

Reaching Out to Group Contingencies in the ESL Classroom

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The most significant task for a teacher is to keep students engaged in the classroom. Teachers can use group contingencies like independent, dependent, and interdependent to assist students in being more involved in classroom tasks. This study identifies the effects of group contingencies in regulating students' engagement in ESL classroom tasks. Samples comprise 27 Form 4 mixed-ability students from a secondary school in Selangor, Malaysia. The research used a mixed-method approach that included both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings revealed positive motivation, task retention, and teamwork promotion outcomes. Student behaviour was found to have a detrimental impact, particularly among the weaker students, who were boisterous and essentially riders. Interdependent group contingency has been determined to be the most successful method for regulating student engagement in ESL classes. This study suggests that students be divided into interdependent groups to ensure that classroom evaluations be done independently within the allotted time. It also has a good impact on the students' motivation and teamwork.

Keywords: group contingency, independent, interdependent students' engagement, academic performances

INTRODUCTION

In an educational context, one commonly faced problem in classrooms is getting students involved in classroom tasks and having them complete them in the allocated time. As a result, teachers often are forced to spend a significant amount of time controlling those students who are disorderly and uninterested in participating. This will eventually disturb the entire flow of the lesson and may even cause them to carry forward the current day's lesson to another day. Fortunately, group contingencies are a well-known

instructional strategy in helping to curb such issues. Independent, dependent, and interdependent groups are three types often utilized in classroom procedures. The benefit of employing group contingency is that it encourages students to work together autonomously, without the teacher's constant assistance, to complete the provided assessment (Storch, 2002), as well as foster good classroom behaviour.

Several studies on group contingencies in the classroom have found that they are advantageous to students. According to Cashwell, Skinner, & Smith (2001), group contingency interventions are beneficial for use in classrooms because they increase the likelihood of teacher attention to appropriate behaviour, are more efficient to implement than individualized treatments, and increase the chance of student success. Popkin & Skinner (2003) studied the impact of interdependent group-oriented contingencies on academic performance. All contingency components were randomly selected: criterion, target behaviours, and reinforcers. They discovered that selecting academic performance criteria, target behaviours, and reinforcers at random improved independent seatwork performance for five male students with emotional, and behavioural disturbance in a self-contained classroom. Other research showed the effectiveness of group contingency interventions in increasing engagement (Babyak, Luze, & Kamps, 2000) and decreasing problem behaviours (Hansen & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2005). Nevin, et.al. (1982) indicated the effectiveness of interdependent group contingency over individual contingency in improving students' academic performance and peer acceptance.

Problem Statement

However, there haven't been any studies conducted among teenage students in terms of completing classroom tasks as most recent studies (Shelton, 2021; Helton & Alber-Morgan, 2018; Maggin, Pustejovsky, & Johnson, 2017; Pokorski, Barton, & Ledford, 2016) focus mainly on either students with disabilities or younger students in controlling their behavioural issues. As such, this study contributes to bridging the research gap in the domain of classroom task completion, especially in secondary school settings in Malaysia, where students' participation and task completion in the form of group contingencies are highlighted. Ferguson-Hessler de Jong, in Theberge (1994), found that students who are active participants of collaborative learning tend to have better academic achievement compared to students who are passive in participation. Therefore, it is crucial to address this matter by incorporating collaborative learning techniques such as group contingencies in achieving classroom task completion to produce better-quality students.

Research Objective

1. To identify the effects of group contingency in managing students' participation in classroom tasks.

Research Question

2. What are the effects of group contingencies in managing students' participation in classroom tasks?

Research Theoretical Framework

Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory is applied in this study. Four assumptions underpin expectation theory (Vroom, 1964). First, this theory is suited to an educational environment, in which he claims that an individual's view determines a person's motivation to act at any given time that a particular form of action would result in a specific outcome. This suggests that students' motivation and effort depend on three perceptual relationships; valence, expectancy, and instrumentality.

Valence is the attraction of an outcome to the individual. Valence is something subjective and varies from person to person. However, Valence is deemed positive for an individual if he prefers attaining the outcome (Sinha, 2019). Therefore, in this study, the valence and the reward must be of students' preference and an attraction to them.

Expectancy is referred to as the Effort-Performance Probability. It refers to the extent to which the person believes his efforts will lead to the first level outcome, which will be completing the task in this study. Expectancy is a particular action that leads to a specific outcome (Sinha, 2019). Thus, during the

intervention, the teacher must ensure that students understand that their effort is vital in completing the given task as it also influences overall motivation.

