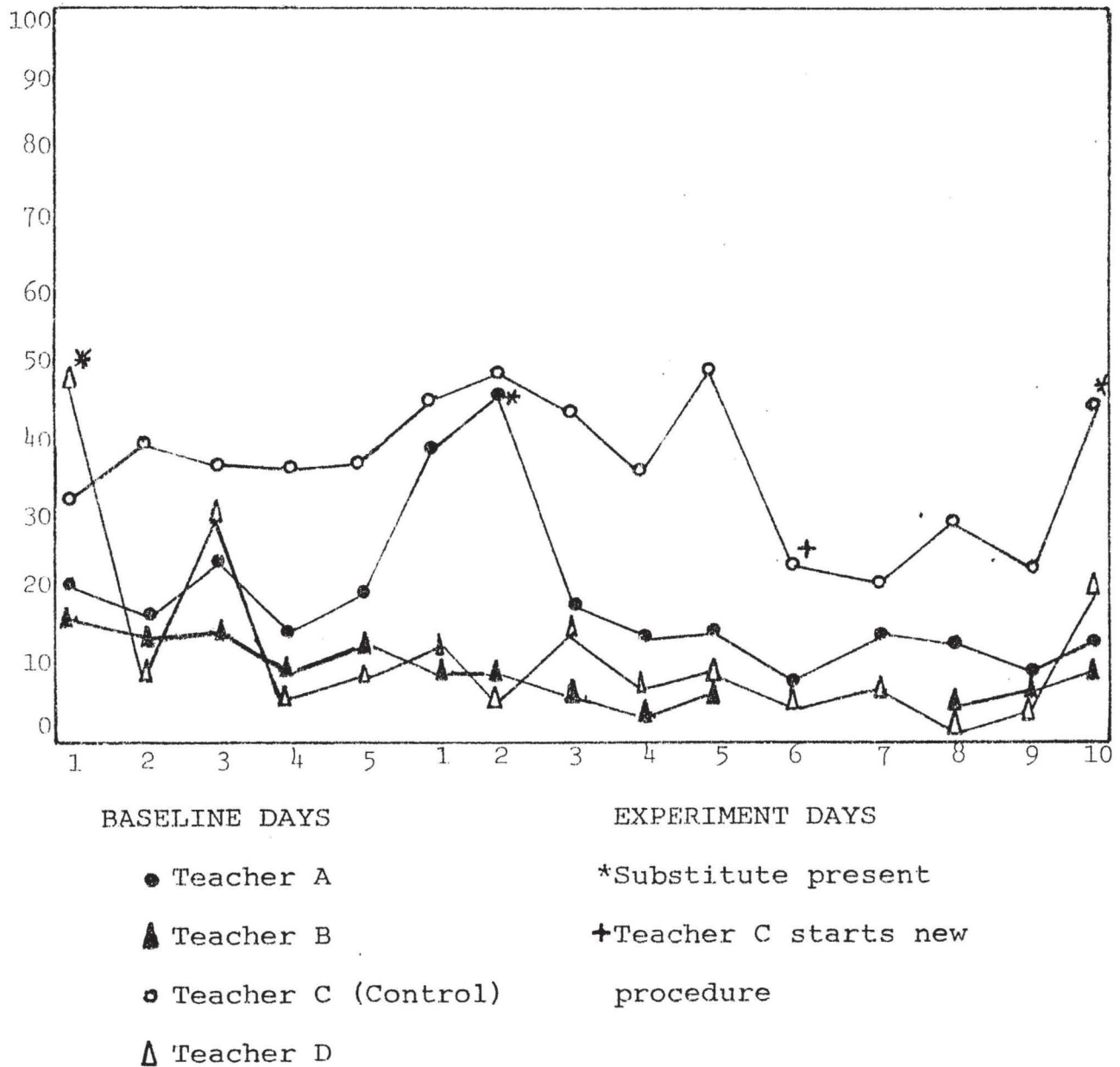
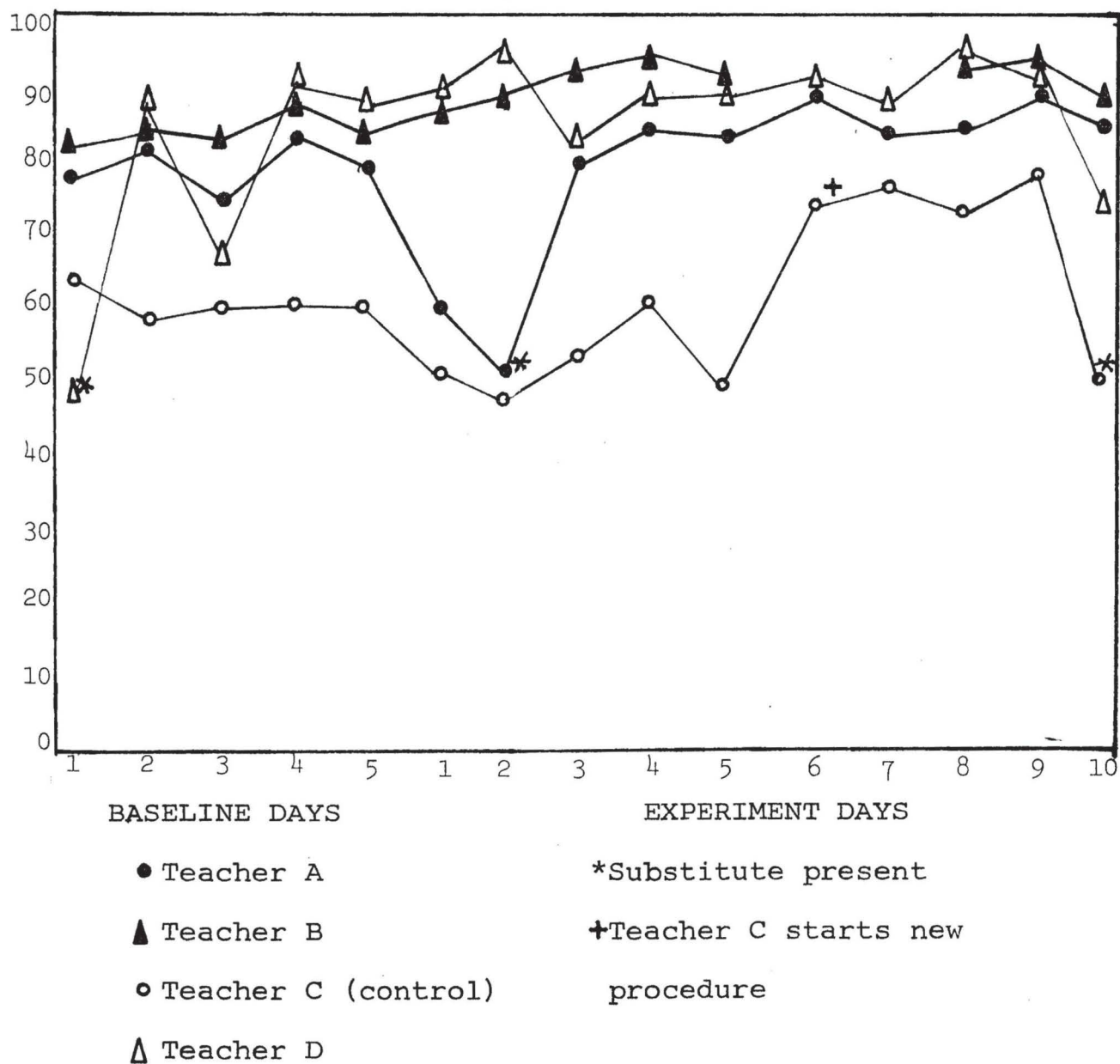


FIGURE 2

PERCENTAGES OF INTERVALS
OF NONDISRUPTIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR
IN ALL CLASSROOMS



in Table 5. The mathematical difference between the averages of the Baseline and Experiment Days in all categories is displayed in the last column. Data from days when substitutes were present is displayed in Tables 1-4 and Figures 1 and 2, but is not calculated into the averages presented in Table 5.

Success in securing any evidence of the effects of the use of the I-Message on the frequency of disruptive student behavior was dependent on the cooperation of the teachers and on their consistent use of the technique. Whether or not the teachers could learn to give a correct I-Message to their students became as important to the outcome of the study as the rating of student behavior. Tables 1-4 present the number on each day of the baseline and experimental condition periods of either the teachers' I-Message responses or non-facilitative responses to student behavior which they found unacceptable.

