*INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVING
THE QUALITY OF DISCUSSIONS IN
SEVENTH-GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSES*

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An experiment was conducted to evaluate procedures to improve classroom discussions in seventh-grade social studies classes. An increased number of students participated in discussions when rules were stated for discussions, students were praised for their contributions, the teacher restated or paraphrased students' contributions aloud or on the blackboard, the teacher planned an outline of discussion questions, student contributions to discussions were recorded and were used to determine part of the students' grades for the class, and discussion grades were publicly posted.

The second part of the study focused on procedures designed to improve quality of classroom discussions. Students were taught to participate in discussions by providing reasons for their statements, comparisons between different points, or examples supporting their statements. As each type of contribution was taught, recorded, and counted toward part of the students' classroom grades, each type of contribution increased. Ratings of discussions by outside judges consisting of junior high school teachers, junior high school students, and persons experienced in conducting discussions, indicated that the training increased the overall quality of the discussions. Use of the quality training procedures, however, resulted in decreased levels of overall participation in discussion, a decrease that was reversed by the use of a group contingency for participation. Finally, the discussions after training seemed to be preferred by both the teacher and the students.

DESCRIPTORS: academic behavior, discussion skills, contingencies, teacher behavior, junior high students

Discussions are a common, essential activity in most school classrooms. They are an especially significant part of most junior and senior high school social studies classrooms. Yet, despite this emphasis, discussions are rarely model scenes of positive, effective group learning experiences. Instead, in a typical discussion, only a small portion of the class is actively participating. Glutthorn (1966) stated, "In a typical class, it is usual for less than one third to par-

ticipate actively in a 50 minute period." Furthermore, beyond the problems of limited participation, few teachers seem satisfied with the caliber of contributions students make during discussions. The low quality level of students' contributions may be partially responsible for many students' general disinterest and frequent disruptions during discussions.

The wealth of articles in education journals devoted to classroom discussions indicate the significance teachers place on discussions. Many of these articles have stressed the benefits to students who frequently contribute to discussions. Suggested benefits range from more obvious products, such as practice in verbal self-expression (Oliver, 1958), more involvement in the subject being discussed (Ohles, 1965), and enjoying and learning more during the discus-

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sion (Porter, 1965), to more indirect products, such as increased self-confidence (Morrison & Thomas, 1975; Trosky & Wood, 1976), better critical thinking skills (Monteau, 1961), and learning skills for future participation in community groups (Bushman, 1976).

A relatively small number of studies have experimentally analyzed the effectiveness of strategies to improve discussions. Some studies have attempted to improve discussions by increasing participation through self-recording (Delprato, 1977; Securro & Walls, 1975). Other studies have been aimed at improving the quality of students' contributions and have used a wide variety of strategies ranging from the use of contingent positive consequences (Boshier, 1975; Hoover, 1960) to training teachers in discussion-leading skills (Broden, Copeland, Beasley, & Hall, 1977; Burka & Jones, 1979) and use of stimulated recall sessions (Loree & Koch, 1960).

Thus, there is some information indicating possible ways to improve students' participation in discussions both in terms of increasing the number of participations and improving the quality of students' contributions to discussions. However, of the limited supply of empirically based research, the subjects were often college or adult aged; those studies including younger students were conducted in special classroom situations. Further, interpretation of the significance of the results of a number of the studies is difficult: Some studies evaluated participation on an overall basis and did not report the percentage of students that contributed to discussions; many studies were without baseline conditions, preventing a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the procedures used; and some studies did not include an assessment of the reliability of the measurement system used.

Of the studies available, the one by Broden *et al.* (1977) seems the most rigorous methodologically, presenting individual student participation records, and using a clear experimental design and reliability measures. However, that study did not include any method for evaluating whether or not the changes produced in student

participation resulted in a better overall quality of discussion.

The primary purposes of the present study were to develop and evaluate procedures to increase student participation in discussions and to change the form of student contributions and thereby produce improvements in the overall quality of the discussions.

EXPERIMENT 1 INCREASING STUDENT PARTICIPATION

METHOD

Students and Teacher

This portion of the study was conducted in four, seventh-grade social studies classes containing between 20 and 31 students each. The teacher was in her first year of teaching.