Instrumentality is the probabilities attached by the individual to each possible performance (Sinha, 2019). In this study, the students must be informed that the probability of receiving a reward exists when performance expectation is met. Vroom suggests that the equation relates motivation, expectancy, instrumentality, and valence, motivation equals expectancy x instrumentality x valence.

The multiplier effect in the equation is significant. Higher levels of motivation result when expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are all high among students (Lunenberg & Samaras, 2011). Vroom's theory provides a process of cognitive variables that reflects individual differences in work motivation. Therefore, following this theory, the researcher ensured that all three factors were selected carefully following the criteria provided by Vroom when implementing and modifying each intervention.

Operational Definition

Group Contingency

A group contingency is a behaviour management protocol in which a single consequence, reward, or aversive is delivered dependent on the behaviour of a single individual in a group or the entire group. The whole group receives the consequence (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). In this study, group contingency is employed as a motivational feature to ensure that students finish their classroom tasks and are rewarded when they achieve the required results.

Independent Group Contingency

Independent group contingency is a contingency that is presented to all group members, with reinforcement delivered based on an individual's performance (Cooper, et.al., 2007). In this research, the independent group contingency applies to the entire class, individuals who meet the desired results will be rewarded with a sticker when they complete their given task in the designated time. The reward depends on their hard work and determination.

Dependent Group Contingency

Dependent group contingency is a contingency presented in a group setting, with reinforcement based on individual or small group performance (Cooper, et.al., 2007). The dependent group contingency refers to members of groups of five to six students receiving reinforcement (stickers). If everyone in the group completes the assigned work in the allotted time, everyone in the group gets a prize.

Interdependent Group Contingency

Interdependent group contingency is an arrangement in which the whole group has to meet the criterion to get access to reinforcement (Cooper, et.al., 2007). The interdependent group contingency system applies to the entire class. In this contingency, a token board will be used to monitor the student's participation in classroom tasks. Each student will contribute one token (reinforcement) to the token board until it is complete. Thus, the reward in this contingency depends on the student's effort in that particular classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several classroom intervention techniques for managing students' behaviour as well as academic engagement. Dependent, independent, and interdependent group contingencies form the focus of this study.

Previous Studies

A recent study by Dart, et.al. (2016) used the independent group contingency to manage students' behavioural problems. Each student was required to correctly identify the number of times the teacher mentioned the day's password. The students who successfully identify the correct frequency will be rewarded according to the rewards chosen by the teacher for each class. The number of rewards for each

class is announced and is divided equally according to the number of students who identified the correct frequency. The fewer the number of students, the more the rewards per student. The results indicated that the study successfully controlled the students' in-task behaviour.

Metallo's (2015) research focused on using a dependent group contingency to increase homework completion and accuracy in a general education classroom. The results indicated that dependent group contingency members improved their homework.

Another study by Chafouleas, et.al. (2011) used the dependent group contingency as a class-wide intervention package to control the classroom behaviour of middle school students. The results of this study suggested that the intervention of dependent group contingency could improve students' behaviour as there was some degree of improvement across classes.

Whereas, Kim, et.al. (2021) employed technology-based group contingency to examine the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of walking among adults. The results showed that dependent group contingency was considered to be the most effective in this issue.

A study that examined the effects of Class-wide Function-related Intervention Teams (CW-FIT) by Naylor, Kamps, & Wills (2018) used a class-wide group contingency to reduce students' disruptive and on-task behaviour in a first-grade class. The study concluded that the effects of the CW-FIT intervention improved the on-task behaviour of all the students and decreased the disruptive behaviour of the target students when interdependent group contingency was used. The results also indicated that using group contingency was effective for both large groups of students and individuals within a group. However, another possible explanation for the results was said to be due to the frequency of praises delivered by the teacher, as the students who received more praises did better than the ones who did not.

Besides, Lum, et.al. (2017) studied the effects of tootling on class-wide disruptive and academically engaged behaviour in general-education high school students. Tootling is considered the opposite of tattling, a process of positive peer-reporting where students report their classmates' positive behaviour instead of inappropriate behaviour. The results from this study indicated that disruptive behaviour decreased and showed an increase in positive behaviour. Furthermore, the use of interdependent group contingency ensured students' required behaviour and worked together towards achieving the goal of obtaining the reward.

Additionally, Kennedy (2014) conducted a study using an interdependent group contingency to improve homework completion, accuracy, and achievement of high school students with disabilities. The intervention took place by randomly choosing a homework goal from the Homework Goals jar. If the students achieved the desired destination, they were rewarded according to the reward selected from the Homework Reinforcers jar. In addition, the reward was given if the entire class reached the goal. The results revealed that the class improved throughout the execution of the interdependent group contingency technique. According to experts in this domain, group contingencies have a favorable impact on students' classroom behaviour.

