



A First Look at Tier 1 Instruction to Promote Early Literacy in Preschool Classrooms

- What is the quality of classroom instruction and children's engagement in literacy instruction?
 - What is Tier 1 instruction like in preschool programs across our local communities?
 - In their interactions with children, how often do teachers employ strategies for promoting language and early literacy?
 - How often are children actively engaged in activities related to early literacy?



Sample Characteristics

	Pre-K	Head Start	Title 1	Private
IEP	12%	11%	6%	10%
Dual Language Learner	40%	17%	7%	0
Parent: No HS Diploma or GED	26%	29%	20%	0
No Reading to Child in Past Week	9%	4%	3%	0



Developmental Status Early in the School Year

1 SD Delay:	Pre-K	Head Start	Title 1	Private
CELF Core Skills	66%	43%	33%	15%
PPVT	42%	53%	34%	10%
TOPEL Print Knowledge	55%	54%	41%	24%
TOPEL Phonological Awareness	65%	49%	48%	33%



Observational Instruments

- ***CLASS Pre-K: Classroom Assessment Scoring System*** (Pianta, La Paro & Hamre, 2008)
 - Ratings from 1 to 7, based on four 20-minute observations
 - Focuses on classroom as a whole
 - One day's observation (80 minutes) on each of 57 classrooms (goal=60)

- ***Classroom CIRCLE: Code for Interactive Recording of Children's Learning Environments*** (Atwater, Lee, Montagna, Reynolds & Tapia, 2009)
 - Time-sampled recording of classroom context, teacher behavior, and child behavior, with scores as pct of 30-second intervals
 - Focuses on one individual child at a time
 - 30 minutes on each of 265 children in this presentation (goal=360)

