

Social Processes in Six Effective Third Grade Classrooms Through The Lens of Socioeconomic Status



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Previous Study & Findings

- We defined, then observed “social processes” in five highly effective third grade classrooms, 2009-2010.
- 10-15 hours of observations in each classroom.
- **Findings:**
 - strong teacher control over classroom behavior
 - high levels of focus on tasks
 - high expectations regarding work and behavior
 - knowledge-based instruction, from TEKS curriculum
 - strong competence, commitment from each teacher
 - some talk, but not prevalent, regarding upcoming state tests
 - little or no talk that indicated inquiry, sharing of personal stories, humor, cultural awareness.

Parameters of Current Study

- Six highly effective teachers in third grade classrooms, selected by their principals for observation.
- Seven-eight hours of observation occurred during the early fall – early-spring time period, before state tests were given.
- Observations of social processes were coded every 3 minutes during the approximate hour of observation.
- Inter-rater reliability was established with collaborative cases and discussion.

Summary of School Descriptors and Teachers

School	Size	Title I	Grade levels	Areas Commended	Economically disadvantaged %	LEP %	Mobility % 2009-2010	At-Risk %	3 rd Grade Teacher
S.	820	yes	EC - 5		94.3	73.5	16.1	77.6	Ms. S
J.	472	yes	EC -5		87.5	61.4	17.9	65.3	Ms. J
C.	344	yes-chart er	PK-3	Reading/ELA	61.9	3.2	23	48	Ms. C
L.	520	yes	EC-5	Math, Science	39.6	18.8	12.1	24	Ms. L
B.	652	no	K-5	Reading/ELA Writing Math Science	14.3	.9	2.3	34.8	Ms. B
T.	692	no	K-6	Reading/ELA Writing Science	13%	5.3	4.8	16.2	Ms. T



CCA	Culturally-conscious awareness talk, cultural discourse
CM	Classroom management by the teacher, behavior talk, directions given orally, routines management
HUM	Humor expressed, jokes, natural expressions, street expressions
INF	Information given by teacher, content explained, curriculum alert
INQ	Inquiry, "I wonder," "why" statements, problems posed, puzzlements, purposeful talk around an issue or situation
POWER	Verbal sharing of decision-making power, allowing students to make decisions and choices
RAP	Rapport building communication, positive feeling expressed, emotional comfort and trust from teacher to students
SCM	Student manages the classroom behavior
SSI	Student to student talk, informal exchange
SSQA	Student to student question and answer, student directed IRE (initiation, response, evaluation)
S-stories	Student tells stories
TEST	Specific talk about upcoming state or district tests
T Models	Teacher models thinking, assignment, or activity; shows, makes, draws, models the task
TSI	Teacher to student talk, informal exchange
TSQA	Teacher to students question and answer, teacher directed IRE (initiation, response, evaluation)
T-stories	Teacher tells stories
Worktime	Students work independently, or collaboratively, teacher monitors, helps, may talk individually, quiet voices