Overall, it can be seen that group contingencies can be implemented for various types of participants under different circumstances to address a specific issue, yet they do not necessarily yield similar outcomes. Maggin, et.al. (2017) reviewed multiple kinds of research on group contingencies and found that the findings provide strong reasons to implement them in general education classrooms, yet stated that there remains a need to continue research on related issues to determine for whom group contingencies are most likely to work as results cannot be generalized for all participants. Therefore, we will explore implementing different contingencies for teenagers in secondary schools as well as focus on their effects to determine which is most likely to work.

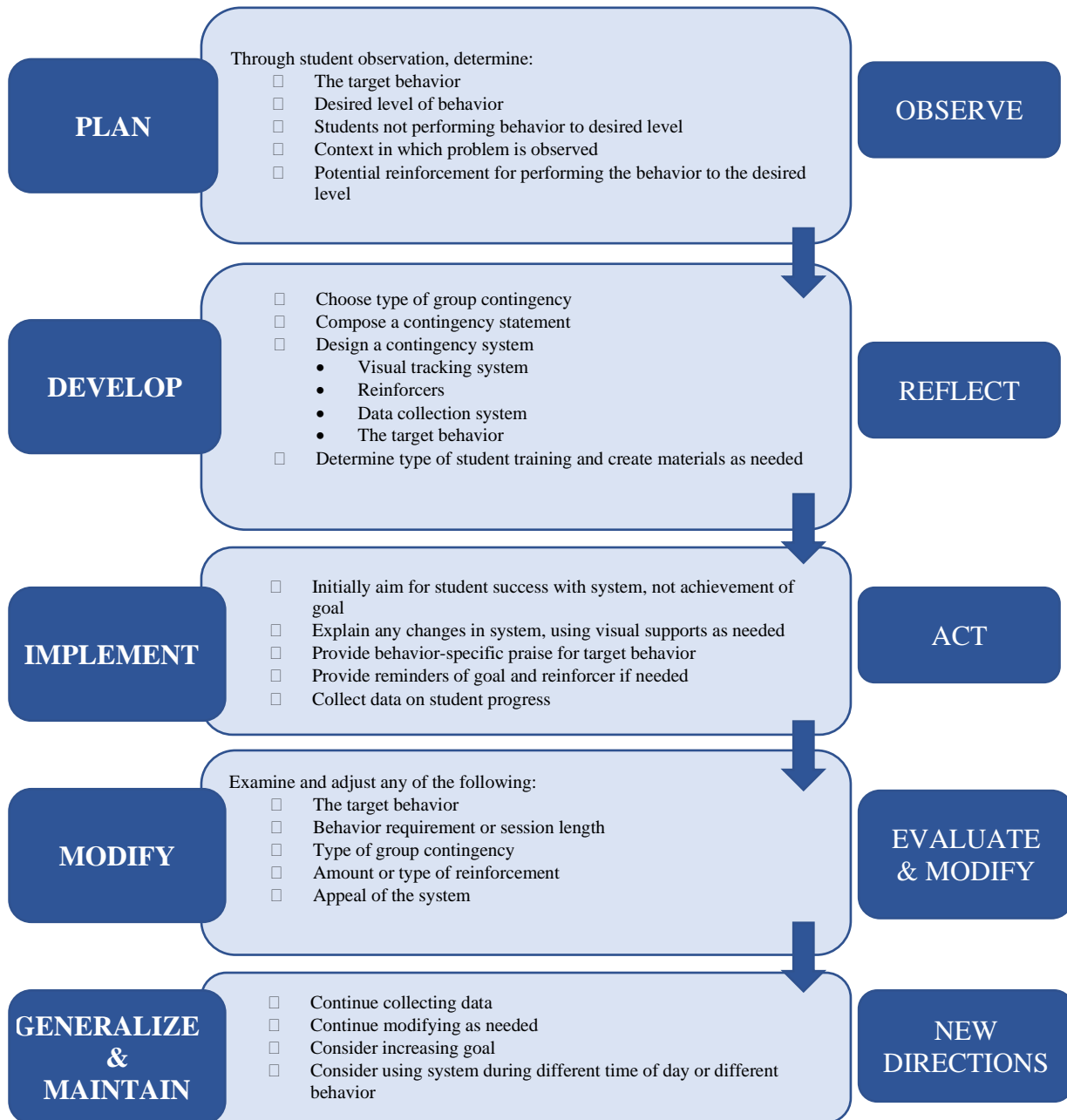
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is based on Whitehead and McNiff's action research framework (2006). Whitehead and McNiff (2006) developed an action research paradigm that consists of five disciplined and systematic processes in a research cycle known as 'activity-reflection.' The cycle begins with an observation, followed

by identifying the problem, reflecting, and implementing the intervention. The researcher is in charge of judging the intervention's implementation. The final stage entails a change. The diagram below is a summary of how the action research framework was incorporated into implementing the interventions.