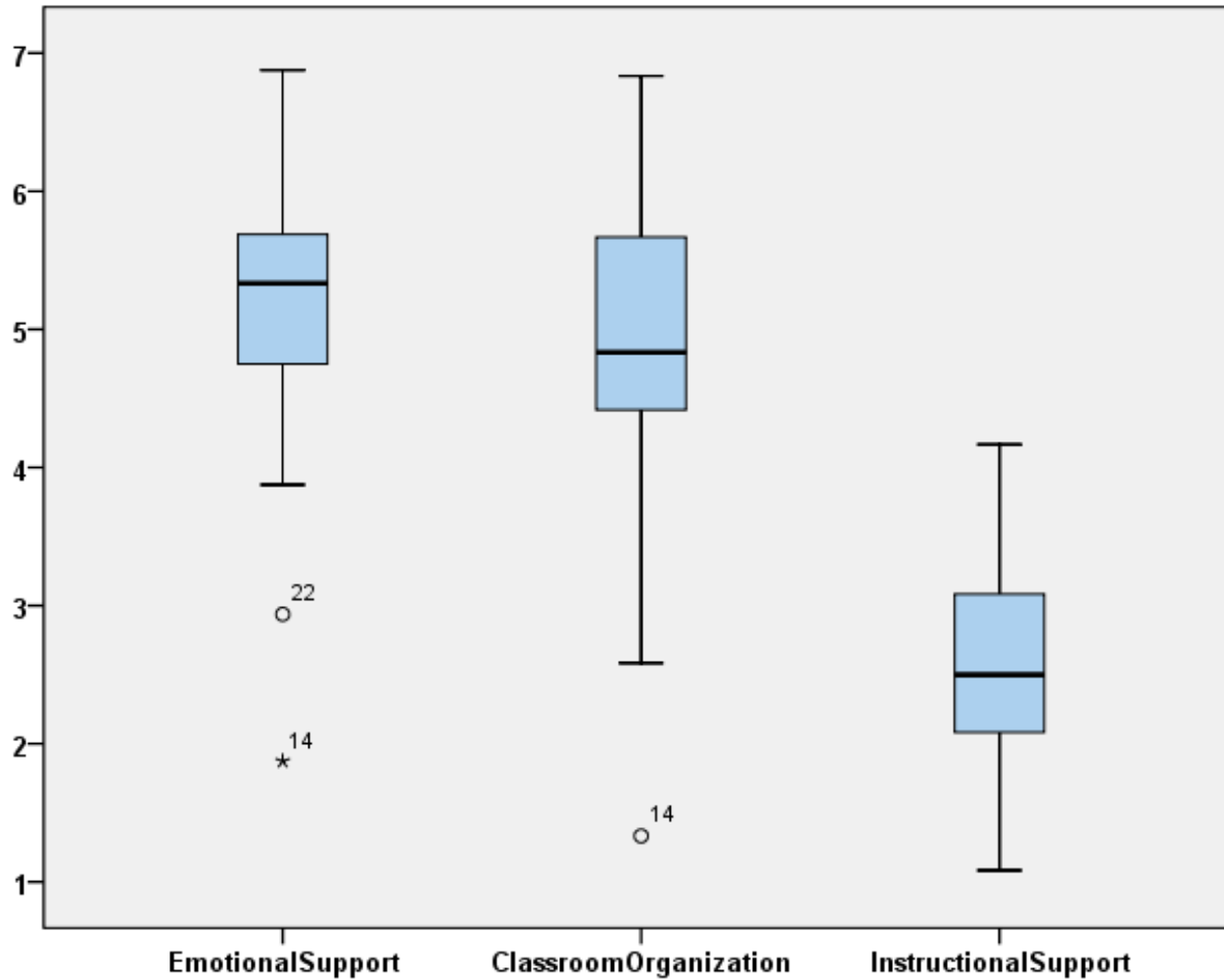


Classroom Assessment Scoring System: CLASS Pre-K

- Emotional Support
 - Positive Climate, Negative Climate, Teacher Sensitivity, Regard for Student Perspectives
- Classroom Organization
 - Behavior Management, Productivity, Instructional Learning Formats
- Instructional Support
 - Concept Development, Quality of Feedback, Language Modeling



Distribution of CLASS Scores for Tier 1 Classrooms (N=57)



