Classification of teachers' interaction behaviors in early childhood classrooms


Abstract: This study investigated patterns of teachers' interaction behaviors in early childhood classrooms. Sixty-three child care teachers were rated on their use of eight interaction behaviors taken from the Teaching Styles Rating Scale (McWilliam, Scarborough, Bagby, & Sweeney, 1998). Using cluster analysis techniques, we identified four homogenous interaction clusters. One cluster presented an average profile: The teachers in this group had average scores on all interaction behaviors compared to the other teachers in the study. The teachers in a second cluster were characterized by high ratings on elaborating and low ratings on redirecting behaviors. A third cluster consisted of teachers who where rated high on redirecting and low on all other behaviors, and the teachers in the fourth cluster received high ratings on nonelaborative behaviors. Cluster differences were found for teachers' education; teachers' sensitivity, as measured by the Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett, 1989); classroom quality, as measured by the Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 1990) or the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998); group child engagement, as measured by the Engagement Check II (McWilliam, 1999); and center licensing level. © 2000 Elsevier Science Inc.
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