FIGURE 1
FIVE STAGES OF IMPLEMENTING GROUP CONTINGENCY (ADAPTED FROM
POKORSKI, 2019)



Sample and Location of Study

A total of 27 Form 4 Science students from a suburban area in Klang, Selangor, Malaysia participated in the study. The class had 17 females and ten males of various races, mainly Indians and Malays. Students'

language proficiency was at an intermediate level. This was determined from their mid-term examination results, where the students got an average B grade in their English language examination. The sampling technique used is convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is used to select the partial type of nonprobability sampling in which people are sampled simply because they are "convenient" data sources for researchers (Lavrakas, 2018). The teacher who conducted the lesson, directly involved in the study took note of every step of the lesson and came up with reflective journal entries.

Research Instruments

The research instruments used to collect data in this research includes teachers' reflective journal entries, task completion sheet, token board, and questionnaire.

Teacher's Reflective Journal Entries

Teachers' reflective journal entries were written based on Jasper's (2013) Experience, Reflection, and Action (ERA) Cycle, which revolves around three factors, experience, reflection, and action. The experience from the first reflective journal entry was used to identify students' difficulties in the language classroom, in this case, task completion, which was determined through reflection. This was then used to initiate the action, which will be the first intervention. For the rest of the reflective journal entries, the experience in terms of the effects of interventions and students' attitudes towards the interventions were focused on. The attitudes of students were observed by noticing how they reacted toward a certain instruction, observing the changes in their mood, and hearing their responses when implementing each intervention. The teacher then reflects on these entries and proposes an action for future experiences, which will be implemented in the subsequent intervention. The reflective journal entries were analyzed using thematic analysis in which the common patterns of prominent themes were identified.

Task Completion Sheet

The task completion sheet consists of a list of students ranging from Student 1 to Student 27, with several columns to determine the completion of the task sheet. If the students completed the task in the given time, it is recorded by the teacher as a tick (/); if they did not complete the task, (X) was used. This is to ease the comparison between the number of students participating during the interventions.

Token Board

The token board used in this research consists of slots of individual photographs. The students' photographs are filled in the token board when students have completed the task. The teacher collected the photographs of headshots of students in advance by asking the student to send a copy through email. For those unable to do so, the teacher took a picture of them in class and then printed out copies of the photographs following the size of the slots on the token board. The token board acts as a visual reinforcement to keep track of the number of students who have completed their task sheets.

Questionnaire

A five-point Likert scale was used to grade seven items on group contingencies. The measure assessed how students felt about the interventions and their outcomes. The scale comprises 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). Table 1. shows the list of 7 questions for 4 selected criteria in implementing group contingency, and Table 2. shows the list of past studies referred to in selecting the criteria.

TABLE 1
THE 7 QUESTIONS FOR 4 SELECTED CRITERIA

No.	Criteria	Description
1	Preference	1. Method that students enjoyed the most and would prefer
2	Liking	2. Fondness of students in participating using chosen method

3	Effects of Method	3. Motivation in students' participation 4. Concentration on given task 5. Good behaviour of students 6. Teamwork among students
4	Implementation	7. Implementation of method in future

Table 2 shows the summary of past studies that implemented three out of the four selected criteria, preference, liking, and effects of the method. Implementation was not included in any of the past studies, but the researcher initiated the criteria to determine the application of the pedagogical strategy for future use. Preference for chosen method in the early years was initially given priority to teachers' preference, as shown in Ennis, Cho Blair, & George (2015). However, in Deshais, Fisher, & Kahng (2018), students' preference was taken into account as it has a significant role in determining the effectiveness of the pedagogical method. Next, the criteria of liking was only included once by Ennis, et.al. (2015), and it was focused on teachers' liking. Yet, no importance was given in terms of students' liking. Even though students' preference is being considered, liking is still a valid criterion. This helps prove whether students favor the selected method being conducted in the classroom. Effects of the method are the most common criterion over the years. Although it has been given importance, there is always a fluctuation in the results of the chosen method and its effects. Hence, there is a constant need for it to be included in the criteria selection. Therefore, after comparing the commonly used criteria in past studies and determining their inadequateness as well as identifying the common effects, the information gathered from this was used to construct the questionnaire, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 2
THE LIST OF PAST STUDIES IMPLEMENTING THE SELECTED CRITERIA