Measurements

Times were recorded when discussions began and ended. Each student contribution during a discussion was also recorded using a sheet resembling a seating chart. A contribution consisted of a verbal response involving one or more words in the form of a question or a statement which related to the topic being discussed. The student's response may or may not have been solicited by a question from the teacher. For a contribution to be scored, the student had to raise her or his hand and be called on by name or signaled with an obvious nod. A single contribution lasted until another student was called upon. Thus, a contribution was scored in the appropriate square on the chart for the discrete instance in which a student was recognized by the teacher and contributed to class, regardless of the number of interchanges between student and teacher that occurred during that instance.

Procedures

Basic class format. An average of two school days per week in the social studies classes were

devoted to discussions, each discussion lasting about 20 min. Discussions had to last at least 15 min to be included in the data. Discussion topics varied from day to day. Some discussions stemmed from in-class readings from books, pamphlets, leaflets, or dittoed handouts, while others stemmed from filmstrips or movies, and still others were merely based on students' general knowledge.

Baseline. Although the teacher tried to lead orderly discussions in her four classes, she had to devote much of her attention to reprimanding the students for disruptive behavior.

Treatment. At the beginning of the treatment, the teacher announced and distributed a list of rules covering discussion procedures. Included were the following rules: Raise your hand and wait quietly when you have something to say; speak only when you are called on by the teacher; if someone else is called on, put your hand down and quietly listen; and if after the person is finished talking, you have more to add, raise your hand again. Next, the teacher explained why she considered it important that every student participate in class by contributing to discussions.

The teacher then told the students that one of them would be designated every day to record a mark given by the teacher for every time another student contributed a relevant question, answer, or comment to a discussion. Each mark would stand for one point earned. The teacher gave examples of irrelevant statements and made it clear that if any student made an irrelevant statement in the middle of the discussion or emitted any other disruptive behaviors (e.g., being out of seat, not facing forward, or talking-out when not called on), that student would lose one point per disruption. Furthermore, if a student lost three points during the course of one discussion, the student would automatically be sent to the office and would have to make up missed class time after school. The teacher then explained that the total number of points earned or lost during each discussion would determine each student's daily

classroom grade. If a student made no contributions, but attended to the discussion (i.e., emitted no disruptive behaviors), the student had a daily grade of C; if the difference between the number of points lost and the number of points earned was plus one, the student earned a C+; if the difference equaled two, a B-; if three, a B; if four, a B+; if five, an A-; if six or more, an A; if the difference was minus one, the student's grade was a C-; if minus two, a D; and if minus three, an F. The weekly averages of these daily discussion grades were posted on the bulletin board in back of the classroom. At the end of each school quarter, these weekly grades were averaged and converted to 25% of each student's overall grade in the class.

During each discussion, the teacher followed all student contributions with the remark, spoken loudly enough for all to hear, "Please give (Sally) a point for her answer (or question, or comment)." In addition to this form of recognition, the teacher would also often compliment students on their contributions by saying such things as: "Good," "That's right," and "Excellent point, Rob." The teacher often paraphrased verbally and/or wrote the essence of students' remarks on the blackboard. This helped the students to take notes. Lastly, during the treatment condition, the teacher made a list of questions before each discussion. Although this list often consisted of only five or six questions, and often other questions were asked that were not included in the list, it served as a basis for the class discussion.

Experimental Design

A multiple baseline across classes was used: the Treatment condition was introduced in the four different classes at three different times (the treatment plan was introduced at the same time in two classes, Classes A and B).

Reliability

The primary observer recorded all discussions. A second observer recorded independently dur-

Fig. 1. Percentage of students in class participating in each classroom discussion in the four classes of Year 1.

ing at least one discussion in each class in each condition. These observers were adults who sat at the side of the classroom.

An agreement on whether or not a student

participated the same number of times in a discussion was counted if both observers scored the same number of contributions for a student; otherwise, a disagreement was counted. The per-

centage of agreement was 89% (agreement on 504 of 567 occasions).

RESULTS

Figure 1 shows the percentage of students that participated in each discussion. Figure 1 shows that during baseline the average percentage of students participating in discussions was low. In all classes, the introduction of the treatment procedure resulted in a marked increase in percentage of students participating.

