

Using Observation Instruments to Understand Change in Teaching Quality Over Time

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### **Abstract (300 words)**

This study combines archival video footage with new videotaping of the same teachers to examine changes in instructional quality in the "Common Core era" in US schools. We scored teacher's videos at two time points and investigated how teaching has changed over time among a group of experienced teachers. Although, we find and report on slight increases in teaching quality on the PLATO domains of Disciplinary Demand and Management, the presentation focuses on difficulties in measuring change in instructional quality across time. The study spans 10 years, during this time teachers changed schools and/or grades taught. Further, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) led to shifts in the content being taught. Both of these changes created challenges in interpreting changes in observed teaching quality as evidence of growth since observed teaching quality varies systematically across teaching context and the content being taught. Growth in Management was found to be entirely a result of changes in the grade taught by teachers. Teachers moved to grades where observed management scores tended to be higher. Most of the observed growth in Disciplinary Demand was driven by changes to content being taught, specifically whether that content is aligned with CCSS's new grade level expectations, suggesting shifts are a result of changing expectations for students rather than shifts in teaching quality per se. The challenges of using archival video data in new projects are discussed.