The teachers found delivery of the I-Message in its correct and total form difficult to master. Tables 1-4 show the type of I-Message which each teacher delivered. The messages were of the following types:

1. I-Message Incomplete: I-Message was incomplete. The teacher would give only a part of the I-Message. She would say, "When you talk, I feel annoyed" and leave out the tangible

TABLE 5

AVERAGE PERCENTAGES OF INTERVALS
OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

CLASSROOM A

	<u>BASELINE DAYS</u>	<u>EXPERIMENT DAYS</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
DISRUPTIVE	15.57	14.48	1.09
GAZING	3.98	1.80	2.18
TOTAL	19.57	16.28	3.29
NONDISRUPTIVE	80.38	83.70	3.32

CLASSROOM B

	<u>BASELINE DAYS</u>	<u>EXPERIMENT DAYS</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
DISRUPTIVE	7.82	4.74	3.08
GAZING	5.47	1.96	3.51
TOTAL	13.31	6.72	6.59
NONDISRUPTIVE	86.67	93.49	6.82

CLASSROOM D

	<u>BASELINE DAYS</u>	<u>EXPERIMENT DAYS</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
DISRUPTIVE	5.97	5.12	.85
GAZING	9.03	4.17	4.86
TOTAL	15.01	9.31	5.70
NONDISRUPTIVE	84.98	91.16	6.18

CLASSROOM C (control)

	<u>BASELINE DAYS</u>	<u>EXPERIMENT DAYS</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
DISRUPTIVE	33.97	32.87	1.10
GAZING	3.62	4.35	.73
TOTAL	37.60	37.41	.19
NONDISRUPTIVE	62.38	62.64	.04

effects of the student's behavior on her or she would say, "When you talk, I can't hear these students in the reading group" and leave out her feelings in response to the student's behavior. Teachers tended to adopt an individual pattern of delivery.

2. I-Message Mixed: The teacher would begin an I-Message correctly such as "When you get out of your chair, I feel frustrated because" and then she would end the message "you are supposed to know better than that."
3. I-Message Corrected: I-Message was corrected. The teacher would respond to student behavior with a non-I-Message such as "Be quiet," and then immediately correct it with some form of an I-Message.

Table 6 presents the number of I-Messages and non-I-Messages given by the teachers when the observer returned to the classrooms three weeks after the observations of students had ceased.

Findings and Discussion Relative to Individual Teachers

Because the teachers differed in their personal style of teaching and in the way they used and reacted to the I-Message, each teacher will be discussed individually.

TABLE 6

NUMBER OF I-MESSAGES OR OTHER RESPONSES
 DELIVERED BY TEACHERS THREE WEEKS AFTER CONCLUSION
 OF EXPERIMENT DAYS

	<u>I-MESSAGE</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
TEACHER A	0	5
TEACHER B	1 M	0
TEACHER D	(1 P) 1	0
TEACHER C (control)	0	6

M - mixed

P - positive

Teacher A

The teacher told the investigator that her only "discipline" problem was the excessive amount of talking the students did when they were supposed to be working. She commented that they did not pay enough attention to their work as a result of their chatting. She estimated that the students probably spent 50% of their time not working. When at the conclusion of the study the teacher saw the percentages of time her students spent attending to the task, she expressed both amazement and pleasure. During the baseline period, the students had averaged about 80% in the nondisruptive category. From day 3 of the experimental condition, student behavior averaged above 86% in the nondisruptive category (see Tables 1 and 5).

The teacher remarked that she did not have any particular problem children. This was supported by the impressions of the observer. The observer commented repeatedly on the students' ability to sustain attention to task throughout the time they were being observed. This view was supported by the rating sheets which showed no disproportionate number of "d" or "g" ratings near the end of the observation time. The teacher did not like the children to get up out of their seats during the work period. She said that she believed they needed to talk but that they had many other times of the day when talking was permitted and that for the most

part she preferred silence when they were supposed to be working independently.

Teacher A's normal type of response to disruptive behavior can be illustrated by the following responses she gave during the 30-minute observation time on the fourth day of the baseline data collection period:

1. "I'm not going to say it again. (Student name) Your end of the table is too noisy."
2. "You know what you are supposed to be doing. Do it."
3. "Button your lips."
4. "I told you to button your lips."
5. "Button your lips now."
6. "Shut your mouths."
7. "You are going to be sorry when your work isn't finished."
8. "Those people I spoke to are getting one more chance, but I can still hear you."

During the practice days, Teacher A cooperated fully, even to leaving the door of her room open in the afternoons so that the investigator could both hear and observe without actually entering the room. However, she had a difficult time mastering the correct delivery of the I-Message.

She appeared to be uneasy with the "feeling" portion of the message. She tended to use one word--"annoyed"--to

describe all her feelings even when her voice projected other feelings. In addition, it took her many days to learn to deliver the I-Message without using an angry tone of voice.

Teacher A's difficulties were not uncommon in the experience of Teacher Effectiveness trainers. Even with counseling and feedback, however, Teacher A was never able to deliver a correct three-part I-Message.

On Experiment Day 1 the observer, after leaving Teacher A's room, commented that the teacher sounded extremely angry. The percentage of disruptive behavior had risen from 13.55% on the last day of the baseline observation period to 38.38% (see Table 1). During the afternoon, the investigator confirmed the observer's impression. Teacher A was angry sounding and the class, even to a listener in the hall, was noticeably noisier. Passing the investigator in the hall, Teacher A remarked that she did not feel well and added that as far as feelings went, she couldn't see that the children cared anything about how she felt. A substitute appeared on the following day.

When she returned to school on Experiment Day 3, she did not make any response during the 30-minute observation period. On Experiment Day 4 she began using the word "irritated" as well as the word "annoyed" as her "feeling" portion of the I-Message. She returned to her normal tone of voice.

On the days when the tone of Teacher A's voice projected anger, the investigator seriously considered the possibility that she was finding the technique so frustrating to use that her anger was a result of that frustration rather than the students' behavior. Expressions of anger have been demonstrated to produce more disruptive behavior in children (Kounin, 1970). A teacher angry at having to alter her normal, and almost automatic, speech patterns would create more disruptive behavior and be convinced of the failure of the technique. Teacher A's unusual silence on Experiment Day 3 (see Table 1) was commented on by the investigator, and the teacher replied that she could not think of anything to say. If she had not been able to return to a more normal tone of voice, the investigator would have given serious thought to removing from her the pressure to use the I-Message.

Once Teacher A began delivering an approximation of an I-Message, the average percentage of intervals of non-disruptive student behavior changed from a baseline average of 80.38% to 86.72%. This included the final day, Experiment Day 10, when screams from a Halloween celebration across the hall could be heard clearly in the room.

On Experiment Day 4, Teacher A's responses to disruptive student behavior were the following:

1. "When you keep talking, it annoys me. I

want you to be nice and quiet (A Mixed I-Message)."

2. "I'd better write down names of people who don't care how I feel. When you just keep talking, I am irritated (A non-I-Message response corrected by an Incomplete I-Message)."

The most impressive change brought about in Teacher A's behavior during her attempts to use the I-Message was the reduction in the number of responses to disruptive behavior. The I-Message often has more words in it than a teacher's typical response; about 15 to 20 words in contrast with a command which may have only two or three words in it. On the days quoted, Baseline Day 4 and Experiment Day 4, the teacher spoke 50% fewer words. Whereas she had delivered her eight responses on Baseline Day 4 throughout the 30-minute period, on Experiment Day 4 she spoke only twice during the time the students were being rated. Her average number of responses during the baseline data collection was 8.6. The average during the time the teacher was attempting to use the I-Message was 1.8.

On her reaction form, Teacher A wrote the following:

Personally, I felt using the I-Message was difficult, especially with the total class. It seemed that when I used it, it was time consuming, and by the time I had finished giving the message, the effect had been

lost. It might have been more successful if I had started it the first day of school, but I think the children in my class just thought that I was being strange (or at least it seemed that way). I did try it in a one-to-one situation, and I think it works very well on that basis. I am just not sure that the class as a group cares much about how I feel when they don't do what I want them to do. It just takes too long and nothing happens.

When the audio-tape recording was made three weeks later, Teacher A had returned to the type of responses she had made during the baseline data collection period (see Table 6). Whether or not she was attempting to continue use of the I-Message in talking one-to-one with the students was not discernible.

