

BEHAVIOR MOMENTUM

The High Probability Command Sequence

Eb Blakely, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Quest, Inc.
Florida Institute of Technology

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

Well dressed man shows at
doorstep...You open the door, and
after introductions...

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“Wow that is quite a picture of your son – you must be very fond of him!”

“Oh yes I am – he is a great kid!”

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“This is a beautiful house – you must love it here!”

“Yes I do”

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“Gosh that is a comfortable looking couch”

“Yes it is!”

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“You have a nice looking carpet in the living room”

“Gosh thanks – it does require some care”

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“It looks like having a nice house is important to you”

“Yes it is – very important”

WAY BACK MACHINE TO 1950S

“Well...can I interest you in a brand new vacuum cleaner”

“....Yes?”

THE PROBLEM...

Non-compliance – “Doing something else”

1. Academics
2. Self care
3. Employment
4. Household maintenance
5. Medical care
6. Sampling activities in free time
7. Safety

THE PROBLEM...

Concerns:

1. Progress in school
2. Job security
3. Hygiene
4. Health
5. Safety
6. Quality of life

WHY NON-COMPLIANCE?

Can't do....



Solution: Skill acquisition
Prompts
Reinforcers
Chaining

WHY NON-COMPLIANCE?

Won't do...



LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Request →



→ Reinf?

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Instruction →



→ Reinf?

Prompts



LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Instruction →



→ Really?

Prompts



THE BASICS

- I. Behavior momentum
 - A. High probability command (request) sequence
 - B. High probability (HP) requests
 - i. Task/behavior that is easy and likely to occur
 - C. Low probability (LP) request
 - i. Task/behavior that is unlikely to occur
 - D. HP requests → LP request

THE BASICS

Baseline: LP → (B) → Reinf

Treatment:

HP → (B) → Reinf + HP → (B) → Reinf

Then...

LP → (B) → Reinf

EXAMPLE

Time to get up! → (Zilch) → Coffee



Do this! → (Imitates) → Coffee

+

Give me five ! → (Gives 5) → Coffee

Then...

Time to get up! → (Gets up) → Coffee

EXAMPLE

Clean your room! → (Nada) → iPad



How was your day? → ("OK") → attention

+

Hand me shoe! → (Gives Shoe) → praise

Then...

Clean your room! → (Cleans room) → iPad

TARGETS

- I. Low probability behavior
 - A. Task/behavior \leq 20% of opps
 - B. Or any activity that is not occurring often enough
- II. High probability
 - A. Task/behavior \geq 80% of opps
 - B. Easy to do
 - C. Goal: get some reinforcers going!

MAKING IT WORK

- I. Immediacy
 - A. Make it brisk
 - B. Get learner going!
 - C. Use reinforcers for HPs
- II. How many HPs?
 - A. 1-3 is good
- III. What if HPs don't work?
 - A. Skip to next HP or...
 - B. Start over or...
 - C. Just give reinforcer

MAKING IT WORK

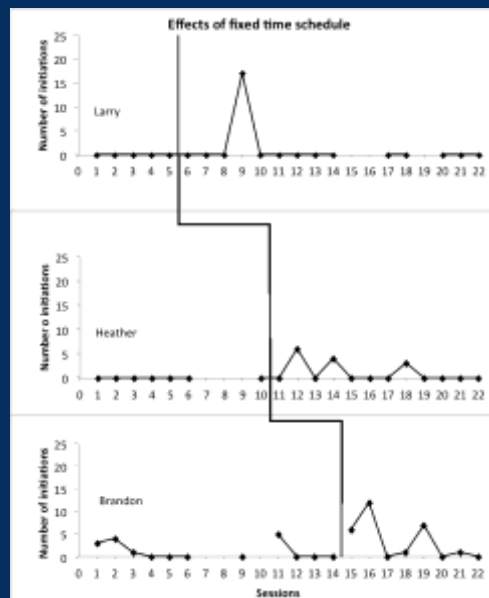
- IV. Pairing – establishing contact with learner
 - A. Give non-contingent reinforcers to learner – especially at beginning
 - B. No strings attached fun!
 - C. Results?
 - i. More approach behavior
 - ii. More cooperation
 - iii. But might be temporary, so keep it up!

