BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PROGRAM:
A STUDY ON A PRIMARY LEVEL STUDENT

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Abstract

The preliminary identification on a student (named Randy), who has Mathematical problem at primary school was derived from a classroom report, which explored everything occurred within 30 minutes interval. The data recorded becomes a baseline for ABC chart analysis to vividly portray true behavior, the potential triggers and consequent events following the occurrence of the student's off-task behavior during Math lesson. Based on the ABC analysis, it was proven that the frequency of the off-task behavior was significant, biting nails constantly, making funny faces, walking out the classroom for motor off-task behavior; talking out of topic, making weird noises for verbal off-task behavior, and looking around, looking out the window, staring blankly to places, delaying to start doing task, as well as putting head down on table for passive off-task behavior.

To construct more reliable data analysis, teacher conducted assessment interview. To ensure reliability aspect of data analysis, some other frequency data samplings were conducted in three different sessions. The rates of off-task behavior occurrence were transcribed and it came to conclusion that student's behavior was not influencedby time difference, duration, or intervals. The off-task behavior was purely aroused by the presence of mathematics operational instructions. In order to guarantee and minimize misinterpretation, functional behavior assessment was conducted to observe personal, situational, mental, physiological, cognitive or instructional influence. Randy indicated some fluctuationsin affective, cognitive, environmental, social, physiological, as well as communicational issues. Therefore a behavior intervention plan should touch these arrays of aspects to be successful.

The behavior intervention plan starts with vivid description of target behavior based on reliable data interpretation as the hypothesis. The second phase is to describe thoroughly the setting, the antecedence and the functions behavior that are problematic. By having these data, behavior replacement program is set such that can be applied step by step instructional "Narrating Number" technique to replace the off-task behaviors. Reinforcement program is also constructed to increase the likeliness to implement "Narrating Number" as well as to decrease the occurrence of off-task behavior. In order to monitor and assess the replacement program, teacher encourages self-management strategy by the help of school, environment, parents, and peers. Teacher also tries to condition environment by modifying, arranging, alternating physical entities and instructions, which are expected to boost Randy's performance in Math.

Key words: *Off-task behavior, ABC chart analysis, behavior problem, behavior intervention program*

INTRODUCTION

Setting:

Randy (not the subject's real name) was a 9 year old male student studying in mainstream general elementary school at one of the regions in East Java, Indonesia. Since the third grade of his elementary school, which was last year, his Math teacher had identified his problem dealing with numbers. Randy often performed off-

task behaviors such as biting his nails unconsciously, looking around or staring objects blankly, or trying to escape the Math class for numbers of different reasons. Currently, Randy sat in grade four and the current teacher identified his off-task behavior increasingly severe up to the point where his behavior insulted classroom instruction, attention, and delivery smoothness of the learning activities. The teacher was concerned about Randy's academic performance as well as mental development which might negatively influence his learning achievement. Therefore, the teacher decided to conduct analysis, behavioral assessment and intervention plan in order to help Randy to perform better in Math subject. Firstly, she generated an anecdotal observation record.

Observation Note:

It was Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. Randy. A 9 year old male student was busy biting his middle finger nail when the teacher explains math problem. He continuously bit the nail for about 3 minutes while staring blankly to a particular spot in the left corner of the classroom. The teacher notified his behavior and started calling his name to get his attention. "Randy, please try to solve problem number two, will you?"

The teacher approached Randy and tried to hand over the board marker. Randy ignored the teacher's request while refusing the board marker; he stood up and said "I want to go to the bathroom, its urgent!" The teacher attempted to hold Randy in class by saying, "Can you hold that for five more minutes? You may go after we solve problem number two." Randy agreed the offer and sat back in his chair.