Teacher B

At the first meeting with the three teachers who were to take part in using the I-Message, Teachers A and D described Teacher B, in her presence, as always having good control. Teacher B's reply to this was, "Well, that's good to hear, but there's always room for getting better."

Teacher B did have the lowest percentage of intervals of disruptive student behavior and subsequently, the highest average of percentages of nondisruptive student behavior of the four second-grade teachers (see Table 5 and Figures 1 and 2). She described her class as "a bunch of good kids" who worked pretty well. She did not want the children to talk during their work period unless it was absolutely necessary.

Teacher B's normal type of response to disruptive student behavior can be illustrated by the following responses she gave during the 30-minute observation time on the fourth day of the baseline data collection period:

1. "Have you a problem? If you don't, go back to work."
2. "Don't you understand what to do?"
3. "Please stay in your seat."

An aide appeared in the room on Baseline Days 4 and 5. On those two days, the aide sat with one group of children. She did not appear again until Experiment Day 6. On that day and the following one, Experiment Day 7, groups of students were taken out for a special music class and no rating of the students was done (see Table 2).

Teacher B never expressed any particular frustration with the I-Message. She remarked that she thought it was a good idea to tell the students what the results of their behavior were on her work as well as on themselves. The word she chose to use the most in the "I feel . . ." portion of the I-Message was the word "concerned." Having expressed a liking for the tangible effects portion of the I-Message, she often gave a correct message and then added what she thought would be the resulting tangible effects of the student's disruptive behavior on the student.

On Experiment Day 4, Teacher B's one response to

disruptive student behavior was the following:

"When people don't get their work done, it makes me have to plan all the work again for tomorrow (I-Message is incomplete because the teacher's feelings are not included)."

Teacher B had a relatively low rate of response to disruptive student behavior when compared to Teacher A (see Tables 1 and 2), averaging 3.6 responses to Teacher A's 8.6 during the baseline data collection period. During her attempts to use the I-Message, Teacher B's average number of responses dropped to 1.5, but the approximate number of words she spoke remained the same since her I-Messages tended to be longer than the responses she normally gave.

On Experiment Days 8, 9, 10, 13, and 14 the percentage of intervals of disruptive student behavior dropped below any day of the baseline data collection period. On Experiment Day 10 the screams from the Halloween spook house located directly across the hall from the second-grade classrooms were intermittent but loud throughout the total 30-minute observation period. Despite that distraction, the students spent 91.81% of the time in nondisruptive behavior. The observer commented that on that particular day, two of the boys spent the entire period devising protective armaments to ward off the ghosts they

were certain were in the spook house. Most of the disruptive behavior and gazing behavior was a result of their efforts.

On her reaction form Teacher B wrote the following:

I thought the idea as a whole worked very well. After the first day or two, however, I'm not sure that it had much more effect than saying anything else. I think the idea is good though, but do you think it would really have any long-term effect on children this young? I can see where it might probably be very good in high school. The form was a little difficult to use with the group. I found myself saying the same thing over and over and that bores me a little. When you really want to tell one child why you are upset with him, it's a good way to talk.

When the audio-tape recording was made three weeks later, Teacher B spoke only once during the 30-minute time (see Table 6). She said, "Does someone have a problem? I can hear talking, and it's frustrating because I can't hear these students. The ones who are talking won't get finished with their work." It was Teacher B's own form of the I-Message containing all the elements plus the addition of the tangible effects on the students.

Teacher D

Teacher D described her class as some of the best students, but always ready and willing to talk. She said that she had only one discipline problem and that she was sure that the observer would discover him immediately.

The observer did not discover the student's identity

during the pre-baseline days, but on Baseline Day 1 there was a substitute teacher present in the room and his identity was clear. The observer commented that the substitute had spent the entire 30 minutes that the observer was in the room responding to one student's disruptive behavior. It was the only day when the observer saw disruptive behavior that could be described by the first three types of behavior on the coding categories; running around the room, banging objects, and disturbing others directly by aggression. When the teacher returned, on Baseline Day 2, there was a marked decrease in the percentage of intervals of disruptive behavior (see Table 4) and the observer once again remarked that no student could be picked out as the one cause of ratings in any category of behavior.

On Baseline Day 3 the teacher was preparing a play with one small group of students. Unlike the other teachers who separated their small work groups from the whole class by seating them in the corner of the room behind partitions, Teacher D conducted her small-group work in almost the center of the room. The observer felt that the interest in the play rehearsal was generating the increased amount of gazing. The teacher's habit of conducting these groups in the center of the room made the low percentage of gazing on other days all the more remarkable.

Teacher D's normal type of response to disruptive

student behavior can be illustrated by the following responses she gave during the 30-minute observation time on the fourth day of the baseline data collection period:

1. "How can you do your work if you don't even look in your books?"
2. "Turn your chair around. I told you to."
3. "Go to work."
4. "Are you doing your work? It looks like talking to me."

At the conclusion of the first day on which the teachers had attempted to use the I-Message in their classrooms, Teacher D told the investigator that she "hated" using it because she was sure all the children were looking at her as if she was crazy. She said that she was going to keep trying because she knew the writer wanted her to and because it was probably a "nicer" way to talk to children.

In the following days of practice, Teacher D was always able to get the "feeling" portion of the I-Message included. She used words such as "uneasy," "concerned," "edgy," and "impatient." She was usually able to include the tangible effects of the student's behavior on herself, but would often add what she called "a zinger." After giving a perfect I-Message, she would stop and then add a statement such as, "You ought to know better."

According to the observer, Teacher D seemed to be

conscious of the need to try and deliver a good I-Message during the time the observer was in the room. She would often look over at the observer and smile. After the investigator gave her a note praising a particular I-Message, Teacher D said that she was not always that good and that sometimes during the day she forgot and gave the students "a really good zinger." She became the best of the three teachers at delivering the I-Message in the classroom. By Experiment Day 3 (see Table 4) she was using complete I-Messages and continued to do so for the duration of the study.

On Experiment Day 4, Teacher D's one response to student behavior was:

"When you mumble like that I feel very, very uneasy. I have to keep asking you what you said, and it takes me a lot longer to get through reading."

On Experiment Day 8, the observer reported to the investigator that Teacher D had used a different kind of message that day. She had said, "When you do your work so quietly, I feel real good. I'm going to be all ready to go on to what I've planned for this afternoon." Without ever being told how to phrase a positive I-Message as a response to acceptable student behavior, she had used one.

On Experiment Day 3 a group of visitors had just left

the room before the observer arrived. These visitors had moved about, talking with the children and asking the teacher questions. The percentage of intervals of disruptive behavior was 10.82% for that day; higher than any other day when Teacher D was there. On Experiment Day 10, the Halloween screams could be heard although more muffled because the room was the farthest from the entrance to the spook house. The teacher commented to the observer that the children were on a "Halloween high" and had been for two days. The observer remarked to the investigator that Teacher D made some comment, such as "That's scary," each time a Halloween scream was heard. The students would look up at her and then listen. This would appear to account for the high percentage of gazing (15.77) that day.

Like Teacher B (see Table 2), Teacher D decreased her average number of responses by only a small number (see Table 4). She said about as many words in giving her I-Messages as she had in the responses she gave during the baseline data collection period.

Although a glance at the percentage of intervals of student behavior in the disruptive category in Table 4 shows, with the exception of Experiment Day 3 when the visitors had been there, an apparent decrease in the percentages compared with the baseline period, the actual mathematical differences between the data from the Baseline

Days and the Experiment Days show that the average percentages had remained about the same.

In her reaction to the I-Message, Teacher D wrote the following:

I feel pretty positive about using the I-Message, although I'm not sure what it did for the children. For some it worked and for some it didn't. I always felt that it worked in my favor. In using the I-Message with a group, I never was sure that what I was saying was reaching the feelings of the children. Some would definitely give you the impression that they could care less how I felt about what they did. Sometimes I said so much that I was sure by the time I had finished, they were ready to start whatever they had been doing all over again. Nevertheless, I think the I-Message really works on certain children. In talking on a one-to-one basis with a child, I think it was great. I am definitely going to continue using it that way and maybe with the group too. It probably is a better way to talk to children. Idea: In using the I-Message, I told them how I felt when they did something good or nice. I think they really liked to hear about that feeling rather than hearing that I was upset, frustrated or disappointed, etc. That was the best way yet to use it.

