

Classroom Interactions in Urban Schools: A Descriptive Study

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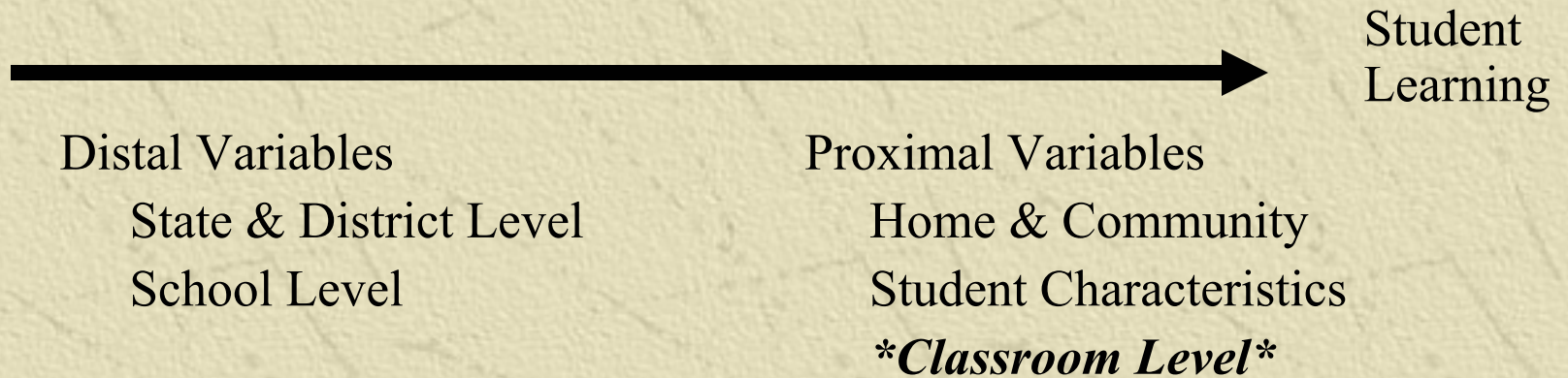
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Evaluating Schools through Student Learning

✠ Distal Variables

✠ Proximal Variables



(Wang et al., 1993)

Classroom Level Variables

✦ Curriculum and Instruction

- ✦ Grouping Practices (whole, small, one-one)
- ✦ Class Size (teacher-student ratio)

✦ Classroom Practices

- ✦ Organization (classroom management)
- ✦ Instruction (teacher behaviors)
- ✦ Strategies (active learning, lecture, etc.)
- ✦ Teacher-Student Interactions (commands, praise, etc.)

Current Research

✦ Proximal Variables

- Classroom Level

✦ Observational Methodology

✦ Urban School District

● Student Ethnicity:

- 61% African American (A=62%, B=59%)
- 25% Caucasian (A=14%, B=36%)
- 12% Hispanic (A=20%, B=4%)
- 3% Asian (A=5%, B=1%)
- 0.7% Native American (A=0.3%, B=1%)

- Free and Reduced Lunch: 51% (A=72%, B=30%)

Research Methods

✦ Subjects

- Randomly Selected from 22 Urban Schools
- 252 Teachers Observed
 - 166 Elementary Teachers
 - 47 Middle School Teachers
 - 39 High School Teachers
- 240 Teachers Interviewed
 - 10 fewer elementary teachers, 2 fewer middle school teachers

Observation Protocol (Stallings, 1977)

	Cycle One (5 min.)	Cycle Two (5 min.)	Cycle Three (5 min.)	Cycle Four (5 min.)
Physical Environment Form (PEF)	X			
Classroom Checklist (CCL)	X	X	X	X
Teacher-Focused Interaction Frames (TFI)	X	X	X	X
Academic Engaged Time	X		X	

Teacher Interview

✦ 20 Multi-Part Close-Ended Questions

✦ Instructional Activities

- class discussions, whole group instruction, etc.

✦ Instructional Strategies

- active learning, lecture, recitation, etc.