Authors / Criteria	Preference	Liking	Effects of Method
Chafouleas, et.al. (2011)			•
Kennedy (2014)			•
Ennis, et.al. (2015)	•	•	•
Metallo (2015)			•
Dart, et.al (2016)			•
Lai, et.al. (2016)			•
Lum, et.al. (2017)			•
Scott & Schulz (2017)			•
Caron (2018)			•
Deshais, et.al. (2018)	•		•
Naylor, et.al. (2018)			•
Caldarella, et.al. (2019)			•

Data Collection Procedures

Three interventions were used to obtain data. The aim of these treatments was to students' participation in group dynamics. Three group contingencies were used: independent, dependent, and interdependent. In each session, students were given a worksheet with a reading passage with various titles and five "wh-questions" to answer. In each treatment, students' difficulties were identified in comprehension of the lesson, and changes were made in the following intervention.

First Intervention

The first intervention was carried out using the independent group contingency. The students answered the worksheet individually and were responsible for their work. The students were informed that they were

given 10 minutes to complete the worksheet. Upon completion, a sticker is given to them. The number of students who completed their work was recorded in the task completion sheet. All students who obtained a sticker received a gift from the teacher at the end of the lesson.

Second Intervention

In the second intervention, a dependent group contingency was involved. In this contingency, students worked in small groups of 5 to 6 students. Students read the passage and discussed the 'wh-questions' in their groups by helping each other. If a member in this group did not complete the task, the whole group would not receive the reward. The instruction is applied for motivational purposes. The time limit was 10 minutes to complete the worksheet, and students redeemed their reward in groups at the end of the lesson. The number of students who completed the task was recorded in the task completion sheet.

Third Intervention

In the third intervention, an interdependent group contingency was applied. In ten minutes, students completed the exercise on their own and worked together as a class to claim the reward. A token board was used in the intervention. The token board is made up of photo spaces for students. When students completed their tasks, they filled the slots with photographs on the board. The token board is displayed at the front portion of the class to act as a motivational factor.

Once all interventions were carried out, questionnaires were distributed to the students to get their perspectives on the interventions.

Teacher's Reflective Journal Entries

Immediately after each intervention, the teacher notes the prominent issues and effects in the classroom and later writes a more elaborate explanation of the problems in the journal. Then, the teacher reflects on the respective issues and provides suggestions that can be implemented in the following intervention to improve the situation further.

Data Analysis Procedure

According to Bhatia (2018), data analysis is how researchers go from a mass of data to meaningful insights. The data collected from the task completion sheet, token board, and questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively, while the teacher's reflective journal entries were analyzed qualitatively. According to Dudovskiy (2019), qualitative analysis involves thematic analysis identifying common patterns and critically analyzing them, while quantitative analysis involves descriptive statistics presented in the form of frequencies and percentages. As such, this study employs both methods and a mixed-method research design. As stated by Piccioli (2019), quantitative and qualitative data are used to explain and support the overall results.

Teacher's Reflective Journal Entry

Thematic analysis was used to determine the existence of particular themes within the reflective journal entries. The researcher looked for themes in the journal entries that connected to the success of the contingencies used, as well as factors that were related to the contingencies.

Task Completion Sheet and Token Board

The task completion sheet assisted in detecting the total number of students who participated in completing the tasks. The percentage is calculated to show the statistical differences between the interventions. Similar to the task completion sheet, the token board is used to calculate the number of students' participation by observing the number of slots filled in with photographs in the third intervention.

Questionnaire

To analyze the quantitative data, the frequencies and percentages were calculated for each item using excel as only seven questions were catered to students. The frequency is the sum of the number of times a certain item was chosen. The results showed differences between each preference.

FINDINGS

Teacher's Reflective Journal Entry

The content of the data is categorized into two themes which are problem identification and effects of group contingencies.

a) Problems in each intervention

The following are example of excerpts taken from the 1st reflective journal entry which reflect the shortcomings of the first intervention used.

"However, I realised that this method did not have much effect on the students as many still did not complete their work in time. The students did not feel motivated even when I mentioned that they will be receiving a reward if they complete the given task."

The reflective entries showed that in the first intervention, students were not influenced by the reward for completing their worksheets. An additional factor should be added in the following intervention to help with this. The following excerpt from the 2nd reflective journal entry reflects the drawbacks of the second intervention used.