When an audio-tape was made in the classroom three weeks later, Teacher D gave two responses to disruptive student behavior (see Table 6). She said:

1. "Frustrating, frustrating. I don't think the work is getting done. I know I will not get outside for a little recess because I'll have to stay in here and supervise all of you."

2. "The table by the window is talking pretty loud. Thank you. The quiet makes me feel good cause that is just what I need right now."

Teacher C - control

Teacher C expressed disappointment when she was told that her classroom would be observed but that she would not be expected to participate beyond that. She was unaware of the type of student behavior the observers were rating, but she remarked that the behavior they would see in her room would be "all talking and moving around." She commented that she had a hard time getting the students to do their work and felt sure that this had something to do with the fact that they were a class of lower achievers. "I have never had a class like this before," was one of her comments.

Teacher C's class did have an impressively higher average percentage of disruptive behavior when compared with the other classes (see Figure 1 and Table 5). One of the observers' comments was that the students spent very little time attending to the assigned task. Most of the student behavior was talking and moving around, just as the teacher had predicted, and very little of it was gazing behavior (see Table 5).

Teacher C's normal type of response to disruptive student behavior can be illustrated by the following responses

she gave during the 30-minute observation time on the fourth day of the baseline data collection period:

1. "I'll count 1, 2, 3 . . ."
2. "You must be quiet right now."
3. "Don't talk anymore at all."
4. "You are talking too loud."
5. "You are not working very hard."

On Experiment Day 4 when the other three teachers were attempting to use the I-Message, but Teacher C was not, her responses during the 30-minute observation time were:

1. "Get busy out there."
2. "You won't get to the library at this rate."
3. "Now be quiet. Sh--sh."
4. "I don't want people standing up."
5. "We are reading now. You are working."
6. "You are talking too loud. You aren't working."
7. "Do your work."

On Experiment Day 6 the observer reported to the investigator that something was different in Classroom C. Although she could not tell what had happened, she realized that as she was rating, she was not marking as much disruptive behavior and that the low undertone of noise which always existed in the room was being caused by shuffling

feet, chairs, and papers rather than by talking. The observer also commented that, in her opinion, the students were still not completing their work. A check of the rating instrument showed that the percentage of intervals of disruptive student behavior had dropped from 43.46% on the preceding day to 16.15%.

At the conclusion of the day, the investigator asked Teacher C if she had instituted any new procedures. After first expressing surprise that the investigator had noticed since she "did not do it while the observer was in the room," she admitted that she had gotten "fed up" with the talking on the afternoon before and decided to try and stop it for good. She had told the students that anyone who talked a lot was going to have to stand by her desk until she wasn't busy, and then they were going to get some "licks." She commented that she had only had to make two children stand by the desk on the afternoon before and only one of them had gotten the "licks." "They hate standing by the desk so long more than they do the licks."

Asked how she determined who would go and stand at the desk, she replied that when she looked up and saw someone talking, she would warn them to stop. If they kept on talking, then she told that student to go and stand and wait for her. Reminded that she had been asked to not institute any new procedures designed to change student behavior

during the days when observers would be in her room, she said that she hated to stop the procedure since it must be working if we had noticed so quickly. Two days later, on Experiment Day 8, the teacher remarked to the investigator that she was going to stop because "it isn't really working anyway." On that day the observer reported that a student stood by the teacher's desk for the entire 30-minutes she was in the room, but that the teacher never spoke to him.

On Experiment Day 9 the observer commented that Teacher C had spent the 30 minutes seated at her desk watching the students and saying very little. That afternoon the teacher left early because of illness and a substitute appeared the next day. With the absence of the teacher and the Halloween celebration noises, the percentage of intervals of student disruptive behavior rose to 40.64% (see Table 3). Despite the impressive decrease in the percentages of disruptive behavior when Teacher C had decided to stop the talking with a new procedure, the average percentage of intervals in all categories of student behavior remained almost unchanged when compared with the classrooms in which the teachers were attempting to use the I-Message (see Table 5).

When at the conclusion of the study, the investigator showed Teacher C the average percentage of intervals of

student nondisruptive behavior for the ten preceding days, she expressed surprise that the class had spent 62.64% of the time in that category. She said that she would have estimated 25%; the length of time it took to do the work wrong. She was also curious to know what the other classes had done. "I know mine was the worst," she said.

Three weeks later when an observer returned, she neither saw nor heard any evidence that the teacher was continuing to have students stand by the desk. The observer commented that the room was noisy and not much work was being done. The teacher's responses were almost identical in style and number to those reported on Baseline Day 4 (see Table 6).

Serendipitous Findings and Discussion

During the approximately 10 hours spent by the observers in each classroom plus those additional hours that the investigator was at the school, there were many observations made as a part of the inevitable interest in the causes and effects of classroom behavior. Three observations, however, became findings which seemed of enough significance to the study that they deserve mention.

1. On the first day of the baseline data collection both observers commented that the teachers did not praise the students very much. Particular attention was then given to finding support for this contention.

During all the observations made during the baseline data collection period and when the teachers were attempting to use the I-Message, there were only two recorded incidences of praise to the group or to any individual within hearing of the group. Teacher D gave her "positive I-Message" on Experiment Day 8 and Teacher C was heard to comment at the beginning of Baseline Day 3 that "the writing looked good." Teacher B could be heard saying "Good, good" to individuals in her reading groups. Teacher D, whose "idea" it was to use a positive I-Message, must have tried it out during times when neither the observer nor the investigator were present.

Verbal praise did not appear to be used systematically as a teacher technique for increasing desired student behavior. No attempt was made, however, to discuss the absence of verbal praise either with the teachers individually or with the group. Since the technique under study was a specific negative response to unacceptable student behavior, any attempt to influence the teachers to use praise or a positive I-Message would have introduced an additional variable.

No teacher in the group meetings nor in any individual discussion ever raised any objections to the negative aspects of the technique under investigation. Neither

was any mention made of praise as a preferred or alternative response until Teacher B suggested her "idea" for using an I-Message as a positive response.

2. In the first days of the pre-baseline period, both observers commented on the fact that almost all unacceptable student behavior was talking or moving around the room. Incidents of extreme verbal noise, aggression, or noisy out-of-seat behavior were so rare that observers were able to remember and comment on their occurrence. However, both observers remarked that much of the talking and moving around seemed to concern questions about how to do the work. This was particularly true in Classroom A where the teacher's complaint had been about her frustration in trying to stop the talking and in getting the children to pay attention during the work period. The observer commented that Teacher A told the students what to do but never asked if there were any questions or problems. It was the observer's impression that the children were trying to figure out what to do.

The investigator spent 30 minutes on Baseline Day 4, in the time immediately preceding the arrival of the observer, recording directly the proceedings in an effort to determine whether or not the teacher's preparation of the children contributed to the student

behavior being rated. The notes taken are particularly revealing.

The teacher began by pointing out a chart on which would be placed the names of students who had received 100% on all their seatwork the day before. She commented that only four students--all girls--had been able to have their names placed on the chart. She then went to the board where separate sheets written in different ink colors were placed. Many of the children had to turn in their seats to see her. Some of the children did not turn but remained facing away from her. Pointing to a chart printed in blue, she remarked that no one in the blue group had gotten their sentences correct the day before and the work would have to be repeated. One sentence had been missed by everyone in the group. The sentence was "My father is a . . . man (slim, fin)." The students were required to fill in the appropriate word. The teacher did not ask if the students understood the word "slim." During the time the teacher had been pointing out the charts, she made several comments to one student by name, telling him to pay attention and stop talking. Moving to a side board, the teacher instructed the students to open their spelling books. She then went over the first three exercises, asking for answers.

The students at the tables nearest the board stood on their feet waving their hands and saying, "Teacher, teacher." Those farthest from the board sat with their backs to the board and did not participate. Two of the four students called on to give answers were girls who had their names on the chart for 100% seatwork. The teacher then told the children to begin work and she returned to her desk. She called four children to come and sit with her. She then returned to the front of the room and said that she had forgotten something. Pointing to the spelling page she said, "This is an asterisk. When you see an asterisk, it means to look at the bottom of the page. Remember to do that." She then went back to the small group. The students at the table nearest to the investigator began talking among themselves and pointing at the asterisk. The teacher said, "That table had better get to work." Two boys went up to look at one of the charts and the teacher named them and told them to sit down. The investigator then left the room because the observer was about to come in.