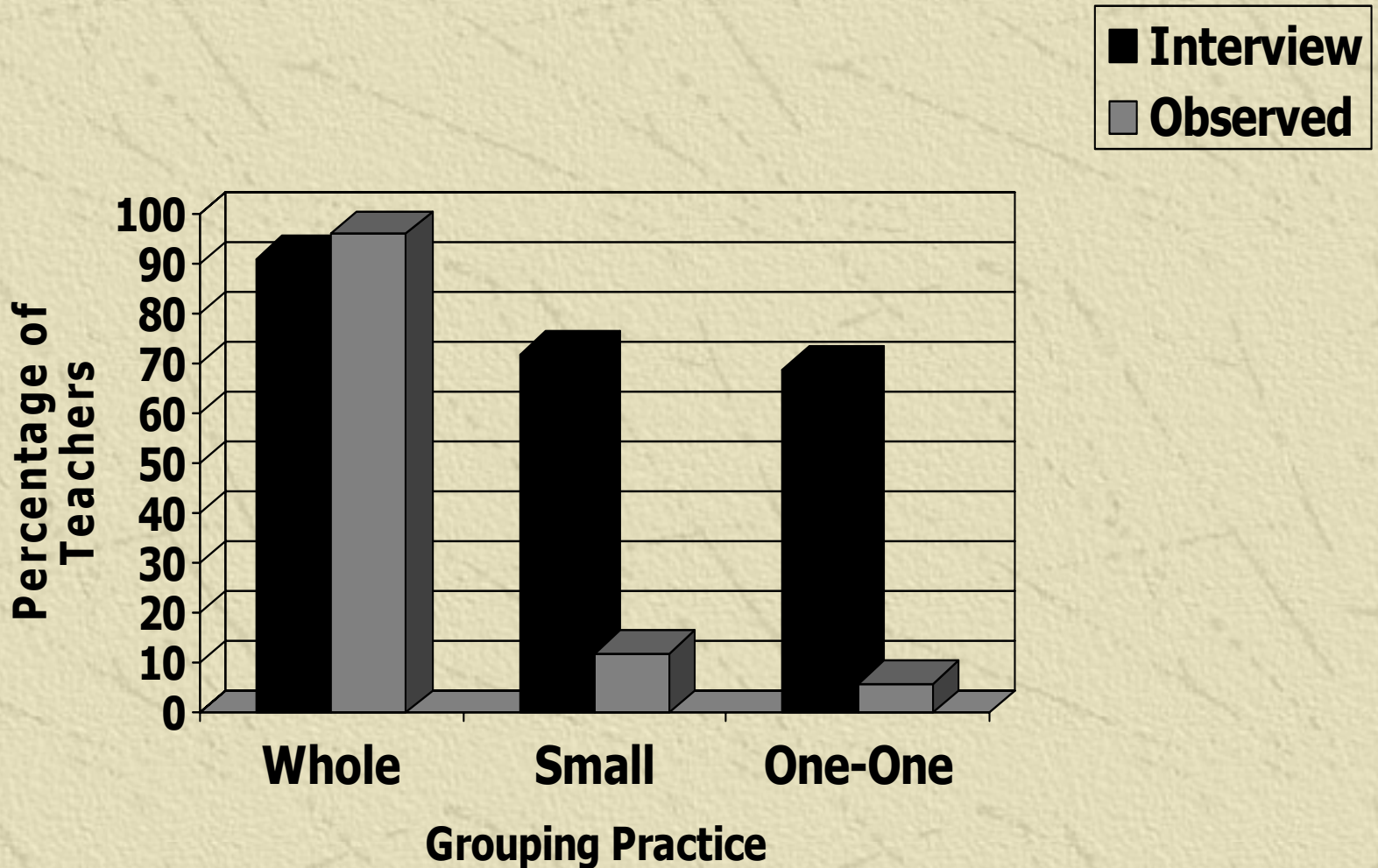
(Frequency of use: never, monthly, weekly, daily)