Of all the classes, the change from baseline condition to treatment was least dramatic in Class D. To evaluate further whether the treatment was functional, a "no points" condition was introduced in Class D during discussion #54. During this "no points" condition, all procedures remained the same as during the treatment condition with the exception that the students no longer earned points. The average percentage of participation during these six discussions was 55%, in contrast to the 69% average existing before and after this condition.

In Classes A, B, C, and D there was an average of .34, .22, .32, and .24 contributions/minute, respectively, during baseline, and an average of 1.45, 1.60, 1.64, and 1.50 contributions/minute during the treatment.

An analysis of individual student scores indicated that the treatment appeared to increase the number of contributions of students who had low or moderate rates during baseline. The rates of students who contributed frequently to discussions during baseline were not noticeably affected.

EXPERIMENT 2 IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

METHOD

Students and Teacher

This part of the study was conducted the next year in two seventh-grade social studies classes containing 18 and 25 students. The

teacher was the same, except she was now in her second year of teaching.

Initial Procedures

Baseline. The teacher started the year with several of the procedures she had successfully used during the previous year: discussion rules, compliments, verbal paraphrasing and writing on the blackboard, and preparation of discussion questions. She did not give points for contributions, take away points for disruptions, or use a grade contingency.

Grade contingency for participation. This was basically the same as the treatment program for Classes A, B, C, and D; because students were less disruptive, however, the teacher did not take away points.

A result of the grade contingency was increased participation. The teacher, however, felt that the quality of students' contributions still left something to be desired; students' statements were often so brief they conveyed little information, or so drawn out and off the subject they were boring and irrelevant. Quality training was initiated in an attempt to help remedy this situation.

Quality Training

Behaviors taught. To improve the quality of students' contributions, three types of contributions were selected to be trained: reasons, examples, and comparisons. These contributions were called "star" contributions and could, like any other contribution, appear as questions, answers, or comments. To be scored as a "star," a contribution had to consist of at least two separate components, or independent clauses, in which one component acted as a reason, example, or comparison for another component. A "star" reason was a contribution in which one component, usually introduced by "because," "so that," "since," or "the reason for that is," served to supply the reason for the statement, or question, in the other component. The reason could appear either as the second component of the statement, as was most common (e.g.,

"When I'm in strange places I get all nervous, because I don't know what I'm supposed to do."), or as the first component of the statement (e.g., "I don't know what I'm supposed to do in strange places; that's why I get nervous in them"). A "star" example was a contribution in which one component, usually introduced by the words "for example," "like if," "an example of . . . is," or "one kind of . . . is," served as an example for the statement or question in the other component. A "star" comparison was a contribution in which one component, usually introduced by the words "the difference between," "in comparison," "compared to," "in contrast," or "but," served as a comparison to the other component.

In all cases, a "star" contribution had to consist of at least a two-component statement or question. For example, the contribution, "So that they won't get worse," was not scored as a reason, while the answer, "It's important to put splints on dislocations, so that they won't get worse," was scored as a reason. The decision as to whether a contribution consisted of two separate components was often facilitated by listening for two independent clauses; however, predicate statements could also be scored as "star" contributions. Predicate statements typically began with either the word "is" or "are" which connected the initial statement and the component that served as a reason, example, or comparison. For example, "An example of a problem that happens in our family is when I want something they don't want me to have," was scored as a "star" example.

All contributions were scored as either "star" or "non-star" contributions. Observers were told to make all judgments immediately following the contribution, prior to and independent of any response the teacher might offer. Furthermore, each "star" contribution was scored as either an example, a reason, or a comparison.

Introduction of procedures. All the procedures from the preceding grade contingency condition were employed. In addition, the

teacher stated that she was pleased that almost everyone was regularly participating in discussions. She then said that along with participating, it was important for students to learn to express themselves well so that they could make more convincing cases for their opinions when interacting with others, and gave some examples. Students were then asked to supply additional reasons why it was important to be able to present themselves convincingly and to supply additional examples of situations in which this skill would be helpful. The teacher then said that today they would learn one type of contribution. An instruction sheet described the first type of "star" contribution and listed "key words" that should be included in that type of "star" contribution (e.g., key words for "star" reasons were "because," "so that," "since," and "the reason for . . . is . . ."). The sheet also listed examples of that type of "star" contribution that had been given in past discussions, gave some practice exercises that required students to discriminate "star" contributions from "non-star" contributions, and listed questions that students were then called on to answer with that type of "star" response.