There was some reason to believe that the observer's comment about the possible causes of the talking was correct. A number of Teacher A's practices could have contributed to the out-of-seat and talking behavior

which kept students from completing their work.

3. There is an often heard generalization that punishment is an ineffective means of controlling student behavior (Solomon, 1964). Teacher C, however, appeared to provide dramatic support for the use of punishment as a short-range method of suppressing unacceptable behavior. It was far more effective than the I-Message in causing a rapid decrease in percentages in one category of disruptive student behavior (see Figure 1).

Teacher C began the use of punishment on Experiment Day 6 because she was "fed up" with student talking during the independent seat-work time. The observer's comments indicate that talking among students had decreased but that the students were moving papers and feet, opening and closing books, and creating an undertone of noise. O'Leary and O'Leary (1972) have advised that the poorest time to initiate punishment is when the teacher is "fed up" or angry. Only systematic planning will make punishment an effective technique for long-range improvement of classroom behavior. The results of poorly planned punishment are that the students learn to adapt and the teacher's control weakens even further.

Since Teacher C did not begin the use of punishment until Experiment Day 6, the long-range effects of her procedures could not be observed. On Experiment Days

8 and 9, however, student disruptive behavior had risen by 10%. On Day 9 the teacher commented that "it" was not working anymore. Teacher C's perception of the success of her procedure was not in accord with the data. The data for that day showed that despite the rise, disruptive behavior was still 20% lower than the day preceding her introduction of punishment into the room. If noise was continuing, however, or if work was still not being completed, she may have judged the success of her procedures to stop student talking in the light of those situations.

Discussion of Limitations of the Study

The symbols used in the rating of student behavior did not permit as accurate a description of the nature of student disruptive behavior in each classroom as would have proved helpful. By not differentiating between the types of disruptive behavior engaged in, the study was dependent on teacher comment and observers' anecdotal records. A classroom with 49% of intervals of student disruptive behavior which consists of talking, orienting responses and walking around the room is a considerably different learning environment than a classroom where the 49% is made up of disruptive movement, throwing objects, and aggressive acts towards others. Although speed in rating was a factor in the selection of the symbols, they could be revised to

give a more accurate description of the nature of disruptive behavior which the teachers confronted.

No provision was made for indicating the disruptive behavior of an individual student. In some classes, one or two students may be the cause of disruptive behavior rather than the entire class. Techniques for dealing with individuals may vary from those which would prove effective with the group. As a result of the teacher's positive reactions to using the I-Message on a one-to-one basis, it would have been helpful to have devised a procedure for rating certain target students designated by the teacher. Improvement in one or two students can often cause a considerable change in the atmosphere of a classroom (Becker, Madsen, Arnold, & Thomas, 1967). A change in the behavior of even one child might result in the teacher's positive acceptance of the I-Message despite no impressive decrease in the percentages of intervals of total class disruptive behavior.

The size of the sample was small and presents a limitation on the generalizability of the results of the study to larger populations. With all of the ecological conditions considered, however, it may be important to look not only at the possible effects on student behaviors but at the procedures it was hoped would produce them.

Many behavior modification studies utilize small

samples. The nature of the techniques being investigated requires that the teachers using them be closely monitored to ensure that the techniques are used as designed. This would hold true in any study where a specific skill or technique was being tried out by teachers. Teachers have shown that they can be ingenious at sabotaging the carefully laid plans of researchers (Pilcher, 1973). Where training procedures are also involved and large numbers of trainers must be utilized, qualitative differences in the individual trainer's style of working with the teachers could produce differences in the teachers' use of the technique and thus affect student outcomes. In this particular study, there is some question that the teachers would have continued their attempts to use the I-Message beyond the first day if the investigator had not been in daily contact with them

Broudy (1976) has stated that in the area of human relations skills, it may be more valuable for the researcher to act not only as a theorizer or designer of a study but as a delivery agent of the facilitative skill itself. That would seem to be particularly true when the area under investigation puts pressures on teachers to change. Pressure to change often carries the implication of some inadequacy and special care must be taken to positively encourage their participation. Even the teacher's defensive or resistance

behavior becomes important in the teaching of any interpersonal communication technique.

The constraints on the design of the study which limited the amount of time and the number of days which observers could spend in the classrooms present perhaps the most severe limitation on the study. The time span may have been too short to observe the special aspects of the interaction patterns that only develop with time.

In 1929, John Dewey said:

No conclusion from scientific research can be converted into an immediate rule of education art. For there is no educational practice whatever which is not highly complex; that is to say, which does not contain many other factors than are included in the scientific finding. (p. 19)

Forty-four years later, Rosenshine and Furst (1973), are quoted as saying:

The techniques of effective teaching are so idiosyncratic that they may never be isolated. Studying teaching in naturalistic settings will remain unproductive because the classroom is not functional for direct outcomes. (p. 175)

The teachers who participated in this study were also accustomed to participating in the development of new programs for the district. They accepted both visitors and observers into their classrooms readily. Perhaps, then, the findings of this study cannot be said to have emerged from a truly "naturalistic" setting. However, it is unlikely that any investigation of the effects on student outcomes of changes

in teacher behavior will take place where teachers are not at least as willing to participate and as cooperative as were the four teachers in this study. Research would seem to indicate that a longer investigation with its requirements for regular before and after school meetings would have necessitated the offer of more incentive to the teachers than a simple appeal for their cooperation (Aspy & Roebuck, 1976). The constraints on the design of any study which takes place in the classroom are not likely to lessen in the coming years.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Findings

1. In the three classrooms in which the teachers attempted to use the I-Message as a response to disruptive student behavior there was a change across all categories in the average percentage of intervals which favored the I-Message.
2. In the three classrooms in which the teachers attempted to use the I-Message there was no increase in the average percentage of intervals of student disruptive behavior.
3. The three teachers who attempted to use the I-Message reduced the number of responses they gave to disruptive student behavior.
4. The three teachers who attempted to use the I-Message either reduced or eliminated their typical responses to disruptive student behavior during the study.
5. The three teachers who attempted to use the I-Message did not believe it had much positive effect on the behavior of the group when delivered to the group.
6. The three teachers who attempted to use the I-Message were mixed in their reactions to it. Teachers B and D

thought that it had elements that made it at least as effective as their typical responses. Teacher A did not believe it was as effective as her typical responses.

7. The three teachers who attempted to use the I-Message believed that it was an effective way to respond to an individual student's disruptive behavior on a one-to-one basis.
8. The three teachers who attempted the use of the I-Message had varying degrees of difficulty mastering its use. Only one teacher (Teacher D) was able to master its use and deliver it consistently. Teacher A never mastered the complete form; Teacher B was able to deliver it in its complete form but did so inconsistently.
9. The two teachers (Teacher B and Teacher D) who reacted to the I-Message use positively were using a form of it three weeks after the conclusion of the observation of student behavior. The teacher who had had the most difficulty in learning to give an I-Message (Teacher A) had returned to the type of response she had been giving before being introduced to the use of the I-Message.

Conclusions

The conclusions suggested by the findings in this study are presented here followed by the implications as they were perceived by the investigator. Conclusions based on a study of only four teachers must be cautiously

undertaken. The investigator, however, spent five weeks in close contact with the teachers. This in-depth approach seemed necessary not only to monitor the teachers' use of the I-Message but to fully understand their reactions to it.

Conclusion 1: The I-Message, even when incompletely delivered or delivered at a low frequency rate, does not result in any overall increase in student disruptive behavior; it is at least as effective as the teacher's normal mode of response.

Implications: The I-Message has been described as a "subtle verbal technique" by other researchers (Fine, 1975) and as such probably would not cause sudden or dramatic decreases in student disruptive or unacceptable behavior. A teacher who has attained a relatively stable state of nondisruptive behavior should not fear that use of the I-Message would result in loss of control. Its use as a specific remedy for disruptive behavior, however, is inconclusive. The technique partially depends on the student's ability to enter the teacher's frame of reference. Such empathic behavior may demand the

maturity of an older student. The importance of the teacher as a model for such behavior, however, cannot be denied.

Much emphasis has been placed by Gordon on the importance of delivering complete I-Messages. The ability to deliver such a message, however, does not seem to cause any greater decrease in student disruptive behavior than delivering an incomplete message. Perhaps the investigation of the long-term effects of the complete message might indicate the superiority of the whole message over the incomplete message. Since more of the incomplete messages given tended to feedback to the students the effects of their behavior on themselves rather than the teacher, it may well be the element of feedback which makes the I-Message a viable technique for dealing with disruptive behavior.