"This contingency method was partially successful as more students participated in the assessment. However, not all students completed their work. I realised this is due to the fact on which type of students the group consists of."

The second intervention showed that a group member's attitude is significant in instilling positive characteristics among the rest. If a hard-working member is found in the group, this motivates the others in the group to be hard-working as well.

Below is an excerpt from the 3rd reflective journal entry. The third intervention involves the whole class (interdependent group contingency).

"Hard-working students helped those weak ones. They were cheering, there was laughter and so much fun, despite the noise."

The third intervention revealed that interdependent group contingency helped students complete the task within the time allocated. However, the noise in the classroom was beyond control.

b) Effects of Group Contingencies

Excerpt from 1st intervention

"From this I realised that students need an additional motivational factor besides the rewards to help motivate them. Having a friend to work with seemed to motivate some of the students so something in relation to this should be incorporated during the next intervention."

One of the effects identified in the first intervention was that when the students were suggested to work with a friend, it affected the students positively. This was adapted in the second intervention.

Excerpt from 2nd intervention

“The groups which have hardworking students tend to motivate the rest of the members of the group to complete their work resulting in the whole group completing the work. However, if the group consists of passive members, then everyone does not motivate each other, and the progress is equally slow.”

From the second intervention, it was noticed that even when working with a friend, the right amount of peer encouragement is needed as not everyone is equally motivated. Therefore, adequate peer encouragement plays a vital role in the success of the group contingency.

Excerpts from 3rd intervention.

“The interdependent group contingency was lively. I could see all the students participating in the task and within the time allocated, students completed their work.”

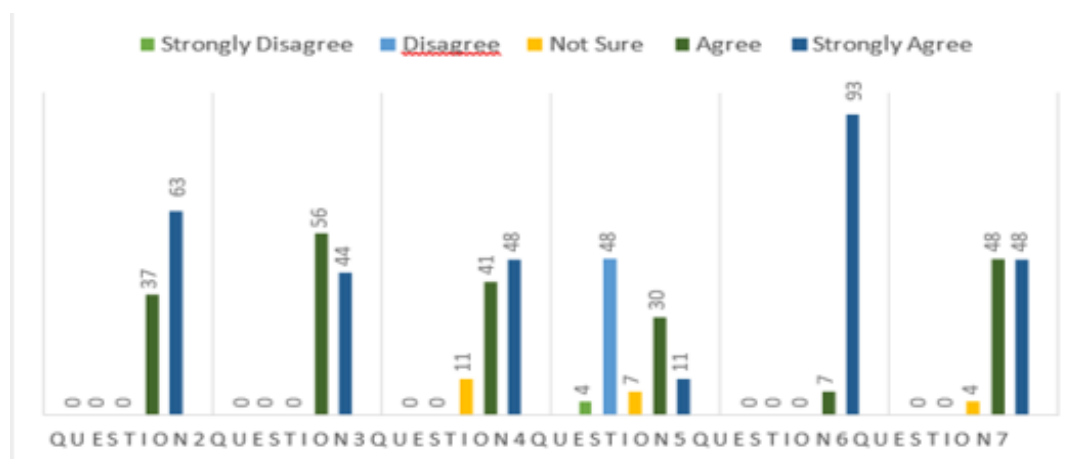
“Hard-working students helped those weak ones. They were cheering, there was laughter and so much fun, despite the noise.”

Despite the noise issue as mentioned previously, there were several observable positive effects from the third intervention such as collaborative peer encouragement, teamwork, and enjoyment among students.

Effects of Group Contingency

Group work helped students to cooperate among themselves to complete a task. However, the degree of achievement in task completion differed among groups. Figure 2 shows the effect of group contingencies. This begins with question 2, which showed 37% ‘agree’ and 63% ‘strongly agree’ with the teaching technique conducted in the classroom. For questions 3, 4, and 7, the percentage of students who chose ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ are at a similar range of around 50% of students agreed using group contingency that motivated and helped them to be engaged in the given task. Thus, they wanted it to be implemented in future classrooms. Question 5 is based on whether group contingency helped students behave well during tasks. It had the most varying answers, 4% chose ‘strongly disagree’ and 48% ‘disagree’ while 30% ‘agree’ and 11% chose ‘strongly agree’ respectively. Another 7% of the students were unsure of this question. Question 6 has the highest percentage of students who ‘strongly agree’; everyone agreed that using group contingency increased teamwork among students. On question 7, 48% strongly disagreed and the same percentage contributed to strongly agreeing, and 4% of the students were not sure of the implementation of the group contingencies in future classrooms.