This initial training session lasted one 25-min class period when each type of "star" statement was first introduced. Booster training sessions were planned if the data showed no increases after initial training, or if, after a small increase, the students reverted to the pretraining, baseline levels. These booster training sessions were planned to last 5-10 min at the beginning of class and consisted of the teacher restating the importance of making "star" contributions of the type trained and then giving the students more chances to practice answering questions with "star" contributions.

Each time a student made a "star" contribution that had been trained, the teacher instructed the recorder to, "Please give (Tommy) a 'star' contribution" and sometimes she complimented the student on the specific type of contribution given. Students received one point for "non-

star" contributions and three points for "star" contributions in the quality training condition. When time permitted at the end of class, the teacher asked the observer to read off the names of students who had made "star" contributions. As in the first part of the study, a weekly sheet was posted listing the students' numbers of contributions, and their weekly grades. Point requirements for grades (e.g., three points for a B and six points for an A) remained the same. Thus, a student could obtain an A by making two "star" contributions during a discussion.

Before each discussion in this quality training condition, a 60 cm $\times$ 45 cm poster was posted on the front blackboard for each type of "star" contribution that had been introduced. The posters stated that students would receive three points for each "star" reason, example, or comparison contribution they made, and listed the key words that could be included in that type of "star" contribution. As each new type of "star" contribution was taught, another poster was added to the blackboard.

Bonus condition. During the last 2 wk of the school year, a final condition was introduced to motivate more students to contribute to discussions and more students to make all three types of "star" contributions. In this condition, the classes were divided into their naturally occurring rows and a group contingency was instituted: Each member of each row received three bonus points if every member of the row contributed once to a given discussion. At that time, the teacher announced that "Everyone in (Ed's) row has contributed. Give everyone three points."

In addition to this group bonus, during this condition a three-point individual bonus was given to each student who made at least one of each type of "star" contribution in a single discussion. Furthermore, to encourage diversity in "star" contributions, students received the three-point bonus, which had been awarded to each "star" contribution, only for their first "star" contribution in each category (e.g., a student's

first "star" reason, "star" example, or "star" comparison). All the other procedures remained the same as they were during the initial quality training condition.

Experimental Design

A multiple baseline design across types of "star" contributions was used in this experiment. The order in which the types of "star" contributions were introduced was different in each of the two classes. The bonus condition was introduced at different times in both classes, first in Class F, and then two discussions later in Class E.

Reliability

During eight discussions in each class, a second observer independently scored all contributions. These eight discussions represented at least one discussion in baseline, one discussion after each of the three types of "star" contributions was trained, and one discussion during the bonus condition. For each student, the first contribution of a student on one observer's sheet was compared with the first score for that student on the other observer's sheet. Then the second scores were compared and so forth. An agreement occurred when both observers scored the same contribution as the same type of "star" contribution (e.g., both observers scored the same contribution as an example) or if both scored it as a "non-star" contribution; otherwise a disagreement was scored. Percentage of agreement for individual contributions was 95% (96/101) for reasons, 94% (84/89) for examples, 88% (21/24) for comparisons, and 95% (361/379) for "non-stars."

RESULTS

Figure 2 shows the percentage of students that contributed to each discussion in Classes E and F. During baseline, in which part of the procedures of the first portion of the study were used, the percentage of students participating

Fig. 2. Percentage of students in class participating in each classroom discussion in the two classes of Year 2.

was moderate. These percentages increased when the grade contingency was added, dropped during initial quality training, but increased again when the bonus procedures were added.

Figures 3 and 4 show the percentage of stu-

dents in Class E (Fig. 3) and in Class F (Fig. 4) that made "star" contributions. The top three graphs show the percentage of students making each type of "star" contribution. The bottom graph shows the percentage of students making

Fig. 3. Percentage of students in Class E contributing reasons, examples, comparisons, and any "star" in classroom discussions. Arrows point to discussions that began with booster training periods.

any one of the three types of "star" contributions. In all cases, the first discussion following training of a specific type of "star" contribution

resulted in a substantial increase in the percentage of students contributing that type of "star" contribution. Only Class E needed two booster

Fig. 4. Percentage of students in Class F contributing reasons, examples, comparisons, and any "star" in classroom discussions.

training sessions during "reason" training. These are indicated by arrows in Figure 3.