Gordon has hypothesized the teachers, being forced to think about the tangible effects of the students' behavior on themselves, will discover that there often are no significant negative effects and will therefore

be more accepting of the behavior and less likely to respond to it. The use of the I-Message in this study, even by teachers who had a low frequency of non-I-Message responses, did seem to bring about a further reduction in the number of their responses. To accept Gordon's hypothesis, however, would be a large quantum leap in cause and effect thinking. None of the teachers ever expressed such a view. It may well be that the teachers became sensitized to what they were not supposed to say or that they found the I-Message so different from their normal mode of response that they chose silence in preference to attempting to deliver it. A possible implication suggested by the reduction in responses, for whatever reason, may be that teachers over-control verbally. If they were able to receive feedback showing the stability of student behavior even when they respond less frequently, they might see such a technique as the I-Message as one way to gain more time to teach.

Conclusion 2: The use of the I-Message helps the teacher to eliminate non-facilitative responses such as commands, threats, moralizing, criticizing, and interrogating as responses to disruptive student behavior.

Implication: The I-Message is a form of teacher disapproval delivered without any threats of unfortunate consequences for the students (McAllister, 1969); so use of it by a teacher can free his or her dialogue from words that are destructive to the self-concept of the student (Ginott, 1972). Since this study has no measure of the student's feelings in response to teacher-use of the I-Message, claims cannot be made for its use based on changes in the students' inner states. Aspy and Roebuck (1976) have demonstrated the significance to student performance of the teacher's ability to enter the student's frame of reference and both understand and accept the student's feelings. The I-Message offers the student an opportunity to enter the teacher's frame of reference. In the constant interaction of the classroom, the feelings of all would seem to be important (Johnson, 1972).

Conclusion 3: The use of the I-Message as a technique to respond to group student disruptive behavior or to the disruptive behavior of an individual within the group will not be accepted as positively by teachers as will its use with an individual student alone.

Implication: Teachers who used the I-Message were consistent in their praise for it as an effective verbal technique for use with an individual student on a one-to-one basis. Although no evidence was secured to support their beliefs, it is likely that teachers recognized it as an effective counseling skill. The teachers' positive reception of it in that context may make it a viable skill for all teachers to understand and use. Their lack of enthusiasm for the use of the I-Message as a response to group disruptive behavior or the disruptive behavior of an individual within the group may result from their perceptions of the differences between the techniques used to counsel an individual student and those necessary to deal with whole-group behaviors. The proximity of a student to the teacher may change the

teacher's reactions to the student.

In addition, initiating skills to be used for a group may be harder to learn because public disclosure of feelings is often discouraged in our culture. Most research studies have dealt with self-disclosure of feelings as a facet of genuineness in the therapy context (Carkhuff, 1969). Unlike the teacher, the therapist functions in a situation unaffected by client behaviors. Most communication skills have focused on feelings whereas communication in the classroom has focused on facts (Barbour & Goldberg, 1973). Aspy (1972) has commented, however, that even when the teacher focuses on facts, only the ideal-self remains neutral. The real-self reacts negatively to certain student behaviors and those feelings, whether or not the teacher verbalizes them, are communicated to the students. Teachers may view control of groups as a neutral management skill and not recognize the relationship between their feelings and the students' responding behaviors.

It takes a great deal of sensitivity on the

part of a teacher to perceive the impact of her behavior on students. Without that sensitivity and/or with poor management skills, a teacher might have little confidence in her ability to alter student behavior and subsequently be a poor subject for training in facilitative skills.

Use of the I-Message demands a certain amount of spontaneity on the part of a teacher. He or she must react in a way that accurately reflects feelings at the moment. The I-Message is so divergent from typical teacher-talk, however, that teachers are likely to be self-conscious and feel strange. Spontaneity is not likely to come without careful preparation, rehearsed expression, and specific feedback from a monitor. Without some incentive to continue, it is unlikely that it would ever be adopted by teachers as a technique for dealing with groups.

Conclusion 4: The effectiveness of the use of the I-Message as a response to disruptive student behavior will be screened through the teachers' individual perceptions of its impact on the student and will only be adopted if its use

is consistent with the teachers' individual personalities.

Implication: The I-Message is based on a fundamental assumption put forth by Carl Rogers (1951, p. 417) that "personal growth is hindered and hampered rather than enhanced by external evaluation." Gordon and others believe that evaluation is harmful to the interpersonal communication process. According to this position, students in a non-evaluative atmosphere will exhibit a quality of behavior that is superior to behavior in other circumstances.

Research conducted by Barbour and Goldberg (1973) has tended to support this position but not in an extreme way. Not all evaluation is harmful. One principle which emerges from their research is that evaluation should be avoided in interpersonal communication when we want to encourage the participants to assume more responsibility for their own behavior.

Many teachers, however, are highly moralistic in their attitudes toward students. They see compliance with their rules as

preparation for being good citizens and responsible adults. They feel responsible for all the student's behavior in and around the school. This attitude would affect their possible adoption of a technique based on the acceptance of the assumption that some of the student's behavior is his or her own responsibility.

The implication of the possibility that teachers will accept a technique only when it is consistent with their own personalities is that techniques can only be offered as options. The teacher cannot be told how he or she ought to be since no one is in a position to make such a decision for teachers and dictate preferred behavior.

The final and ultimate test of whether or not there is any value in using a particular technique or skill will be in the behavior of the teacher. If the technique or skill is any good, it will do the teacher some good (Barbour & Goldberg, 1973). If the teacher cannot make it fit with personal inclinations, cannot understand it or internalize it, the technique will probably not

amount to much for that teacher. Teacher D mastered the ability to deliver an I-Message. There was no extreme decrease in student disruptive behavior because of it. She stated, however, that everything about the I-Message was in her favor. It had made some difference in her life as a teacher.

Serendipitous Conclusion: Teachers will probably not react to the use of the I-Message as a viable response to student disruptive behavior with specifics unless they are able to demonstrate and explicate their own and/or other effective responses.

Implications: According to Ellingsworth, Welden and Rosario (1972), the goal of any training program in specific models or techniques is not only to increase the trainees' set of alternatives, either by adding new skills or strategies or by strengthening those infrequently used, but to provide them with the criteria necessary to select from alternatives and to evaluate the criteria for their application so that the trainees can act as their own consultants. If teachers cannot describe their own techniques and the result

of them on student behavior, they are unlikely to be able to predict the effectiveness of alternative techniques in their own classrooms.

All of the teachers in this study had some system of classroom management. In the many meetings between the investigator and the teachers, however, it was always difficult for them to explicate that system. They might have equal difficulty passing that system on to either a student teacher or a substitute teacher (see Table 2 & 3 and Figures 1 & 2 for the effects of the entrance of the substitute teacher). Anyone asking them to try a new technique as a response to student disruptive behavior should be prepared to receive a reaction form that does not explicate any comparisons between the new technique and their own preferred modes of response to such behavior.

There has been earlier mention of the investigator's discovery that praise was not used as a systematic reinforcement of acceptable behavior in the four classrooms. Yet praise

has been described as one of the easiest and most natural of social incentives to use in the educational setting. In numerous research studies it has proven effective in increasing desired student behavior (Lipe & Jung, 1973; O'Leary & O'Leary, 1972). Even research on non-evaluative forms of interpersonal communication has stated that positive evaluation was always superior to non-evaluation (Barbour & Goldberg, 1973).

It is probably naive for teachers to believe that they can ever eliminate unacceptable student behavior from the classroom (Kounin, 1970). Therefore, it would seem advisable for teachers to learn a set of principles for changing student behavior on their own in some systematic manner (Meachem & Wiesen, 1972). Besides giving them confidence in their ability to change student behavior, it would also offer them a framework on which to base an analysis of their own behavior and free them to move on to other considerations of importance in the learning environment. In the absence of any

kind of personal evidence for the advantages of one kind of technique over another, the choice of the teachers will usually be toward the easiest mode; a strong, controlling hand (Longo, 1972).