The teacher walked back to the white-board and continued the discussion. She asked another student to solve problem number two. While the class engaged in solving problem number two, Randy kept on looking around and looking out the window. He sometimes sighed, made a bored looking face. Exactly 5 minutes after the last encounter with the teacher, he stood up and said loudly, "I am going to the bathroom now!" He ran out of the class without asking further permission to the teacher. Just a moment before he reached the door, the teacher stated, "You can go, but you must come back within five minutes". She continued, "You must be here before 9.15 a.m." Randy nodded his head and dashed out of the classroom. Most of the students looked at his act, seemed distracted by his behavior, and continued the discussion while

murmuring. Two or three students whispered each other while looking alternately at teacher, Randy's desk, and door. The teacher attracted students' attention back to math by drawing a cartoon derived from number '3' and said, "Can anyone guess what I am drawing?" Students started to look at the white-board and predict the drawing. It was a beautifully drawn flower petal derived from number '3', and another drawing of burger derived from the basic design of number '3'. Students seemed to gain more attention and the teacher explained, "If number three is so attractive and interesting, we should continue to work on problem number three. If we can solve it, we will continue to play a game with item number 4". The rest of the class then focused on the math problem.

It has already 9:18 a.m., there was no sign of Randy's appearance back into the class. The teacher assigned her teaching assistant to look for Randy in the male bathroom and brought him back to the class silently. At 9:23 a.m. with the assistant teacher, Randy came back to the classroom. By that time, the class was in the middle of group work to solve problem number 4. The teacher asked students to form a group of three and worked collaboratively to solve the exercise. The teacher got close to Randy; she whispered, "It is already 9:25, you are late, you do not keep your promise. I need to see you after Math lesson". By hearing this warning, Randy sat on the appointed seat with other friends in group. He directly put his head on the desk showing no intention of joining group work. During three minutes interval, the teacher told him to concentrate on the instructions by re-reading aloud the instructions next to him and avoid him to delay the work; he made an effort to have conversation with his group members but refusing to work on the lesson. He tried to make funny faces and various sounds to distract his peers. His peers were laughing at him and neglected the task. Randy could not maintain his attention to the task.

From this observation note, the teacher moves further to the second step by designing ABC Chart Analysis. This analysis is considered appropriate to confirm and identify student's behavior during the specified period of observation, the possible causal factors, and the consequences of the behavior towards the doer, peers, teacher, instructional activities, and environment (Robinson & Smith, 2005, pp. 2-3).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applied both qualitative and quantitative methods, focusing on the ABC chart behavior analysis for intervention program. Field observation was firstly done by mathematics teacher who was also the researcher as one preliminary step to recognize student's off-task behavior. Parents' interview was conducted outside of school hours according to the research consent, whereas the other interviews with physical education, social science, Indonesian language and mathematics teachers were done at school during the scheduled time. In addition, frequency data analysis by using Rate (R) was also performed to portray equal length of data observation. The result was expected to display the ratio of responses per unit of time, usually per minute, to validate the data in order to avoid behavior misjudgment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

ABC Chart Analysis

Student's Name : Randy Matawayang (only nickname)

Grade : Grade Four

Offering : B

School : State Elementary School in East Java, Indonesia

Teacher : ErlynaAbidasari

Focused behavior: **Off-task behavior(s)**

Description of behavior interests:

"Off-task Motor: biting nails, walking/running out of class, standing up"

"Off-task Verbal: talking to peers unrelated topic/out of context"

"Off-task Passive: staring blankly into space, looking around, looking out the window, delaying to start a task, putting head down on the table"

Date	Time	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence	Possible Function
Tuesday, 8 Oct 2013	9.00-9.03	Teacher explained Math lesson	Randy continuously bit his middle finger nail while staring blankly to spot in the left corner of the classroom	Teacher called Randy to try solving Math problem number 2	Off-task
	9.04-9.06	Teacher approached Randy while handing over a board marker	Randy ignored Teacher's request, he stood up and asked to leave the class for bathroom	Teacher refused Randy's request to go to the bathroom and asked him to wait for about five minutes in order for the class to finish problem number 2	Off-task Effort to escape
	9.07-9.09	Teacher continued her explanation on board	Randy looked around, looked out the window	The class was working on the Math problem number 2	Off-task
	9.10-9.12	Teacher was still engaged with her problem solving explanation and tried	Randy stood up and stated loudly, "I am going to the bathroom now!" He ran out of the class.	Teacher warned him to come back within five minutes. Peers were distracted, class	Escape

	to build eagerness of the class to solve the next problem number 3.		activity smoothness was disrupted	
9.23-9.25	Randy came back from the washroom. The teacher whispered to ask Randy to meet her after the lesson.	Randy seemed ignorant, he put his head down on the desk	Randy did not join group work discussion. Peers were distracted	Escape
9.28-9.30	Teacher reminded Randy to start working the task without delaying	Randy showed an effort to have conversation with peers but out of topic. Randy made funny faces and weird noises.	Peers laughed and neglected the math task.	Off-task