FIGURE 2
EFFECTS OF GROUP CONTINGENCY



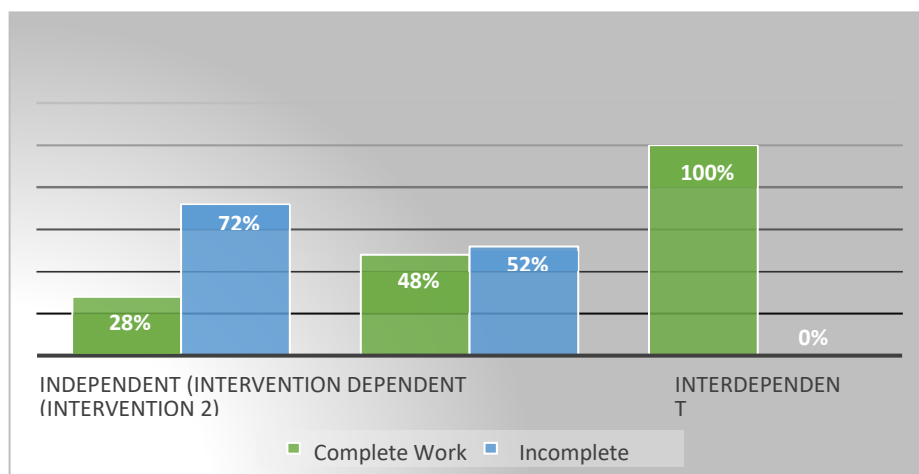
Four effects were explored to identify the impacts of group contingency in classroom tasks. The motivation was the first effect. The use of group contingency was shown to drive students to complete their tasks, as demonstrated by the questionnaire results and the teacher's observation. Furthermore, the students believed that incorporating group contingencies was beneficial.

Second, the students reported that it promoted teamwork because they had to rely on one another to get the prize. Third, group contingencies aided them in staying focused on the work. The fourth, however, negatively affected the student's behaviour and caused a noisy classroom.

Students' Participation

Figure 3 compares students' participation in the three interventions employing independent, dependent, and interdependent group contingencies. The bar chart shows that each of the three interventions had a distinct effect. For example, the first intervention had the lowest percentage of completed work, gradually increasing throughout the three treatments.

**FIGURE 3
STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION**



In the independent group contingency, the first intervention, only a total of 25 students participated; the rest two were absent. As a result, seven pupils completed their tasks within the allocated time of 28 %. However, most of the students, 18 of which is 72%, still need to finish the given work in time.

In the second intervention that involves dependent group contingency students' task completion was solely observed as a group. Three out of six groups completed their work, with groups 1, 5, and 6 accounting for 48 % and groups 2, 3, and 4 not completing their work, contributing to 52 %.

During the interdependent group contingency in the third intervention, all 23 slots on the token board were filled with photographs of the students indicating that all the students completed their work, 100% of students' participation was achieved, excluding the absentees.

Table 3 shows the result of students' answers to question 1 in the questionnaire. All 27 students answered, among the three interventions, 100% of the students agree that the Interdependent group contingency was the most enjoyable.

**TABLE 3
GROUP CONTINGENCY PREFERENCE**

Group Contingency	Frequency (x)	Percentage (%)
Independent (Individual)	0	0
Dependent (Group)	0	0

Interdependent (A Whole Class)	27	100
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Working in groups, students motivated one another to complete the work. However, not all completed their work because the motivation factor was not constant for every group. The findings are consistent with the study by Metallo (2015), which indicated that dependent group contingency could have been more effective in increasing homework completion for all students. However, some have shown a slight improvement. Thus, it needed to be better in participation and is not considered effective.

Considering the negative aspect of the motivation factor from the first and second interventions, a new and improved group contingency was introduced in the third intervention, the interdependent group contingency. This intervention was the most successful in student involvement; everyone in the class completed their classroom evaluation within the allotted time. The students motivated themselves, and using the token board was an additional motivating factor in encouraging them to complete the given task. The token board immediately grabbed the students' attention and ensured their participation. Students were able to monitor themselves and their friends in the completion of the task. The token board was a constant motivation. Although it had some negative effects on noise control, the interdependent group contingency was the most effective when focused on participation. Caron (2018), Dart, et.al. (2016), Lum, et.al. (2017), and Kennedy (2014) agree with the findings of this study that the adoption of interdependent group contingency increased student participation. The students unanimously agreed that interdependent group contingency was their favorite, and they desire the group contingency approach to be used in their classes in the future.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

It was found that the implementation of the first intervention, the independent group contingency, did not succeed, as a vast majority of the students needed to manage to finish their tasks in the given time. Despite being presented with rewards, it was discovered that the motivation factor still needed to be improved among students. This was inferred from the teacher's reflective journal entry. Upon observing and reflecting, the teacher deduced that these teenagers do not solely care about the reward, no matter how attractive it may be. At this age, peer pressure affects adolescents most; although this term is often viewed negatively, there are ways to incorporate it positively. Happiness and Amukeru (2021) found that although there are several negative effects of peer pressure, there are also positive effects, such as being able to lead to good academic results, having an impact on positive family background, improving health, and affecting their overall behaviour in general.