The levels at which the "star" contributions

were made after training varied with each type. In both classes, "star" examples maintained most stably after training and at the highest figures

for percentage of students contributing, averaging 46.1% and 49.1%, respectively. Reasons, although moderately variable in both classes, had the second highest averages of 30.8% and 21.6% for both classes. Comparisons were most variable and had the lowest averages of 18.0% and 19.5%. On an overall basis, "star" contributions made up about 9% of the contributions prior to training in both classes, whereas "star" contributions comprised 70-90% of the contributions during quality training and bonus conditions. (Figures of individual student results for Classes E and F can be obtained from the authors.)

SOCIAL VALIDATION OF THE RESULTS

To evaluate whether quality training produced better discussions, outside "judges" were asked to evaluate several discussions. First, transcripts were made from tape recordings of eight discussions. In each class, a transcript was made from one tape prior to any quality training, one after the first type of "star" contribution was trained, one after two types of "star" contributions had been trained, and a third from a tape of a discussion after all three types of "star" contributions had been trained. Tape recordings were made on randomly chosen days in each condition, with the restriction that the discussion had to last for at least 15 min and the contributions had to be audible enough that two observers could obtain adequate reliability on the transcripts.

The reliability of the transcripts was determined by having a second observer listen to a randomly chosen section of six tapes and transcribe 10 student contributions from each tape exactly as the first observer had done. An agreement was scored when a word on the secondary observer's transcript matched exactly with a word on the primary observer's transcript in the proper order with respect to the other words in a given contribution. A disagreement was scored when two words didn't match and when words were omitted by the secondary observer.

The two observers agreed on 953 of 1,095 occasions, or 87% of the time.

These transcripts were then given to three groups of judges: junior high school teachers from the school in which the study occurred; ninth-grade students, also from this school; and a third group consisting of people currently involved in conducting discussions (e.g., university faculty members, graduate students, librarians, and teachers at other grade levels). None of these people had previous knowledge about the study's specific purpose or procedures. Each person was asked to read four transcripts, given to them in random order; each transcript represented each of the four phases in one class (Class E or Class F). In addition, they were asked to rank the four discussions from highest (4) to lowest (1) in quality, and to rate each of the four discussions on a 7-point scale, with "7" representing very good and "1" representing very poor.

Table 1 shows the results of the judges' ratings and rankings of the transcripts. The rating and ranking figures are averages obtained by totaling all scores for the same discussion and dividing by the number of judges. A total of 46 people evaluated the transcripts: 13 junior high students, 18 junior high teachers, and 15 other discussion leaders. Of these, 22 judged the discussions from Class E and 24 judged those from Class F. All three groups of judges were similar in their rankings and ratings. With the exception of a few of the judges ranking some discussions prior to quality training higher than the one "star" discussions, each of the three groups concurred with the average ranking and rating results. For both classes, the judges ranked the three "star" discussions higher than the two "star," and the two "star" discussions higher than the one "star" discussions. Also, the average rankings of discussions prior to quality training and one "star" discussions were very similar in both classes.

For comparison, Table 1 also shows the primary observer's records of the percentage of students contributing "stars" and the total number

Table 1
Validity

	<i>Baseline, No "Stars" Trained</i>	<i>After 1 "Star" Trained</i>	<i>After 2 "Stars" Trained</i>	<i>After 3 "Stars" Trained</i>
<i>Class E</i>				
22 JUDGES' SCORES ON A TRANSCRIPT IN EACH CONDITION				
Average rankings, (1 = lowest 4 = highest)	1.68	1.64	3.27	3.41
Average ratings, (1 = very poor, 7 = very good)	4.68	4.93	5.59	6.05
PRIMARY OBSERVER'S SCORES FROM IN VIVO OBSERVATIONS				
Percentage of class contributing a "star" contribution	12% ($\frac{2}{17}$)	31% ($\frac{4}{13}$)	35% ($\frac{6}{17}$)	81% ($\frac{13}{16}$)
Total no. of "stars" contributed	2	6	10	27
<i>Class F</i>				
24 JUDGES' SCORES ON A TRANSCRIPT IN EACH CONDITION				
Average rankings, (1 = lowest 4 = highest)	1.96	2.04	2.71	3.29
Average ratings, (1 = very poor, 7 = very good)	4.42	4.67	5.33	5.79
PRIMARY OBSERVER'S SCORES FROM IN VIVO OBSERVATIONS				
Percentage of class contributing a "star" contribution	7% ($\frac{2}{28}$)	23% ($\frac{7}{23}$)	61% ($\frac{17}{28}$)	73% ($\frac{22}{30}$)
Total no. of "stars" contributed	2	14	25	50

of "stars" for the four discussions evaluated by the judges in both classes. This comparison shows that those discussions in which more students made more "star" contributions were rated and ranked higher than those discussions in which fewer students made fewer "star" contributions.