Constructive Notes from Various Data Sources

According to Umbreit and Blair (1997, p.77), in addition to observational structure in ABC analysis, it is necessary to develop another constructive data gathering technique, one of which is by applying assessment interview with people who have close or direct contact with the subject. The descriptions given by parents, other teachers, or peers may become additional information to arrive into hypothesis under which conditions particular off-task behavior is likely to occur. These interview results can be treated as historical record for Randy's performance in the past as well as at present.

A. Parents' interview

The Teacher decided to conduct cross data triangulation observation by having informal chat and talk with Randy's parents to observe deeply the cause of Randy's behavior, the frequency and duration occurred outside of the class hours and also the interpretation or consequences the parents gave to Randy when the off-task behavior(s) occurred. On Saturday, 12 October, 2013, the teacher met the parents in their house. At that time Randy was in his uncle's house playing with his cousins. The teacher applied STAR interview technique that is to ask parents to describe **Situation** or **Task** typically instructed to Randy, the **Action** Randy gave to the task, and the **Result** whether or not Randy was able to accomplish the task fully, partially, or even failing to follow the instruction.

Here is the summary table of questions and answers session with the parents:

Situation/Task	Action	Result
To work on mathematic homework	Delaying to start working on homework	Late working, poor homework result.
To work on Indonesian Language homework (narrative)	Eagerness to start working	Homework was done in time.
To work on PE homework	Start at the time he felt convenient or at his own phase, less cue of eagerness or reluctant (so-so).	Homework was done on time.
To help with calculation problem (for example buying grocery needs and exchanging money)	Skipping the request and start playing with his friends; ignoring the parents' request.	The task was incomplete.
To help his cousin with social science homework	Eagerness to help, Randy continuously ordered his cousin to follow his explanation.	The task was well performed.
To tell stories in Indonesian language study	Eagerness and highly motivated, prolonging stories into his own imaginative ending	The task was well articulated.
To explain parents how he was doing with mathematic lesson in class	Looking around, playing with his hands, or shifting the topic into another subject.	The question was not answered.
To explain parents how he was doing with social subject at school	Eagerness to answer, told details story about the lesson that day while mimicking or imitating teacher/other students doing within the class. Randy could memorize most of the details happened in the social class	The question was answered comprehensively with details
To explain parents how he was doing with language subject in class	Narration was delivered abruptly without necessity to instruct the second time; Randy often showed his language working paper to the parents.	The task was completely fulfilled.
The frequency of off-tasks dealing with mathematic/calculation matter	Randy almost always ignored, avoided, and/or rejected the duty/task dealing with mathematical operation or calculation.	High frequency of off-task
The frequency of off-tasks dealing with other instructions apart from mathematic operation or calculation	Randy almost always completed the task without hesitance.	High frequency of on-task

B. Teachers' interviews

The same interview technique was conducted with PE, Social Science, Indonesian Language and former Mathematic teachers. The result ispresented in the following table.

Interviewee	Dates of interview	Situation/task	Action	Result
PE teacher	Monday, 14 October 2013	To follow instructions to do some physical exercises e.g. to jog, to run, to roll, to stretch, to dribble ball, to pass ball, to hit the ball, to receive serve, to jump, and so on	Randy followed the tasks orderly and revealed NO significant difference with his peers	Instructions were fully accomplished, no interference.
		To follow instructions dealing with numbers, such as to count while jumping, or to calculate laps of running, to memorize time span of particular games	Randy indicated off-task motor behaviors such as walking away, or playing with other sport instrument which is not instructed.	Tasks were partially or failed to accomplished, interference for the sport activity.
Social Science Teacher	Monday, 14 October 2013	To follow instructions to have group work or discussion on social knowledge such as the concept of core and extended family, cultural	Randy portrayed cooperative attitude in group or peer work by stating opinions relevant to	Tasks were completed smoothly, no significant interference occurred.