Typicality of Observations

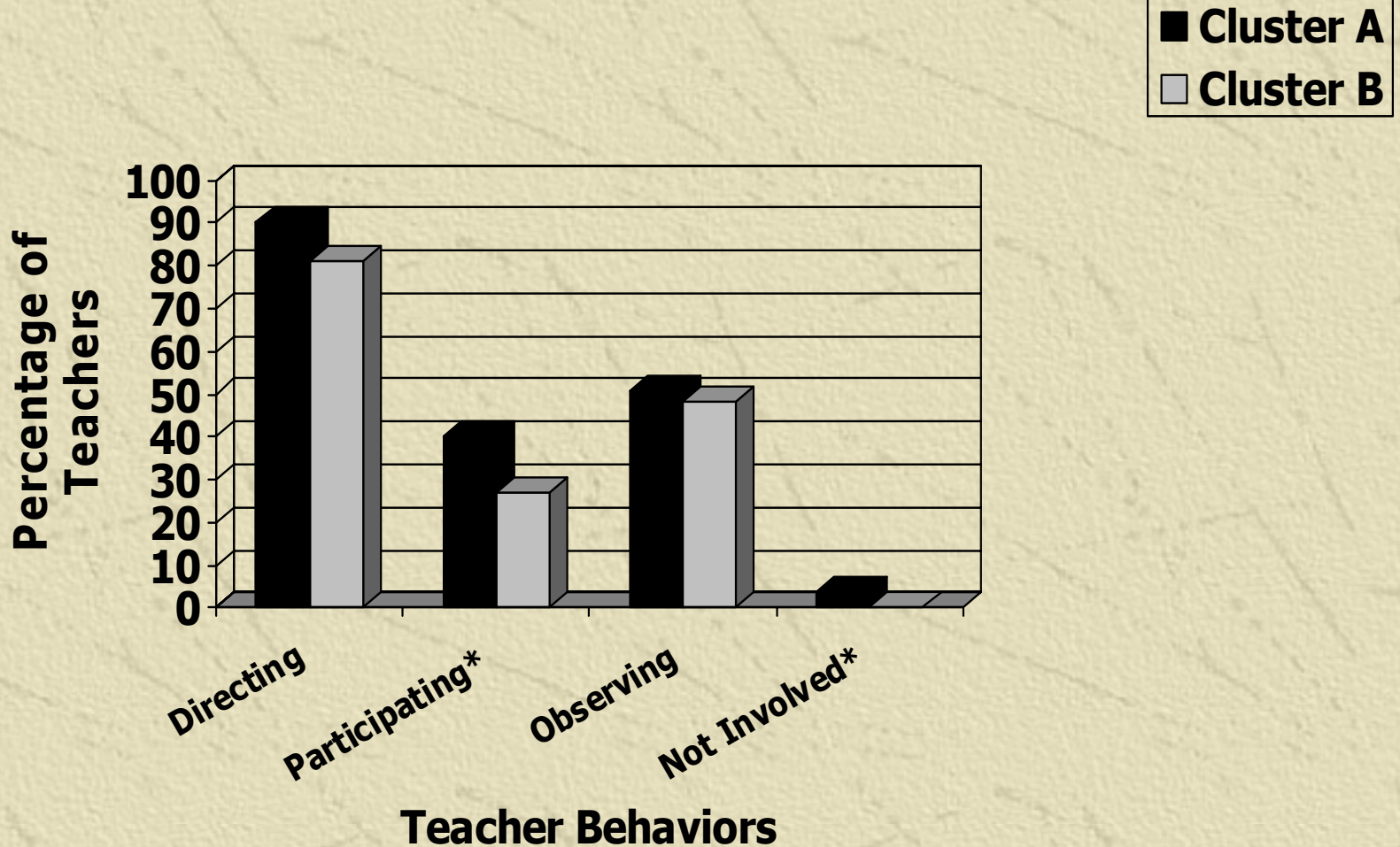
✦ Teachers report class observed was:

- ✦ Typical 63%
- ✦ Less than typically effective 20%
- ✦ Better than typical 7%

Classroom Grouping Practices



Teacher Classroom Involvement Behaviors



On-Task Behavior

✦ Total Average = 82%

✦ Highest On-Task Rate:

- 9-12th Grade Classrooms (86%)