DISCUSSION

This investigation, spanning the course of two school years, evaluated the effectiveness of pro-

cedures for improving discussions in six, seventh-grade social studies classes. The findings systematically replicate earlier work (e.g., Boshier, 1975; Delprato, 1977; Hoover, 1960; Securro & Walls, 1975) showing increased student participation in discussions measured both by overall rate of contributions to discussions and percentage of students contributing to each discussion. These increases appeared to be primarily a result of increased participation by students who were initially low and average rate

contributors. In contrast, McLaughlin and Malaby (1975) reported that a token contingency affected average and high rate participators most when they were asked to construct questions about science films.

The results of the quality training procedures indicate that the teaching procedures and grade contingencies were responsible for increasing several types of student contributions. These findings are similar to those of Broden et al. (1977), although that study concentrated on different aspects of student contributions. The primary extension of the present work lies in the use of relevant judges to evaluate "quality" of classroom discussions. The results suggest that the types of contributions taught to the students were positively related to the judges' evaluation of the "quality" of the discussions.

After quality training, there was considerable variability in the day-to-day usage of individual types of "star" contributions after training. The variability in the three types of "star" contributions may, in part, be due to the topic of the discussions and, more specifically, the type of questions asked, for different topics and questions tend to lend themselves to different types of "star" contributions. The bonus procedure was added to encourage students not to rely on only one type of "star" in each discussion. However, the wide variability in rate of "star" usage may show that students were becoming increasingly more familiar with all types of "stars" and were perhaps turning to the one that best suited the situation.

Although the percentage of students making "star" contributions increased as the quality training condition was in effect, the percentage of overall participation declined during quality training in both Classes E and F. The group contingency appeared to remedy this situation. Unfortunately, the school year ended before this condition's lasting effect could be properly evaluated. Further research is needed to evaluate ways of keeping the overall participation level high while training and encouraging higher quality contributions.

Although there seems to be agreement that improving the discussion skills of students is a needed and important outcome, future research might be aimed at evaluating what some of the possible benefits are. For example, does improving the discussion skills of participants increase the amount of information covered in the discussion and learned by students? The teacher in the present study felt that this was the case, based on improved performances of the students on examinations over the material discussed. There are other important questions as well. Does increasing students' discussion skills make them more effective at convincing others and influencing their peers, parents, and teachers? Do the skills learned transfer to, and make it more likely that students will participate in, discussions in other classes, at home, and in society? As with most other academic skills, it would seem reasonable that if we are to promote good discussion skills, we need additional evidence to answer some of these questions.

A major point teachers consider when evaluating whether to implement a technique is how much extra time is involved. In the present study, the teacher had to spend very little extra time since a student recorded each contribution. We found the teacher to be highly accurate (98-100%) in discriminating appropriate and "star" contributions and the student recorders to exhibit close to perfect accuracy in recording points earned. Beyond recording points, these procedures only required the teacher to explain the grade contingency to the class and to lead the quality training sessions three times in both classes.

It is perhaps these characteristics, together with the effectiveness of the methods in increasing class participation and quality of discussions, that account for the teacher's continued use of the procedures during the year following the completion of this study. In addition, at least three teachers in the same school who learned about the procedures have chosen to use them in their classrooms. Finally, on a questionnaire, given periodically throughout the second year

of the study, students indicated that they liked discussions during the contingent point conditions slightly more than baseline discussions (5.4 vs. 5.0 on a 7-point scale, with 1 indicating "didn't like at all" and 7 indicating "liked it very much") and that they wanted to say something more often during the point-contingent discussions than during baseline discussions (4.8 vs. 3.5 on a 7-point scale, with 1 indicating "never" and 7 indicating "all the time").

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