		and religious ceremonies, geographical distribution of land and water, as well as socio-cultural diversity.	the topic, questioning and answering problems, as well as presenting ideas within the group. He sometimes lost attention when peers talked continuously, but soon he gained attention when peers asked him or gave him time to talk.	
		To follow instructions to discuss or respond to social science involving numeric calculation for example to compare the land and sea width, to state the growth number of Indonesian population, to calculate numbers of traditional tribes with similar language or traditions.	Randy almost always avoided to answer the problems or tasks by "off-task verbal" behavior that was to talk to peers out of topic. He preferred to tell narratives than performed calculation. He mentioned "I hate numbers" several times during the interactions.	Tasks were unsuccessfully conducted; teacher often asked other students to help him calculate or explained again to him.
Indonesian Language teacher	Tuesday, 15 October 2013	To practice using formal Indonesian language, to actively observe the language devices such as structure, grammar, functional words, linking phrases, connotative and denotative meaning of utterances, poetic language, language in spoken and written discourse, as well as meta-linguistic devices as intonation, stress, rhyme.	Randy actively involved in the tasks without being asked to; he exhibited full attention on this subject. He often raised hands and answered correctly when teacher asked questions regarding language knowledge. Randy loved to narrate stories.	Tasks were successfully accomplished.
		To identify language components such as identifying repeated vocabulary appearance and analyze percentage of vocabulary occurrence	Randy often performed "Off-task passive" behavior, such as delaying to start the task or staring blankly to particular place.	Tasks were unsuccessfully conducted.
Mathematics (previous year teacher)	Tuesday, 15 October 2013	To solve mathematical operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and factorization.	Randy performed off-task behaviors in three manners; motor, verbal, and passive strategies.	Tasks were unsuccessful; Randy often disturbed other peers or teacher's concentration.

Supporting Data Collection Method

To make sure that the above analyses were objective and point focus, the teacher conducted another data collection technique on Tuesday, 15 October, Thursday, 17 October, and Tuesday 22 October 2013. This data uses frequency data analysis by applying **Rate** to "equate the length of data observation" (Lee, Vostal, &Lylo, 2011).

Zirpoli (2008, p. 165) defines rate as "ratio of responses per unit of time, usually per minute" Cooper et al. (in Lee, Vostal&Lylo, 2011, p. 25) state that **rate** is necessary in the case where teacher has difficulty to conduct observation in the exact same amount of time. In the classroom setting where activities are unpredictably dynamic, it is difficult for teacher

to conduct the same time allotment for each observation. Three frequency tables' analyses were provided to support the objectivity of the assessment.

Date	*Off-task motor behavior* (biting nails, walking out the class, standing up without being asked, making funny faces)	Length of Observation
15 Oct 2013	4	30 minutes
17 Oct 2013	3	25 minutes
22 Oct 2013	5	35 minutes

Rate : 1st observation = 4/30 = 0.13 response per minute
$\quad\quad 2^{nd}$ observation = 3/25 = 0.12 response per minute
$\quad\quad 3^{rd}$ observation = 5/35 = 0.14 response per minute
$\quad\quad$ These rates proof a quite stable number, there is no evidence that different time and day influences the off-task behavior occurrence frequency.

Date	*Off-task verbal behavior* (talking off-topic, making weird noises)	Length of Observation
15 Oct 2013	2	30 minutes
17 Oct 2013	2	25 minutes
22 Oct 2013	3	35 minutes

Rate : 1st observation = 2/30 = 0.06 response per minute
$\quad\quad 2^{nd}$ observation = 2/25 = 0.08 response per minute
$\quad\quad 3^{rd}$ observation = 3/35 = 0.08 response per minute
$\quad\quad$ These rates proof a quite stable number, there is no evidence that different time and day influences the off-task verbal behavior occurrence frequency.