Recommendations for Research

1. The I-Message was positively accepted by the teachers as a response to unacceptable student behavior on a one-to-one basis. It is recommended that the effects of the use of the I-Message on certain target children in the classroom be studied.
2. The I-Message as a response to disruptive student behavior may be more effective with older students. It is recommended that an investigation such as the present one be conducted at the junior high school and senior high school level with the added dimension of an inquiry into the students' perceptions of the teachers' verbal behavior.
3. Teachers might become more sensitive to the impact of their own behavior on the behavior of students if they viewed video tapes dramatizing actual classroom sequences such as the one described for Teacher A. It is recommended that student teachers write such sequences based on careful classroom observation and the resulting effect on their own classroom behavior be investigated.

4. There would seem to be a need for increasing the positive responses of teachers. It is recommended that teachers be trained in the use of the positive I-Message as a response to acceptable student behavior and the effects studied. There may be additional value in investigating not only Gordon's three-part positive I-Message and its effects on student behavior but also the type of praise described by Aspy and Roebuck (1976). Aspy and Roebuck's praise message consists of:

- a. Recognizing the student's feelings.
- b. Praising specific accomplishments.
- c. Telling the student why or how the action or accomplishment was good.

Gordon's positive I-Message consists of:

- a. Describing the student's specific behavior.
- b. Describing the teacher's feelings in response to the behavior.
- c. Describing the tangible and concrete effects on the teacher of the behavior.

There are certain complementary aspects in these two types of praise which merit investigation.

5. Recently, the Dallas Independent School District announced the first phase of a seven-part study which will ask among other questions; "Are there successful

and humane ways to intervene in disruptive student behavior? (Booty, 1976). It is recommended that the district give high priority to the examination of the verbal responses of teachers to disruptive student behavior as an important variable in developing effective ways to intervene in such behavior. It is also recommended that selected teachers be given incentives to serve as models for the most effective techniques for dealing with disruptive behavior in their own classrooms and that these teachers become trainers for others in the school interested in improving their own classroom techniques.

Epilogue

When a research study is completed, the question is probably always asked: "Why did the investigator really want to study this question?" The answer will be couched in formal and impersonal language. There exists a certain irony when a study investigates an "I-Message" but the personal pronoun "I" never appears in the writing.

The reason why the question was proposed, of course, does begin with the "I": In this case, when the investigator was a first-year teacher. She had been told to take her first-grade class to a play put on in the school's auditorium by some outside group. The play was far above the heads of the first graders, and they were wiggling and

squirming. The investigator leaned over and told the children, "You are having a hard time understanding this play and it's difficult to sit still on these hard seats; but when you make noise and disturb others, I am embarrassed because it's my job to keep us all quiet and it doesn't look like I'm doing it."

Why does the investigator remember the exact words she spoke? She was reported to the principal because she had told the children that the play was hard to understand and that she was supposed to keep the children quiet. According to the supervisor who came to chastise the investigator, she should have told the children to be quiet because they were being exposed to fine drama that they would appreciate when they got older. A life-long interest in stating students' feelings and I-Messages was born on the spot.

Would the investigator recommend that every teacher become exclusively attached to the use of the I-Messages? No. Five weeks of listening to I-Messages have convinced the investigator that it is an option that should be offered to teachers, and that they should have an opportunity to practice it and then decide whether or not it fits their style. In the hands--or the mouth--of a teacher who says she is "irritated" and "annoyed" in an irritated and annoyed voice, the I-Message is unpalatable indeed.

One unfortunate result of an investigation that focuses on a single aspect of teacher behavior is that the picture drawn of the teacher as an individual is usually a narrow one. The teachers who participated in this study were so cooperative with the investigator and so pleasant to the observers who entered their classrooms each day that the investigator felt a sense of disloyalty in some of the findings she reported and negative comments she made. The weeks in the classrooms convinced the investigator that teachers who are treated as we would have them treat their students will try very hard to do what an investigator wants them to do.

The investigator remains equally convinced that significant changes can and must be brought about in the classroom in the interpersonal skills area. Teachers could and probably should alter their "traditional," and possibly destructive, types of verbal responses to student behavior. These changes sound relatively simple. Because they begin with the self, they are often the most difficult to make. But in the words of Aldous Huxley:

There's only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self. So you have to begin there, not outside, not on other people. That comes afterwards, when you've worked on your own corner. You've got to be good before you can do good--or at any rate do good without doing harm at the same time. (p. 14)

APPENDIX A
YOU-MESSAGE FORMS

You-Message Forms: Non-facilitative responses to unacceptable student behavior (Gordon, 1972)

ORDERING, DIRECTING, COMMANDING ("You must . . . , " "You have to . . . , " "You will . . . ") Such responses can produce fright or active resistance and rebellion. They invite "testing." Nobody likes to be ordered or commanded - thus resentment is produced. Such responses may cut off any further communication from the child, or they provoke defensive or retaliatory communication. Often children will feel rejected because their own needs are being ignored. In front of others, children may feel humiliated by such responses. Even if a child obeys, he or she may try to get back at the adult later or he or she may respond immediately with anger.

WARNING, ADMONISHING, THREATENING ("You had better . . . , " "If you don't then . . . ") Such responses are like directing or ordering except that the adult brings in the threat of using his or her power. These responses invite "testing." They may cause the child to obey but only out of fear. As with directing and ordering, these responses may produce resentment, anger, resistance, and rebellion.

MORALIZING, PREACHING, OBLIGING ("You should . . . , " "You ought . . . , " "It is your duty . . . , " "It is your responsibility . . . , " "You are required . . . ") Such responses are like directing and ordering except that the

adult is dragging in "duty" and some vague external authority. Their purpose is to make the child feel guilty or to feel an obligation. Children sense the pressure of such messages and frequently resist and dig in their heels. Such messages also communicate lack of trust by saying to the child that he or she is not wise enough. Children often respond with "Who says I should" or "Why should I?"

ADVISING, GIVING SUGGESTIONS OR SOLUTIONS ("What I would do is . . . , " "Why don't you . . . , " "Let me suggest . . . , " "It would be best for you . . . ") It is not true that people always want advice. Advice implies "superiority" and can make the child feel inadequate and inferior. The child may respond to advice with resistance and rebellion. Often children resent suggestions by adults. Failure to follow adults' advice may make children feel guilty or that they have let the adult down. If the adults' advice does not seem sound to the child, he or she then has to argue against it and spend time dealing with it rather than think up his or her own solutions. Advice can also make children dependent; it does not encourage their own creative thinking. A child may simply respond by feeling that the adult just doesn't understand - "How could you suggest that; you don't know how scared I am." Children may respond, "When I want your advice, I'll ask for

it." If the adult's advice turns out wrong, the child can duck responsibility by saying, "They suggested it; it wasn't my idea."

PERSUADING WITH LOGIC, ARGUING, INSTRUCTING, LECTURING

("Do you realize . . . ," "Here is why you are wrong . . . ," "That is not right . . . ," "The facts are . . . ," "Yes, but . . . ") Such responses provoke defensiveness and often bring on counter-arguments. They may also make the child feel inferior because they imply the adult's superiority. Persuasion, more often than not, simply makes the child defend his own position more strongly. Children may feel, "You always think you are right." Having logic on your side does not always bring forth compliance or agreement. Children often say, "I always get long lectures," or, "They make me feel I'm wrong or stupid."

JUDGING, CRITICIZING, DISAGREEING, BLAMING ("You are bad," "You are lazy," "You are not thinking straight." "You are acting foolishly.") More than any other type of message, this makes children feel inadequate, inferior, incompetent, bad or stupid. It can make them feel guilty, too. Often children respond very defensively -- nobody likes to be wrong. Evaluation cuts off communication - "I won't tell them what I feel if I am going to get judged." Because of adults' psychological size, children often accept such judgments as being absolutely true - "I am bad." Evaluation

by adults shapes the child's later self-concept - "I am a slow reader." "I am not pretty." Another response of children to evaluation by adults is to evaluate right back - "You're not so good yourself."

NAME-CALLING, RIDICULING, SHAMING ("You're a spoiled brat," "Stupid," "Crybaby," "Okay, Mr. Smarty") Such messages can have a devastating effect on the self-image of a child. They can make a child feel unworthy, bad, unloved. The most frequent response of children to such messages is to give one back - "And you're a big nag." "Look who's calling me lazy." When children get such a message from a teacher who is trying to influence them, they are much less likely to change by looking at themselves realistically. Instead, they can zero in on the teacher's unfair message and excuse themselves. "I am not a slob. That's unfair."