RESEARCH ON PAIRING

Baseline: Count # of initiations

Fixed Time Schedule: Give a preferred item every 2 min

RESULTS



AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

1. HP = High probability behavior
2. LP = Low probability behavior
3. Which comes first? HP
4. HP → (B) → ? Reinf

LET'S PRACTICE

Get a partner

1. Select LP
2. Select HP
 - A. Easy
 - B. Quick
 - C. $\geq 80\%$
3. Select reinforcer for HP and LP
 - A. Observe free time
 - B. Give choices
 - C. Menu
 - D. Ask

USE IN LONGER TASKS

- I. Long tasks
 - A. Are important in development
 - B. Challenges: length and complexity
 - C. HPCS can be used...
- II. General procedure
 - A. HPCS to start...
 - B. HPCS within sequence

EXAMPLE

Dressing sequence! → iPad

Task Analysis

1. Under wear
2. Pants
3. Shirt
4. Socks
5. Shoes

EXAMPLE

Dressing sequence! → iPad



How was your day? → ("Good") → attention

+

Hand me the shoe! → (Gives Shoe) → praise

Then...

Begin Dressing sequence

EXAMPLE

Task Analysis

1. Under wear

2. Pants

↳ HPCS break...

Give me five! → (5) → praise + What do you want to do today? → ("Play") → praise



3. Shirt

4. Socks

5. Shoes

↳ iPad

VIDEO BREAK

Put on shoes!



LET'S PRACTICE

Get a partner

1. Select Long Task
2. Select HP
3. Select reinforcer for HP and LP
4. Use HPCS to get started
5. Use HPCS During Long Task

CLASSROOM APPLICATION

1st period:

Easy tasks → Reinf

then...

Difficult tasks → Reinf

2nd period:

Easy tasks → Reinf

then...

Difficult tasks → Reinf

FOOD REFUSAL APPLICATION

LP = non preferred food items:
not consumed

HP = preferred food items:
readily consumed

Preferred food + preferred food + preferred food
then...
Non-preferred food

HPCS VS PREMACK PRINCIPLE

Premack Principle

HP is contingent on LP

LP → HP

Do homework → Play video games

Mow lawn → Watch football

HPCS DURING CRISES

Behavioral Crises

- I. Harm to self
- II. Harm to others
- III. Extreme property destruction

HPCS DURING CRISES

Precursors to Crises

1. Cursing
2. Whining
3. Pacing
4. Glaring
5. Tearing of clothes
6. Throwing shoes

HPCS DURING CRISES

Goal

Precursors → Stable functioning or
safe place

HPCS DURING CRISES

Whining/nagging → Physical aggression



“Hey give me five” → (5) → Praise

+

“Hand me the pencil” → (Give pencil) → Praise

+

“OK let’s go sit down” → (Sits) → Praise

BUT ONE THING...

What if HPCS is consistently used after
problem behavior?

“Please come to the table” → Keeps playing



“Touch your nose” → (B) → “Good”

+

“Give me five” → (B) → Candy

+

“Please come to the table” → (B) → Chip

UH OH...



SOLUTION...

“Touch your nose” → (B) → “Good”

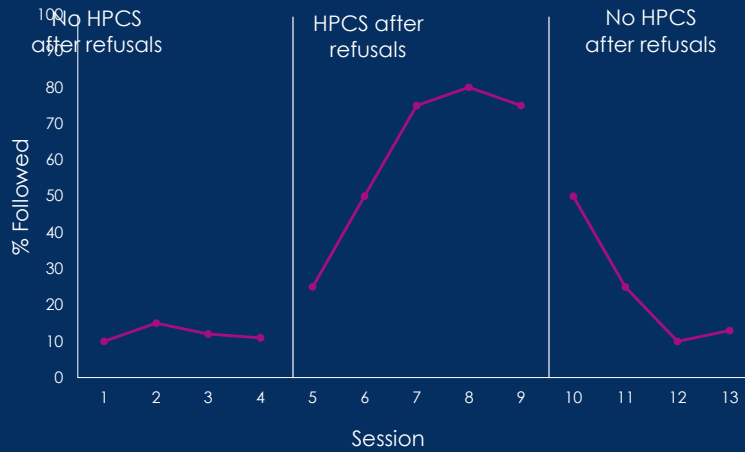
+

“Give me five” → (B) → Candy

then...

“Come to the table” → (Walks to table) → Chip

WHEW...



RESEARCH: ROLE OF THE HP REINFORCER

Do we need these...