Date	*Off-task passive behaviors* (looking around, staring blankly, looking out the class/window, delaying to start tasks, putting head on the table)	Length of Observation
Oct 2013	5	30 minutes
Oct 2013	4	25 minutes
Oct 2013	6	35 minutes

Rate : 1st observation = 5/30 = 0.17 response per minute
$\quad\quad 2^{nd}$ observation = 4/25 = 0.16 response per minute
$\quad\quad 3^{rd}$ observation = 6/35 = 0.17 response per minute

These rates prove a quite stable number, there is no evidence that different time and day, and duration influences the off-task passive behavior occurrence frequency. Therefore, the emergence of Randy's off-task behavior is considered stable, it is not influenced by time and duration, and it is purely influenced by the presence of Mathematic problem or instructions within the class. To make this hypothesis stronger, Functional Behavior Assessment is conducted to observe personal description, emotional, environmental, cognitive, physiological as well as instructional factors that may trigger off-task behavior.

Behavior Intervention Plan

A. Behavioral Concern Description:

Randy has difficulty in Math class, based on last year report; he performed poorly below class average. He also indicated tendency to show off-task behaviors in various motor, verbal and/passive performance. According to frequency data sampling from four different data generation intervals (8, 15, 17, and 22 October 2013) on average, Randy exhibits:

> OTM: 4-5 acts per 30 minutes
>
> OTV: 2-3 acts per 30 minutes
>
> OTP: 4-5 acts per 30 minutes

B. FBA Data

> Setting   : Math Classroom
>
> Causal antecedent   : Tasks on Math operations and/or problem solving exercises
>
> Functions   : 1. Escaping or avoiding the lesson
>
>   2. Do not complete the tasks while being anxious or frustrated.

C.   Replacement Behavior Program

Inquiring   the   previously   conducted Intervention Program which identified Randy's strength in "Narration", the teacher decides to apply **"Narrating Number"** technique (Rogers, 1994). Teacher will explain this technique for the whole class by using video or other multi-media device to attract Randy and peers' attention with the display of funny cartoon characters narrating mathematical problem. Teacher may play the clip twice to assert understanding on how will the technique works. Afterwards, teacher writes down the instructional stages on the board as follows:

1. **Look at the teacher** who is giving instruction
2. **Follow the narrative version** of the instruction
3. **Listen carefully** the narration and **identify the symbol** of mathematical operation within narration
4. Identify **what should be done and do the task**
5. **Receive   acknowledgment** or reinforcement
6. **Check** back the answer.

Here is an example of narrating number:

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5 + 6 -10 = …..
Narration:Abby has five apples at home and his parents buy her six more apples. He is so happy to have those apples. However, Abby should give ten apples to his cousins. How many apple left for Abby?

D. Proactive Reinforcement Strategies

Teacher discusses the Intervention Program involving the need to set up reinforcement. Reinforcement strategy equips students with stimulus to maintain or increase the expected or taught behavior (Zirpoli, 2008, p. 304). In order to maximize reinforcement program, teacher should cooperatively design the menu with Randy and peers, to appropriately grade and decide reinforcers, as failure to attract students' interest with the menu will satiate its functional purpose. Lampi, Fenty, &Beaunea (2005) suggests teacher to vary the reinforcement menu such as activities, privilege, social opportunities, or leisure session. Therefore, consulting the level of intensity of off-task behavior, Teacher, Randy and peers determine reinforcement menu as follow.

Initial points rewarded every day is 40 points per person at the beginning of the class

1. Success in following "Narrating Number Technique": + 5 points
2. Failure in following "Narrating Number Technique":

If occurred with OTM: - 4 points

If occurred with OTV: -3 points

If occurred with OTP: -2 points

(+ means points added, - means points deducted)

During the whole Math session, which is 120 minutes, based on frequency rate calculation, each student may achieve maximum 80 points. After the discussion, the reinforcer's menu is set. The entire menu except number one for 35 points can be exchanged on Saturday after the first or the second break.