INTERPRETING, ANALYZING, DIAGNOSING ("What you need to do is . . . , " "What's wrong with you is . . . , " "You're just trying to get attention . . . , " "You don't really mean that," "I know what you need," "Your problem is . . . ")

To tell a child what he or she is "really" feeling, what his or her "real" motives are, or why he or she is behaving a certain way can be very threatening - "She always thinks she knows what I'm feeling." Playing "psychoanalyst" with children is dangerous and frustrating to the child. If your analysis is wrong, the child resists; if it is "right," the

child can feel exposed, naked, trapped. The "here-is-what-you-need" message implies that the adult is superior - knows more than the child. Children get resentful and angry when adults "interpret" their motives. Interpretations, more than likely, will stop communication from children rather than encourage them to tell you more.

PROBING, QUESTIONING, INTERROGATING ("Why . . . , " "Who . . . , " "Where . . . , " "What . . . , " "How . . . , " "When . . . ") The response of children to probing, like that of adults, is often to feel defensive or "on the witness stand." Many questions are threatening because the child doesn't know why the adult is questioning him or her - "What are you driving at?" Children often feel the adult is "nosey" - "She always has to know what I'm doing."

Questioning can convey lack of trust, suspicion or doubt about the child's ability - "You don't need to ask me if I know the way - I've been there before." Some kinds of probing questions make a child feel he or she is being led out on a limb only to have it later sawed off - "When did you start on the work? Was it after you had watched television?" When adults ask questions, they imply that they are gathering information so that they can solve the child's problem rather than let the child solve it for himself - "If I tell teachers what they ask, then I have to listen to their answers." Questions drastically restrict the range

of what children might say if allowed to speak spontaneously.

They communicate "Talk only about what I am asking."

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

dallas independent school district

July 1, 1976

Nolan Estes
General SuperintendentMs. Dorothy Ann Sanders
13817 Far Hills
Dallas, Texas 75240

Dear Ms. Sanders:

Your research proposal entitled "The Influence of Teacher Use of the 'I - Message' on the Incidence of Disruptive Behavior in Primary Classrooms" was considered by the District's Development Council at its meeting on May 27, 1976. The Council agreed to your carrying out the proposed research in District classrooms subject to several conditions.

It was the feeling of members of the Council that the research design should be somewhat altered and that probably fewer classrooms than you propose to use would serve adequately. You are requested to confer with Dr. Michael Vitale of the Office of Research Consultation in our Department of Research, Evaluation, and Information Systems to consider how the proposal might be streamlined to yield firm information with minimum classroom disruption. You can reach Dr. Vitale at Stephen J. Hay School, 3801 Herschel (telephone 522-8220). Development Council approval is contingent on agreement between you and Dr. Vitale on a design that constitutes a valid and useful research project.

The project is to be carried out at Paul L. Dunbar Community Learning Center, and John Roland, Principal at Dunbar, has agreed to assist you in implementing the project. A further condition is that the teachers who will be involved agree to participate; Mr. Roland will help you to locate teachers interested in being involved.

Your project should add to our understanding of the learning situation and I wish you well in carrying it out.

Sincerely yours,


Nolan Estes
General Superintendent

NE:en

cc: John W. McFarland
John Roland
Michael Vitale

APPENDIX C

FACSIMILE OF RECORDING INSTRUMENT

APPENDIX D
CODING CATEGORIES

CODING CATEGORIES FOR CHILDREN (Modified from Becker, et al., 1967)

d or *d* GROSS MOTOR BEHAVIORS

Standing up; running; hopping, skipping, jumping; walking around; rocking in chair; disruptive movement without noise; rate getting out of seat only when teacher has specifically stated that it is not allowed.

DISRUPTIVE NOISE WITH OBJECTS

Tapping pencil or other objects; clapping; tapping feet; rattling or tearing paper. Be conservative, do not rate as "d" unless you can hear noise with eyes closed. Do not include accidental dropping of objects.

DISTURBING OTHERS DIRECTLY AND AGGRESSION

Grabbing objects or work; knocking neighbor's book off desk; destroying another's property; hitting; kicking; shoving; pinching; slapping; striking with object; throwing object at another person; poking with object; attempting to strike; biting; pulling hair.

ORIENTING RESPONSES

Turning head or head and body to look at another person, showing objects to another child, attending to another child. Must be of 4 second duration to be rated as "d".

BLURTING OUT, COMMENTING AND VOCAL NOISE

Answering teacher without raising hand or without being called on; making comments or calling out remarks when no question has been asked; calling teacher's name to get her attention; crying; screaming; singing; whistling; laughing loudly; coughing loudly.

TALKING

Carrying on conversations with other children when it is not permitted.

d or *d* OTHER

Ignoring teacher's question or command.

g or *g* GAZING

Looking around the room, at the clock, or
at other students without talking.

n or *n* NON-DISRUPTIVE

Relevant or appropriate behavior.
Behavior that does not fall into above
categories.

APPENDIX E
PILOT STUDY

Two classrooms in the Richardson Independent School District were used to determine if the proposed observation procedures and coding categories would prove satisfactory. The observer had been in both classrooms a minimum of six times on previous occasions.

Classroom #1: This was a third-grade class containing 25 children all of whom were present during the observation.

The observer entered at 8:30 a.m. and stood at the back of the room. She had a clipboard and a stopwatch. She did not communicate with either the children or the teacher.

The teacher took care of collecting some money and then wrote an assignment on the board. There was a period of general directions and then the teacher instructed the children to begin work.

The observer began marking at 8:52 and stopped at 9:15 when the teacher instructed the children to clear their desks to get ready to go to recess.

Classroom #2: This was a second-grade classroom located in a school a mile away from the first classroom. The class contains 24 children, 20 of whom were present during the observation.

The observer entered at 9:40 a.m. while the teacher was explaining a letter-writing assignment to the children. She took a reading group of five children to a separate

area in the room. The observer began marking at 9:50 and stopped at 10:00 when the teacher called for a second group to come and read. Observation was begun again at 10:05 and stopped at 10:20 when the class prepared for recess.

Classroom #1: This class was visited again on the following day. On this occasion two observers were present. The second observer was unknown to both the teacher and the children. The same procedure was followed as on the previous day except for five minutes spent by the observers determining the pattern of scanning and practicing the timing. It had been determined before entering the classroom that this practice would be necessary. All communication was in writing and no words were exchanged between the observers. The observers began marking at 9:40 and concluded at 10:05.

Both teachers commented that their children were "very good" when the observers were there. This further underscored the need to have observers present in the classrooms for a pre-baseline period of at least three days. Even though one of the observers had been in the classrooms many times and had always been near the back of the room as she was on all these occasions, the marking behavior may have been noted by the children and some alteration in their behavior may have taken place.

Only one modification was made in coding after the first day of observations. It was decided to code "g" for "gazing" since this was a very noticeable behavior but difficult to categorize in four seconds. Both teachers expressed disapproval of "gazing" or as one teacher called it, "goofing off."

APPENDIX F
CATEGORIES OF FEELINGS

CATEGORIES OF FEELINGS

Levels of Intensity	Sad	Angry	Scared	Confused
<u>Strong</u>	Hopeless Sorrowful Depressed Drained Lonely Miserable	Furious Seething Enraged Disgusted Bitter Mad	Fearful Panicky Afraid Alarmed Petrified Terrified	Bewildered Trapped Trouble Torn Conflicted Pulled apart
<u>Mild</u>	Upset Distressed Down Discouraged Helpless	Annoyed Frustrated Agitated Peeved Resentful	Threatened Insecure Uneasy Worried Apprehensive	Disorganized Mixed-up Disturbed Blocked Frustrated
<u>Weak</u>	Sorry Lost Bad Hurt Ashamed	Uptight Dismayed Put out Disappointed Bugged	Timid Unsure Nervous Tight Tense	Bothered Uncomfortable Undecided Uncertain Puzzled

APPENDIX G

I-MESSAGE FORMULA

I-Message "Formula"

"When you (Describe student's disruptive behavior),
I feel (Describe your feeling),
because (Give reason for your feeling)."

Note: Try to include all three elements every time
you deliver the I-Message.

APPENDIX H
TEACHER REACTION FORM

PLEASE DO NOT IDENTIFY YOURSELF IN ANY WAY

We very much appreciate the cooperation you have given us. Your reaction to both the procedures and to the use of the "I-Message" are extremely important. Please tell us how you personally felt about its use. Do you see any merit in it?

Thank you again.

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