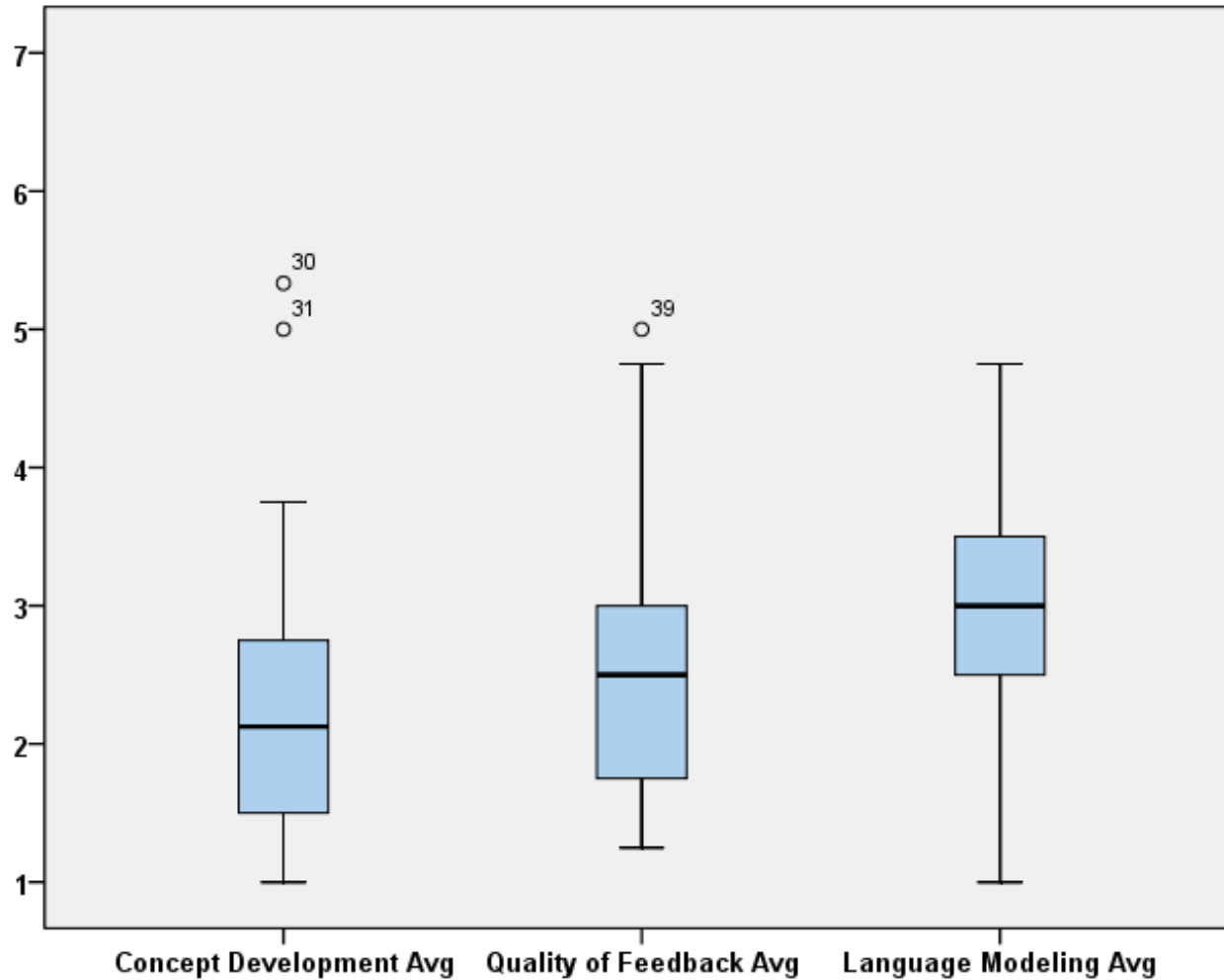


A Closer Look at Instructional Support

- **Instructional Support**
 - **Concept Development**
 - Analysis and reasoning, creating, integration, connections to the real world
 - **Quality of Feedback**
 - Scaffolding, feedback loops, prompting thought processes, providing information, encouragement and affirmation
 - **Language Modeling**
 - Frequent conversation, open-ended questions, repetition and extension, self- and parallel talk, advanced language