HP → (B) → Reinf + HP → (B) → Reinf

OR

HP + HP

CONDITIONS

Baseline:

LP → (B) → Reinf

HP no S^R:

HP → (B) + HP → (B) + HP → (B)

then...

LP → (B) → Reinf

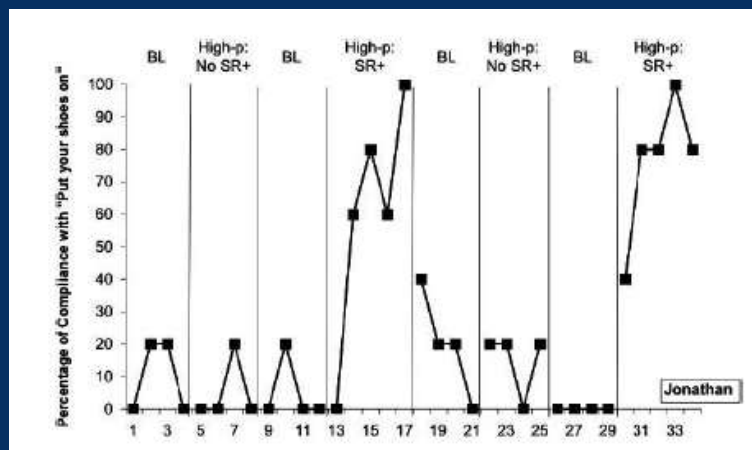
HP with S^R:

HP → (B) → S^R + HP → (B) → S^R + HP → (B) → S^R

then...

LP → (B) → Reinf

RESEARCH: ROLE OF THE HP REINFORCER



Zuluaga & Normand (2008). JABA, 41, 453-457.

RESEARCH: ROLE OF THE HP

Do we need these...

HP \rightarrow (B) \rightarrow Reinf + HP \rightarrow (B) \rightarrow Reinf

OR

Reinf + Reinf

CONDITIONS

Baseline:

LP \rightarrow (B) \rightarrow Reinf

Extinction:

LP \rightarrow (B)

HP:

HP \rightarrow (B) + HP \rightarrow (B) + HP \rightarrow (B)

then...

LP \rightarrow (B) \rightarrow Reinf

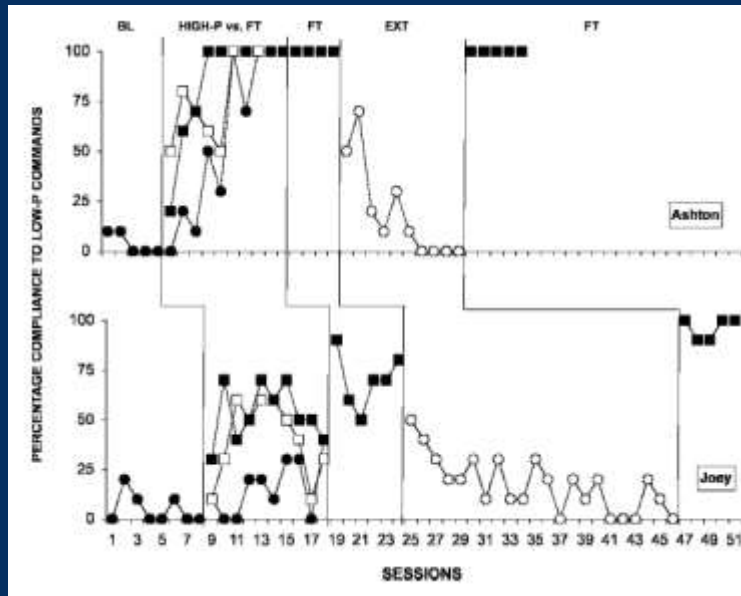
Fixed time (FT):

S^R + \rightarrow S^R + \rightarrow S^R

then...

LP \rightarrow (B) \rightarrow Reinf

RESEARCH:



Bullock & Normand (2006). *JABA*, 39, 495-499.

LET'S PRACTICE

Get a partner

1. Select reinforcer
2. Select LP
3. Implement:

Reinf + Reinf + Reinf

Then...

LP → (B) → Reinf

FINAL EXAM AND SUMMARY

1. HP
2. LP
3. Sequence
4. Crisis usage?
5. Need reinforcer?
6. Need Instruction and Behavior?
7. Pairing
8. Different from Premack?
9. Given consistently after problem behavior?
10. Classroom application