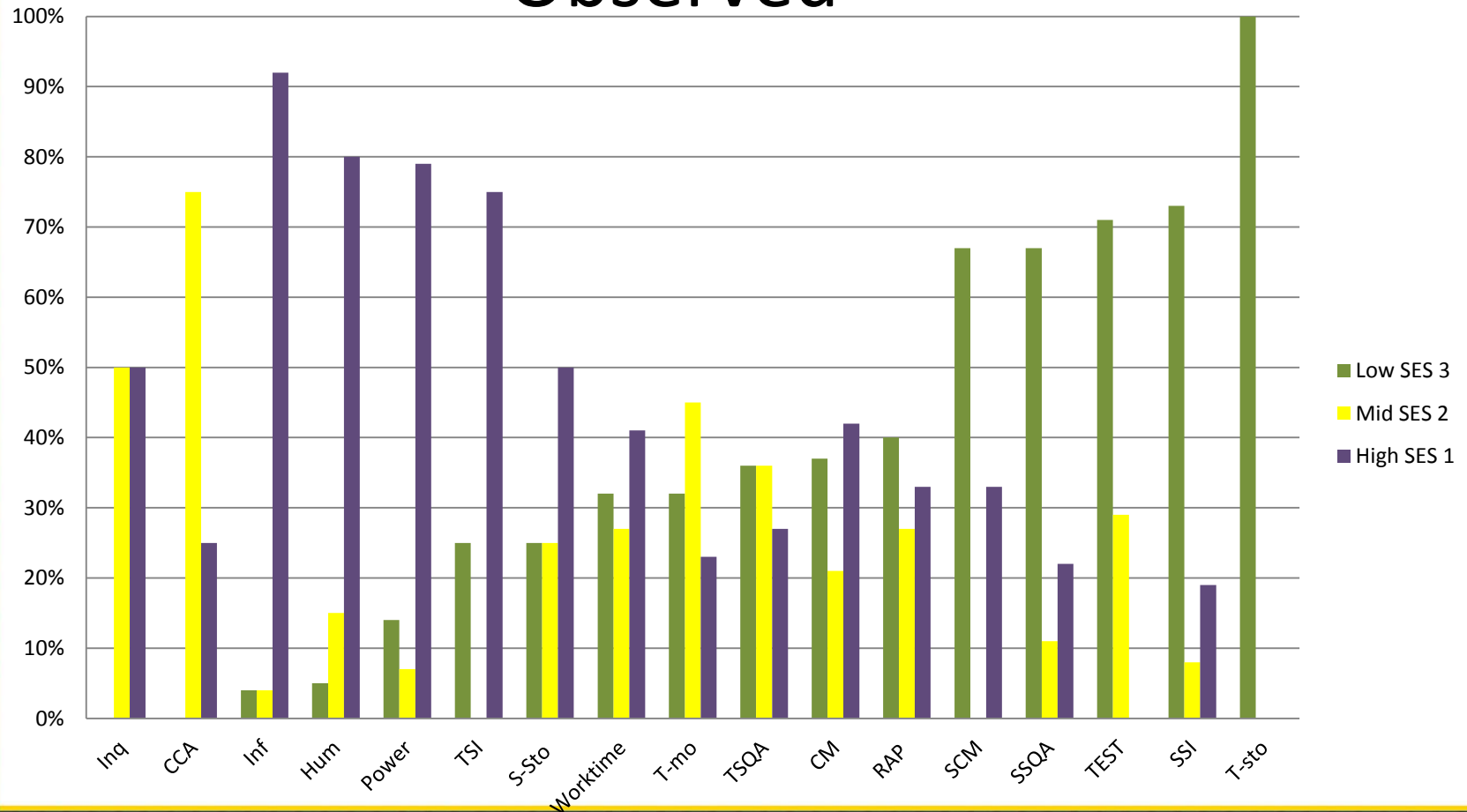
Current Study

- We wondered if effective instruction is similar or different across third grade classrooms in low, middle, high socioeconomic status.
- We wondered if social processes are similar or different across third grade classrooms in low, middle, high socioeconomic status.

Preliminary Findings for All SES Classrooms

- ◆ Effective instruction in ALL socioeconomic levels of schools involved high incidence of the following social processes:
- ◆ **Work-time** was given in all classes for assignments - with helpful, focused, quiet talk needed.
- ◆ Teachers **modeled** tasks by drawing, making, showing, thinking out loud in all SES schools.
- ◆ Teachers asked students **questions** and expected **answers** in all SES schools.
- ◆ Talk frequently centered around **classroom management** in all cases.
- ◆ Teachers built **rapport** through praise and personal concern in all cases.

Incidences of Social Processes Observed



Preliminary Findings in High SES Classrooms

- ◆ Work-time, teacher models, teacher asking students questions, classroom management, rapport.
- ◆ Highest incidences of **information** given, explanatory talk, curriculum alerts.
- ◆ Higher frequencies of **inquiry, humor, power sharing,** and **teacher-to-student informal** talk.
- ◆ No talk about the upcoming spring tests.
- ◆ No stories told by teachers.

Preliminary Findings in Mid SES Classrooms

- ◆ Work-time, teacher models, teacher asking students questions, classroom management, rapport.
- ◆ Some frequencies of **inquiry** and **cultural awareness** talk.
- ◆ Some frequencies of **information, humor, power sharing** talk.
- ◆ Some frequencies of talk about the upcoming state **tests**.

Preliminary Findings on Low SES Classrooms

- ◆ Work-time, teacher models, teacher asking students questions, classroom management, rapport.
- ◆ Only incidences of **teachers telling stories**.
- ◆ Higher frequencies of **students-to-students informal talk; students asking each other questions and giving answers; students managing the classroom**.
- ◆ Some incidences of talk about the upcoming spring **tests**.
- ◆ Very few incidences of information given, humor or power sharing talk.
- ◆ No incidences of inquiry or cultural awareness.

Discussion and more **Questions!**

All of the six teachers held steady to the curriculum focus and style known as effective teaching: modeling, allowing in-class work time, asking questions-expecting answers, managing the classroom, and building rapport.

Why? What expectations are given to teachers for instructional strategies? What drives these instructional strategies – students, administration, other stakeholders?

Discussion and more Questions!

- Do teachers in high SES classrooms tend to feel slightly more “relaxed” with the students they teach – hence, more incidences of humor, inquiry kinds of talk, and no talk about the upcoming state tests?
- Why? What expectations are given to teachers in high SES schools?
- What drives certain instructional strategies – students, administration, other stakeholders?

Discussion and more Questions!

- Do teachers in low SES classrooms feel slightly more pressure to succeed on state tests, therefore there may be more incidences of talk about the tests, and little or no inquiry, humor or sharing of power?
- Why? What expectations are given to teachers in low SES schools?
- What drives certain instructional strategies – students, administration, other stakeholders?

Finally, explain this:

- Most incidences of informative and explanatory talk were recorded in high SES classrooms. **Why?**
- There were two incidences of teachers telling stories, and both were in low SES classrooms. **Any thoughts?**
- **Why is cultural awareness kinds of talk not prevalent in any of our SES observations?**

Thank You
Any Questions?