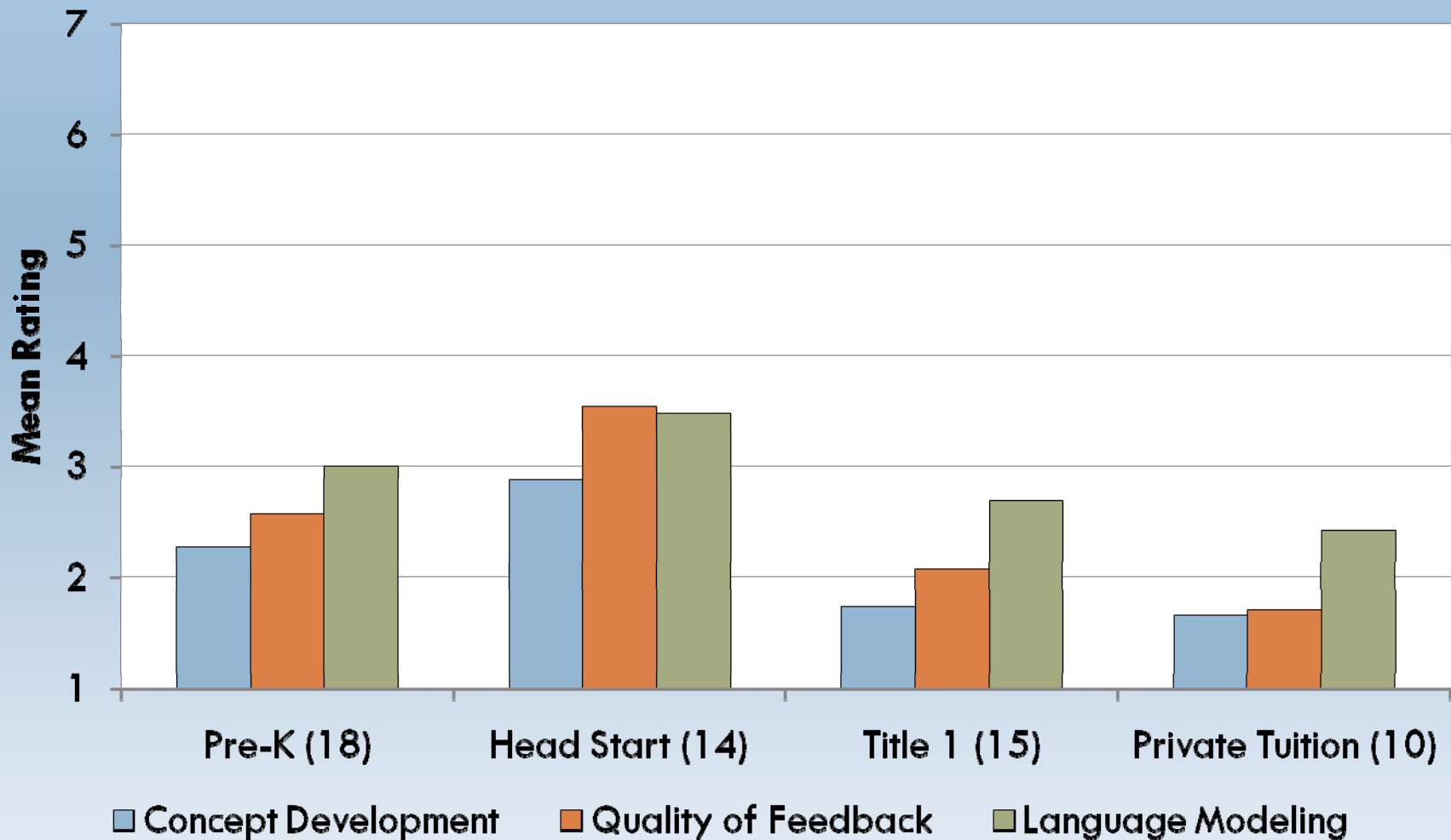


Component Scores for Instructional Support (N=56)





