Applied behavior analysis

Therefore, I will be using Applied Behavior Analysis to help change her behavior towards English spelling and achieve back her good grades or beyond.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a process to apply principles of behaviorism through a more systematic path. It has many successful stories in helping people to increase in learning social skills, get over fear or panic, and stop bad habits like smoking or drinking alcohol. It is commonly used by teachers in classroom environment to help students change their own behavior.

There are basically five critical steps in ABA, firstly identify the target behaviors, second established a baseline for the target behaviors, third choose a reinforcers and a punishers or a combination of both, fourth measure changes in the target behaviors, and at last gradually reduce the frequency of reinforcers as the behavior improves (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007, p. 175).

In order to help my niece improve on her English spelling, first I will need to identify the target behavior. Her baseline for her average English spelling marks achieved currently was 0/5, while initially she could at least get 4/5.

Therefore, my final target is to help her achieved 4/5 or a full marks for her English spelling. It might also be good to let her start out with realistic small achievable goals over a 5 weeks period. On week 1, she can try to break her egg and get at least 1/5 and subsequently increase 1 mark each week until she feels confident and score full marks.

Gradually, I will hope to see that she will not discriminate between her English and Chinese spelling and is able to maintain her score for both subject with own self-regulation leading her towards a sense of self-rewards (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007).

My niece antecedent is her English spelling on Wednesday, the behavior which develops is not willing to learn her spelling and the consequence that follows is failure of spelling. Hence, it is not a wise idea to use punishment as she may feel guiltier about failing her spelling. I will choose to use positive reinforcement, this is done by praising her for each spelling words she is able to memorize during her practice with me. Positive reinforcement is a process to increase the duration or frequency of a desire behavior as a result from introducing a reinforcer (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007).

At the initial stage, I may use a continuous reinforcement schedule to praise her every effort in learning a new word.

For example; " Aunty I have finished memorizing 1 word…" My niece murmured. " Good Job! Keep it up little princess! " I answered. " How about trying to learn another word smart princess? " I asked " Yes! I'll do it right away. " My niece answered The praise after every word learnt becomes her reinforcer, this is also a form of learning called operant conditioning where she voluntarily control her own learning behavior process which leads to a desire consequence of getting a praise.

On the other hand, using continuous reinforcement schedule results to extinction.

It may occur when I am not around to praise her for her effort in learning a new word and the learning behavior quickly disappear (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). Therefore, I would use an alternative reinforcement schedule called intermittent schedule. There are basically two types; Interval schedules depend on time and can either be predictable (fixed) or unpredictable (variable). While, ratio schedules depend on the number of individual behaviors happened.

Over here, I will choose to use a fixed-interval schedule (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). For example, I would tell my niece that for every weekend that I met up with her she would let me know her score for the past spelling quiz; in return she gets a sweet from me and will achieve a " Star" sticker for every mark she scored.

A star scoring board could also be pasted up on the wall to let her monitor her own improvement by involving her to paste the sticker up on her own. Thus, she knows that in order to get more sweets and achieve more stars on the scoring board, she had to get a higher score each week.

Gradually, without having constant praising she might self-regulate by taking up the responsibility for her own learning, in order to do that she may set her own goal on how many marks she should get to achieve the most amount of sweets and stars from me. The good feeling that she will received when she achieved her goal is also called self-reinforcement (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). In a scenario where the above does not work on her, a different way of reinforcement may be introduce, probably by teaching her spelling through playing a word game.

I may ask her 8 years old sister to join in while I help the younger niece to score points and make her feel good. This is a form of negative reinforcement if she is able to get all her spelling words right from playing word game, she do not need to sit on her usual table and chair and practice spelling alone (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). In conclusion, my goal for this report was to help my niece to overcome her fear in learning her English spelling and guide her along to achieve her goals to get good score.

Simply by using ABA, I am able to use behavioral approach to formulate, deliver, and monitor her progress. If my niece lost the competencies towards learning, then how can she function appropriately in her future learning path or go beyond her potentials? Certainly, learning skills must be in place to build her foundation during her early childhood.

Eventually, I hope she will be able to use the same skill to generalize with other subject.