Points	Reinforcement Menu	Requirement or Notes
35 points	one chance to replay the video or any multi-media clip used as instruction in class 5 minutes before the end of the session	only three students are allowed to propose this offer at every end of Math session
45 points	one free minion color stamp or sticker	very cheap and easy to purchase in game or any convenient stores
55 points	one pass for 10 minutes extra free time at school internet café	sponsored by the school internet café
60 points	one free Math homework pass	Maximum 4 students can propose for the same free homework day
70 points	ten minutes time-out during the Math class, students may prefer to do activities they like rather than working on Math problem in class	e.g. reading magazine, playing video game, or listening to his/her favorite music in the reading corner with the audio provided by the teacher
80 points	One movie or online game session equals to 120 minutes instruction.	Student and teacher consolidate the movie or online game appropriate to be watched and/or done together.

E. Positive Environment Modification

In order to positively encourage Randy's behavior change, environmental modifications should be well-planned. Quinn et al. (1998) address the necessity to modify environment because the condition within learning environment may sometimes trigger off-task behavior. Some of the possible off-task precipitation may arrive from physical

seating arrangement that does not accommodate enough access to instructions, types of activities that have less variation so that student with behavior problem finds it boring or distracting. Teacher is encouraged to:

1. Provide Randy with different types of Mathematic problem solving strategies, for example exposing Randy to drawing or pictures in zoo theme or game theme. While narrating what might happen with particular sum of animals on the picture, Randy might develop more interest to apply mathematic calculation in real life situation. Teacher may also use interactive visuals or charts to introduce mathematic formula or music and song lyric regarding numbers.

2. Alternate Randy's seating arrangement, do not put Randy out of sight, try to place him near the instruction board so that he can easily access the information he needs to complete the task. Any inhibition of this access may decrease his

willingness to try solving the problem. Another way is by establishing "standing workstation" where students might request for working while standing in appointed corner or place within the classroom. This station is expected to refresh the way or perception that doing task can be done anywhere as far as it is convenient for students and teacher without distracting others. Teacher should teach the procedure of requesting "standing workstation" to avoid students' clash or competition to get the spot.

3. Modify or alternate the difficulty level of Math problems, instead of going predictably from the easiest to the most difficult problem, teacher may alternate from easy to medium, back to easy to hard, give medium and hard, and return to the easy one , to keep students' motivation and sense of achievement while doing the work.

F. Monitoring the Progress and Interpreting Outcome

In monitoring the effectiveness and the progress of the behavior intervention strategies to achieve the increase in on-

task behavior, it is important to observe the achievement of the following aspects:

1. Reliability measure which provides objective interpretation of data. Kazdin (1989) explains the importance of maintaining data reliability since it

portrays the real or true behavior of the subject, prevents bias data interpretation, as well as provides adequate evidence on how the target behavior is described. The intervention technique is considered *significant* or *adequte*when Randy shows ability to consistently show 80% accuracy of "Narrating Number" techniques. The closer the percentage to 100%, the more reliable the technique is considered (Zirpoli, 2008, p. 180). In addition to keep reliability measure objective, Randy needs to maintain points at least 40 per Math session during the four instructional periods conducted in two consecutive weeks. Achieving this point means that Randy shows potential behavior change either off-task reduction or on-task increase by using alternative behavior "Narrating Number".

2. The program should be assessed regularly to determine Randy's level of mastery. The better way of assessing Randy's performance is by matching teacher's assessment and Randy's self-evaluation. Rafferty (2010, p. 51) emphasizes the importance of self-management strategies where a child should be involved and taught in "self-monitoring, self-evaluation, self-instruction, and strategies instruction" to achieve long lasting

impact. Teacher should teach Randy simple frequency counting system by tally or box ticking to observe his own behavior. Matching the assessment provides Randy feedback on how to direct himself to behave on-task by following stages of the recommended alternate behavior, in this case "Narrating Number". If he is not sure to narrate properly, he can always check with the teacher or in online database suggested by school for his training (this database can convert any mathematical operation into simple narration, it is a free platform for students).

3. When the data interpretation shows positive change towards the target goal, teacher should consider identifying, analyzing, and implementing next replacement behavior and asking parents, Randy, other teachers as well as to collaboratively discuss the next behavior program. It is important to involve other school elements to better stimulate Randy's success in the future. Regular report on Randy's progress should also be discussed with parents to maintain the supportive environment and treatment for Randy within and outside the school hours.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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