Components of Instructional Support – Across Program Types



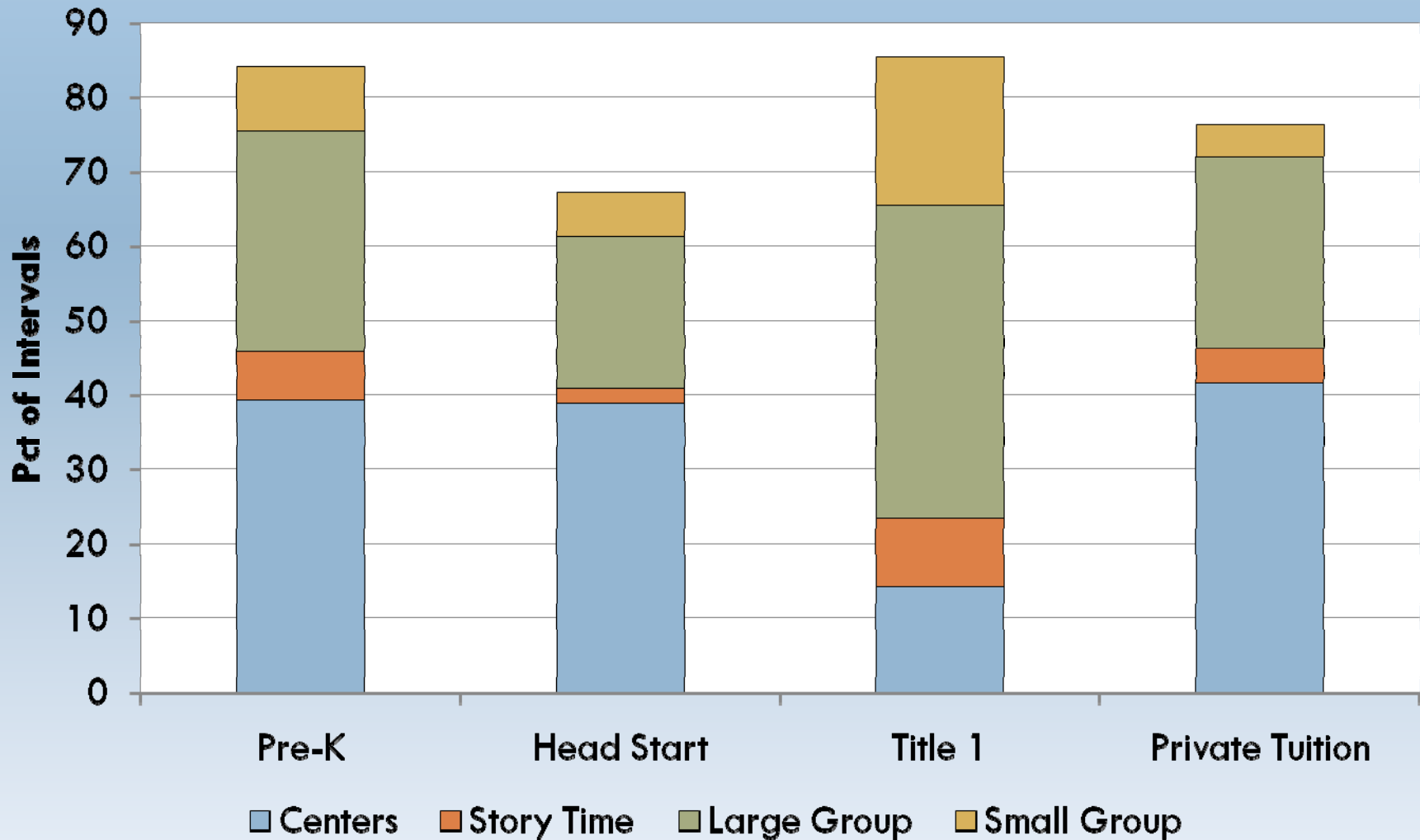


Classroom CIRCLE

- Classroom Context
- Teacher Behavior
 - Verbal Response (to focus child or focus child's group)
 - Recipient of Verbal Response
 - Focus of Instruction (focus on early literacy)
 - Teacher Involvement
- Child Behavior
 - Communication and Social Behavior
 - Social Partner
 - Engagement in Classroom Activities



Activity Context During Observations





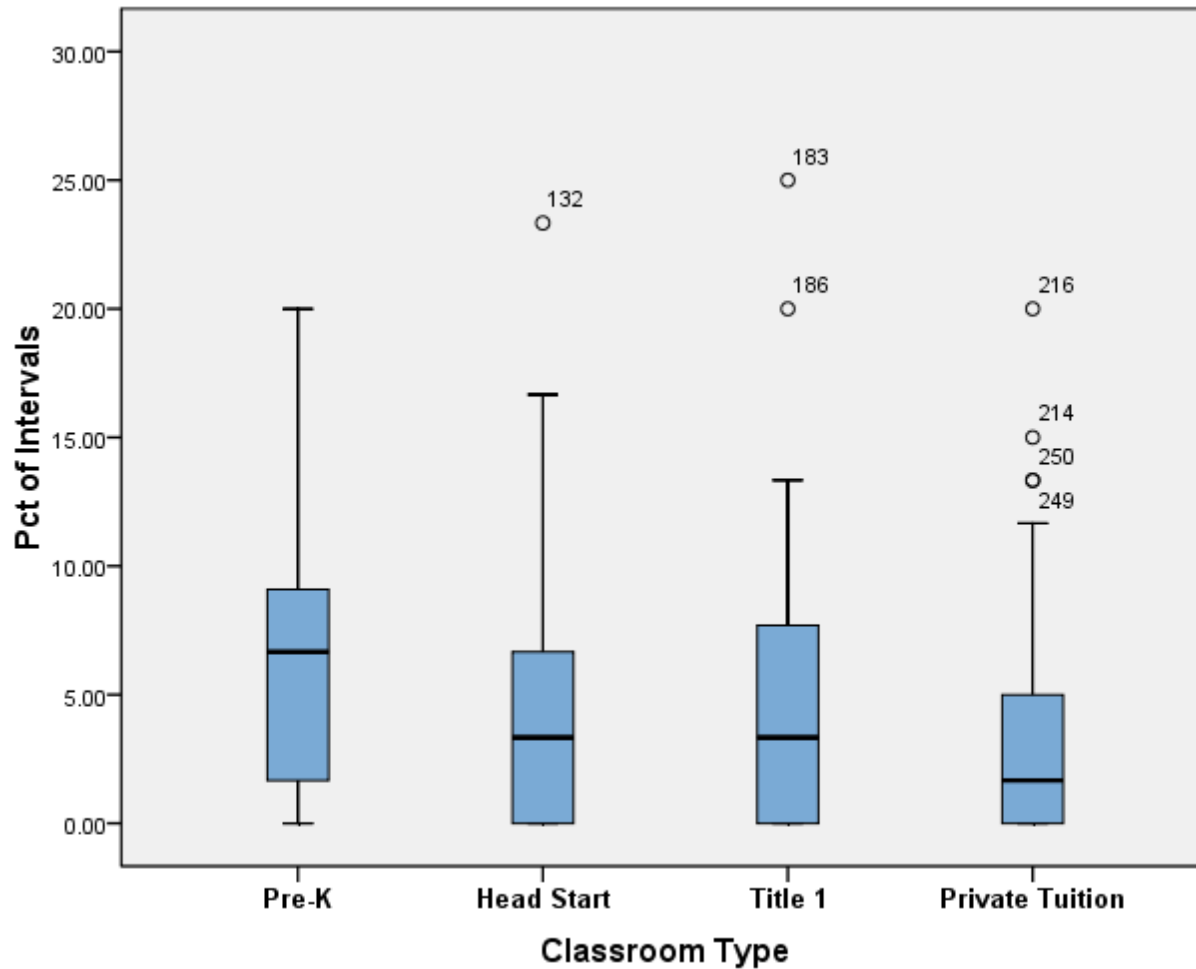
Key Composites Related to Language Support

