Observing Behavior: Formal Observational Systems

Characteristics of Effective Instruction

- Researchers have found that effective Teachers:
  - Begin a lesson with a short review of previous, prerequisite learning
  - Begin a lesson with a short statement of goals
  - Present new material in small steps, with student practice after each step
  - Give clear and detailed instructions and explanations
  - Provide a high level of active practice for all students
  - Ask a large number of questions, check for student understanding, and obtain responses from all students
  - Guide students during initial practice
  - Provide systematic feedback and corrections
  - Provide explicit instruction and practice for seatwork exercises, and monitor students during seatwork.

A General Model of Effective Instruction

Rosenshine and Stevens, 1986

- Six Fundamental Teaching Functions:
  - Review, check previous day's work (and reteach, if necessary)
  - Present new content/skills
  - Guided Student Practice (and check for understanding)
  - Feedback and Correctives (and reteach if necessary)
  - Independent Student Practice
  - Weekly and Monthly Review

Behavior: Classroom Observation System

- Focuses on a single student rather than a group or whole class

- Developed to assess:
  - individual student's classroom learning opportunities
  - time devoted to various activities
  - student's work behavior
  - student's success rate on academic tasks

Materials Needed

- Recording Form
- Summary Form
- Stop Watch
- Classroom Schedule
  - check with teacher to see how much time will be allocated for instruction *before* conducting observations

Observation Situations

- Teacher Led Instruction
- Independent Work
- Corrective Feedback

Teacher Led Instruction

The planned instructional lesson in which the teacher demonstrates, prompts, explains, lectures and/or questions one or more students.

Examples:

- Time spent by the teacher **<u>actively leading</u>** the students through the completion of a worksheet
- Round Robin reading
- Demonstrating how to solve math problems on an overhead projector

Non-examples:

- Assigning and describing how to complete a worksheet or other independent task
- Time spent supervising written work where the teacher interacts with students only for corrections

Individual Responses

Any oral, written, or physical response (pointing to correct answer) made immediately following an *academic* request by the teacher

Individual Responses

Examples:

- Teacher says "Jonny, what is 5 + 7?"
- Teacher says to the class "Who can tell me the answer to 5 + 7?" and then calls on Jonny.
- Reading - Each word read during isolated word practice is recorded as one response. When the student reads in context, each sentences is recorded as one response.
- Student working one-to-one with the teacher on completing a worksheet

Non-Examples:

- Any request that is not academic (telling student to be quiet or to put away a book)
- Silent reading (include in section B)

Individual Responses

Individual responses are recorded when the teacher makes a direct request of the target student, or when he/she makes a general request to all students but then calls on the target student.

- Record whether the student answered correctly, incorrectly, or did not answer.
- Circle the tally if the student answered incorrectly and the teacher corrects the error.

Responses with Group

- This category is used when the teacher is using a unison or choral response format or when the teacher makes a general request of the group and permits anyone to answer.

- Record whether the student answered correctly, incorrectly, or did not answer.

- Circle the tally if the student answered incorrectly and the teacher corrects the error.

Positive/Negative Comments

- Positive comments include awarding points, tangible rein forcers, and praise statements.

- Negative comments include reprimands, however academic corrections or instructions regarding behavior are not considered reprimands.

- Place a tally mark for each positive and negative comment by the teacher specifically directed to the target student.

Delayed Tests

- A delayed test occurs when the teacher, after having corrected an error, returns to the question on which the specific error was made.

- The delayed test must not immediately follow the correction - at least one other task or question should be presented before a delayed test

Independent Work

- The time a student spends on assignments that are completed without the help of the teacher (teacher can provide limited assistance)
- Independent work is generally written work, but could include studying spelling words
- Supplemental practice - oral and silent reading
- Other - anything that does not fit under the other categories (spelling test)
- Record minutes allotted to independent work as well as the number of minutes the student is actually engaged in the activity.

Corrective Feedback

- Record the type and amount of feedback the student is given about independent written work that has been previously completed.

- **Interactive Work check** - the time that the teacher spends correcting or reviewing the student's written work with the student

- **Non-interactive work check** - time spent by the student correcting errors on written work that has been graded by the teacher

- **Performance accuracy** - record worksheet performance for at least two worksheets

- **Structured Reinforcement system** - record whether the student is involved in a reward system of any kind (points, stickers, grades, etc.)

Determining how to Interpret Behavioral Observation Data

- Does the child's observed behavior agree with the verbal report of the teacher or parent?

- Is the child's behavior sufficiently discrepant from that of a peer to warrant intervention?

Interpreting Data

- Determine whether the individual's behavior is adequate
  - Discrepancies
  - Norms
  - Prespecified Criteria
  - Intensity of the problem
  - Common Sense