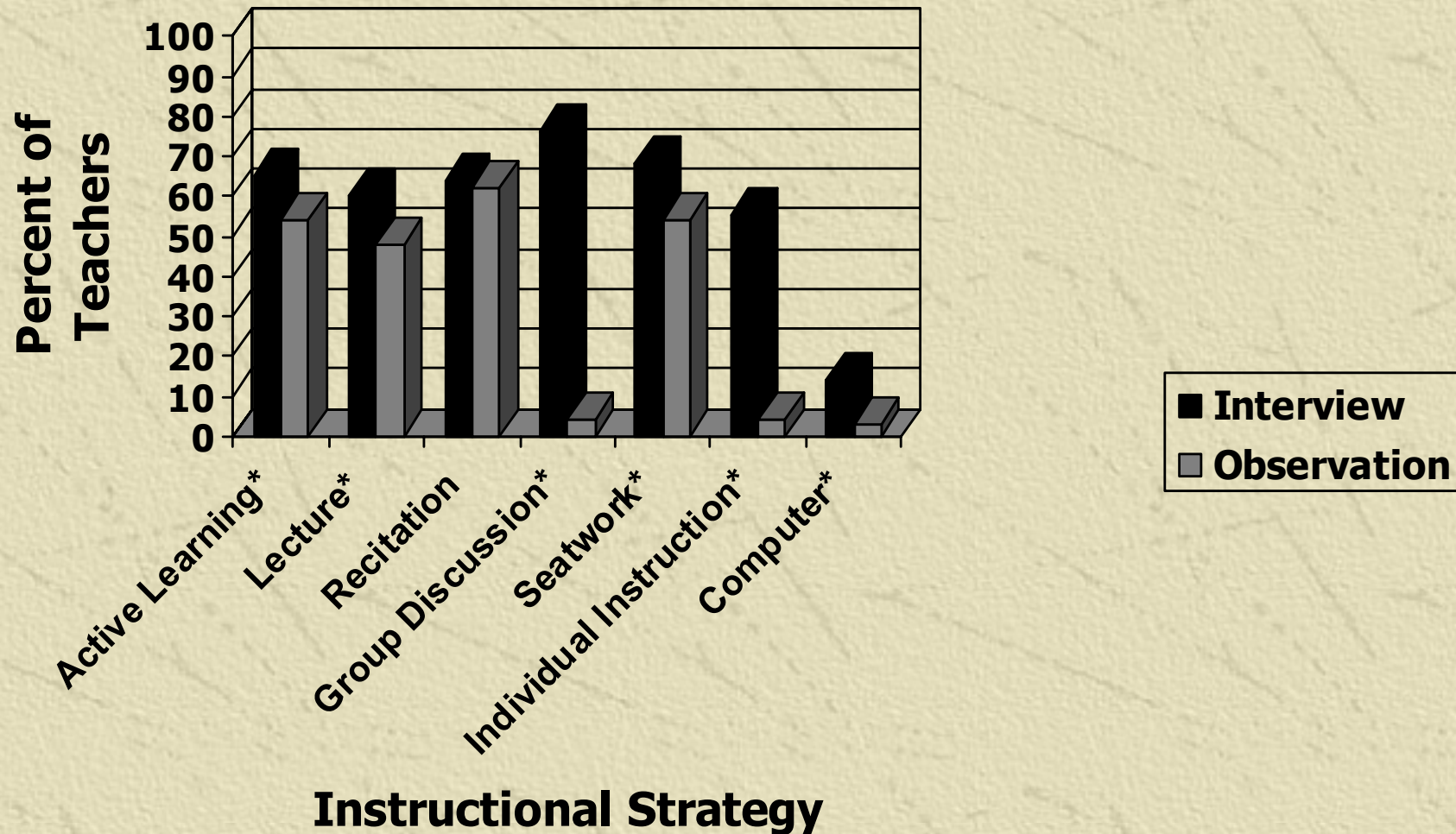
✦ Lowest On-Task Rate:

- 6-8th Grade Classrooms (79%)

- Cluster A = 73%

- Cluster B = 85%

Instructional Strategies



Teacher-Initiated Interactions

Content

✦ Most Common:

- ✦ Observing, Listening (24%)
- ✦ Instruction, Explanation (21%)
- ✦ Direct Question (14%)
- ✦ Command or Request (13%)
- ✦ Task-Related Comment (9%)

✦ Least Common:

- ✦ Open-Ended Question (1%)
- ✦ Praise (2%)
- ✦ Acknowledgement (4%)
- ✦ Corrective Feedback (4%)
- ✦ Wait Time (4%)

Teacher-Initiated Interactions Nature and Quality

✠ Nature of Interactions:

- Academic (77%)
- Behavioral (4%)
- Procedural (18%)

✠ Quality of Interactions:

- Positive (2%)
- Negative (0.1%)
- Other (98%)

Conclusions

✦ Typical Classrooms:

- ✦ Whole group instruction
- ✦ Teachers directing and observing
- ✦ Students doing seatwork
- ✦ Little group discussion, individual instruction or computer work
- ✦ Classrooms not positive – praise and acknowledgement lacking

Implications

- ✦ Comprehensive reform vs. emphasis on best practice
- ✦ Use of teacher report – reliable?
- ✦ Intervention planning
- ✦ Future research:
 - ◆ Comparing to non-urban schools
 - ◆ Comparing observations to student achievement data