As such, drawing from this idea, the teacher introduced the second intervention. In this dependent group contingency, students were allowed to work in small groups and help one another complete tasks. It was observed that there was a slight improvement in task completion, where almost 50% succeeded, yet more was needed. The teacher noted in the journal entry that the success or failure of a group depended on specific individuals in the group. The groups with students who were highly motivated yielded a better outcome than those who lacked such students. Although this ensures the students in that particular group complete their work, they still need to complete it independently. They can be free riders.

Therefore, one way to ensure the inclusion of peer encouragement yet students complete their work independently will be the interdependent group contingency, which was introduced during the third intervention. As the attainment of the reward depended on the hard work of every student equally, this is where positive peer pressure plays its role. The highly motivated students indirectly take over the role of the teacher in monitoring the completion of tasks by other students so that they will be able to receive the reward. As some students are often reluctant to listen to teachers' instructions, this method helps overcome this issue, too, where they now have to listen to their peers. The rate of success was 100% for this group contingency. In addition, several positive effects were observed by the teacher in the journal entries, such as collaborative peer encouragement, teamwork, and enjoyment, which were also agreed upon by the students, as found in the results of the questionnaire.

The implementation of group contingency can be attractive in the classroom to help create a conducive learning environment for language learners. They differ as knowledge seekers partly because of differences in ability, motivation, or effort (Omar & Kussin, 2017). When group contingency is used in the classroom, it promotes student attention and enjoyment. Students were able to learn more collaboratively. Collaborative learning is supported in English language classes according to contemporary pedagogical techniques. This technique actively involves learners in processing and synthesizing information and concepts rather than remembering facts and statistics. The students work with each other on projects and have to collaborate to grasp the topics provided to them. Learners achieve a more thorough understanding of the lesson taught for the day as a group than they could as individuals by defending their arguments, reframing ideas, listening to various perspectives, and communicating their points. Teachers must bridge students' expectations and teaching techniques to maintain a more conducive learning atmosphere (Prasangani, 2019). In this teaching technique, students are inadvertently pushed to work in groups for their benefit. They found they could stay on task throughout the lesson by conducting group contingencies.

Nevertheless, there are several shortcomings in this study that should be addressed. One limitation of this study is that the cycles were only carried out once before implementing the next intervention. The cycle for each intervention should be repeated numerous times to see the expected outcomes of each group contingency. This should be done to confirm that the group contingency chosen is genuinely effective. For future research, the contingency should be on the teacher's focus on good behaviour and task completion. A physical incentive or an additional component should be presented when students demonstrate appropriate behaviour, such as finishing the assigned task, to reinforce the students' behaviour during the instruction. Besides limiting the group contingency to focus on students' participation in classroom tasks, it can be further widened to be implemented as a class-level group contingency to support school-level behaviour and academic engagement management. This improves not just the quality of student's work in class but also the quality of managing students' engagement at the school level.

CONCLUSION

In this study, group contingencies have significantly lowered the amount of effort required by teachers to manage conduct in the classroom. Group contingencies have been proven to reduce disruptive classroom behaviours, enhance on-task time, and improve the academic performance of teenagers in the Malaysian classroom context. Specific considerations should be made while implementing a group contingency in terms of utilizing rewards. While selecting a single "prize" for an entire classroom may be difficult, there are techniques to regulate this, such as randomizing the rewards and keeping them unknown until they are distributed. The most common technique to implement a group contingency is via an interdependent group contingency. Group contingencies are an expanding topic of study in psychology. Their effectiveness and efficiency in academic and professional settings are encouraged regardless of age.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1. Five Stages of Implementing Group Contingency (Adapted from Pokorski, 2019)

Figure 2. Effects of Group Contingency

Figure 3. Students' Participation

Table 1. The 7 Questions for 4 Selected Criteria

Table 2. The List of Past Studies Implementing the Selected Criteria

Table 3. Group Contingency Preference