MODIFYING LETTER AND NUMBER REVERSALS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN¹

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Children from regular and special-education classes were exposed to tutoring procedures designed to modify letter and number reversals. In Experiment I, two students showed reversals during letter-naming (*e.g.*, saying *p* for *q*) and two-digit number (*e.g.*, writing 31 for 13) exercises. In Experiment II, one subject made two-digit reversals, while the other child reversed single-digit numbers (*e.g.*, 9 written with circle on right side of stem). The subject in Experiment III emitted letter reversals under naming, dictation, and copying exercises. The child in Experiment IV showed written letter reversals on both sides of the "body midline" under dictation procedures. Basic treatment procedures during all experiments involved modelling of correct and incorrect symbol formation, and differential experimenter feedback following student responses. During Experiments I and II, subjects were praised for each correct response, and informed when a reversal occurred. Experiment III included a Modelling Only Phase before these feedback procedures. Besides praise, treatment conditions in Experiment IV consisted of additional feedback following correct responses (*e.g.*, charting correct responses), and temporal delays imposed between dictated letters and student responses. Except for occasional letter-naming reversals of one subject (Experiment I), and letter dictation errors of another (Experiment IV), reversals were eliminated when all experiments terminated. The Modelling Only Phase in Experiment III also reduced reversals to a low level. These findings suggest that a variety of reversal problems may be effectively assessed and remediated via simple modelling and reinforcement procedures. In addition, post-check observations indicated that the effects were enduring. The present procedures should be easily implemented by school personnel.

DESCRIPTORS: academic behavior, letter and number reversals, children, modelling, reversal behavior

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