- Prompting and Expanding Child Communication
 - Teacher asks expands, extends or repeats child communication or asks a question (open- or closed-ended)

- Child Verbal Communication
 - Child communicates with words or signs (English or other language)

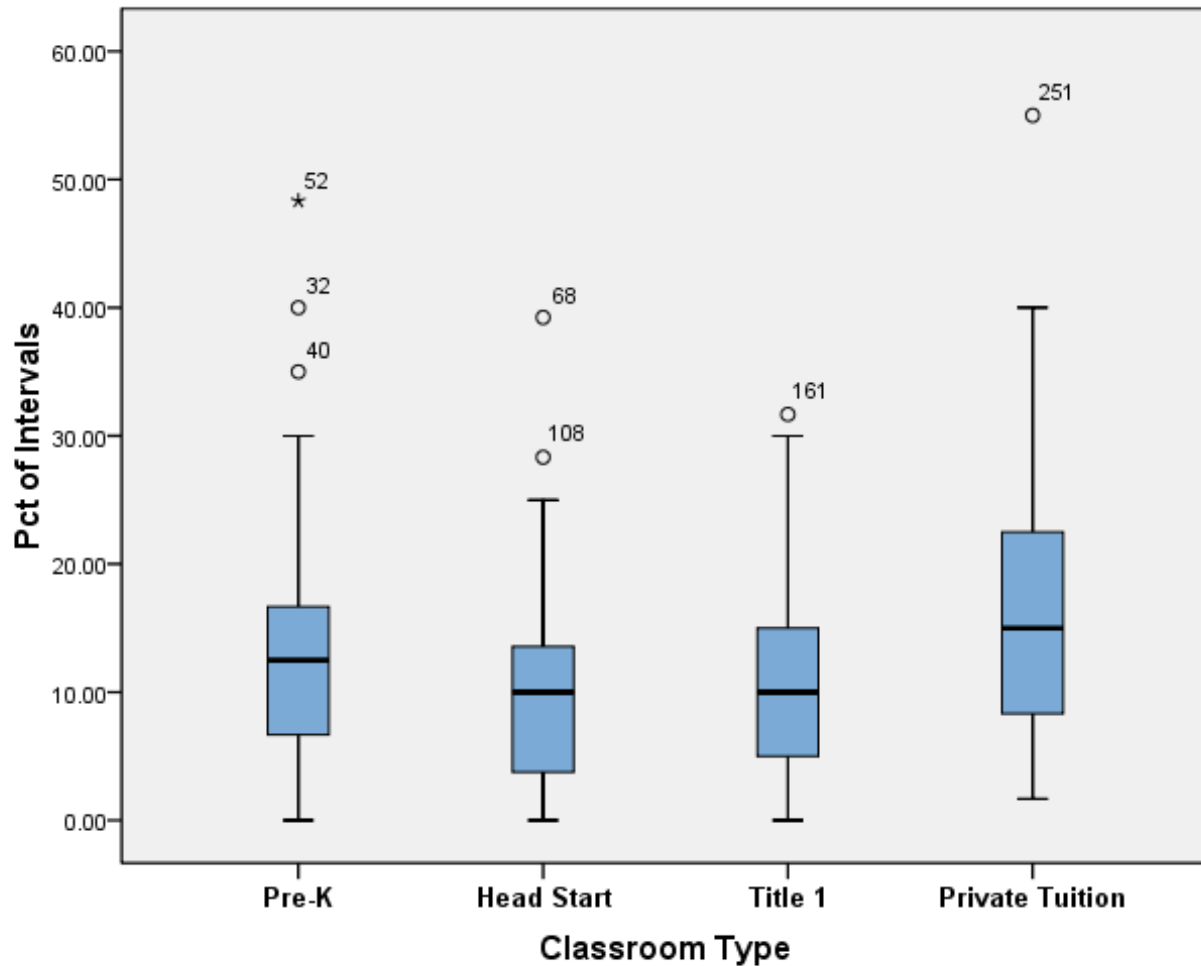


CIRCLE: Teacher Expands and Prompts Child Communication





CIRCLE: Child Verbal Communication





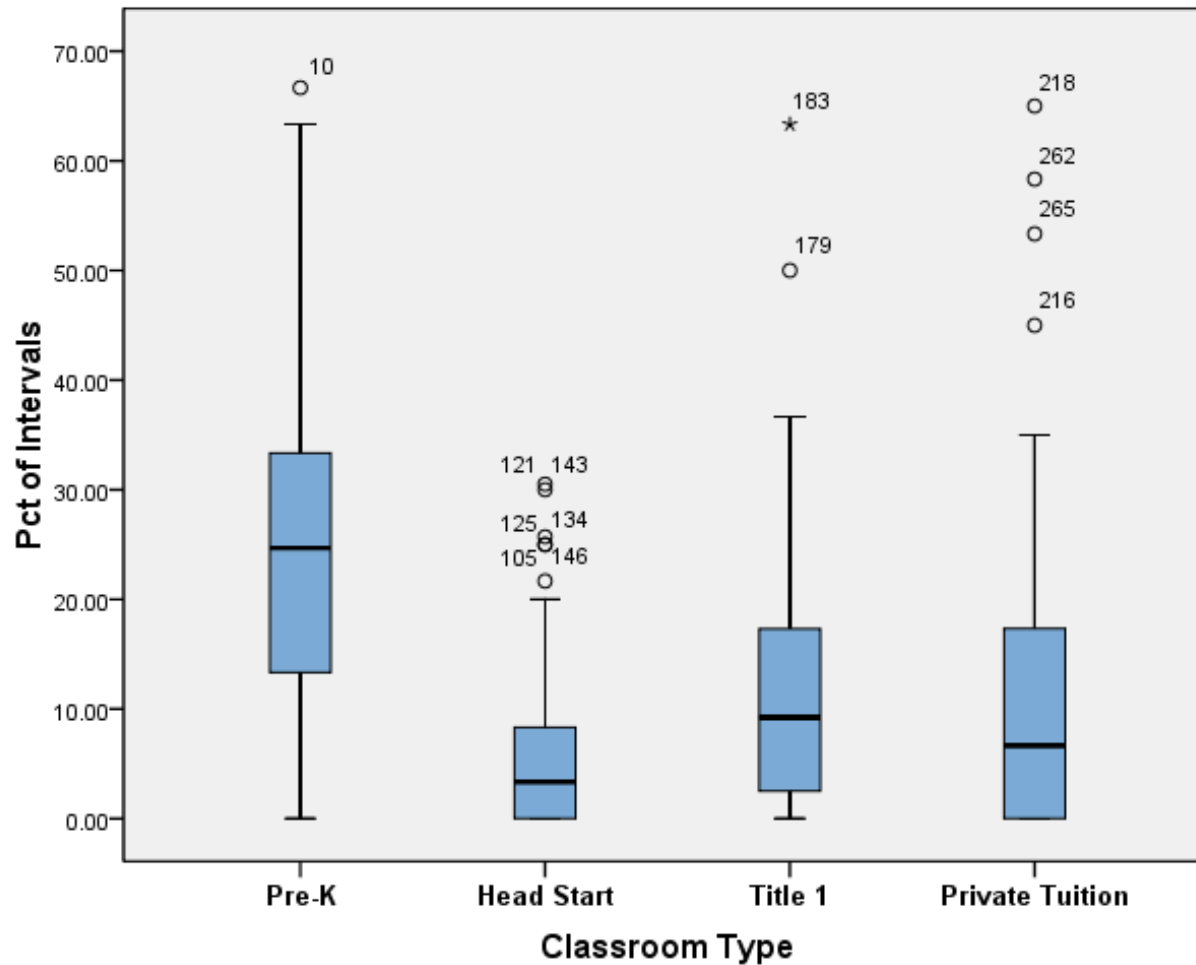
Key Composites Related to Early Literacy Support

- Literacy Focus of Instruction
 - Teacher focuses on phonological awareness, alphabetic/print concepts, vocabulary, comprehension, or reading

- Child Active Academic Engagement
 - Child is engaged in early writing, in early reading or in manipulation or verbal response related to an academic topic (i.e., early literacy, numeracy, science, or social studies)

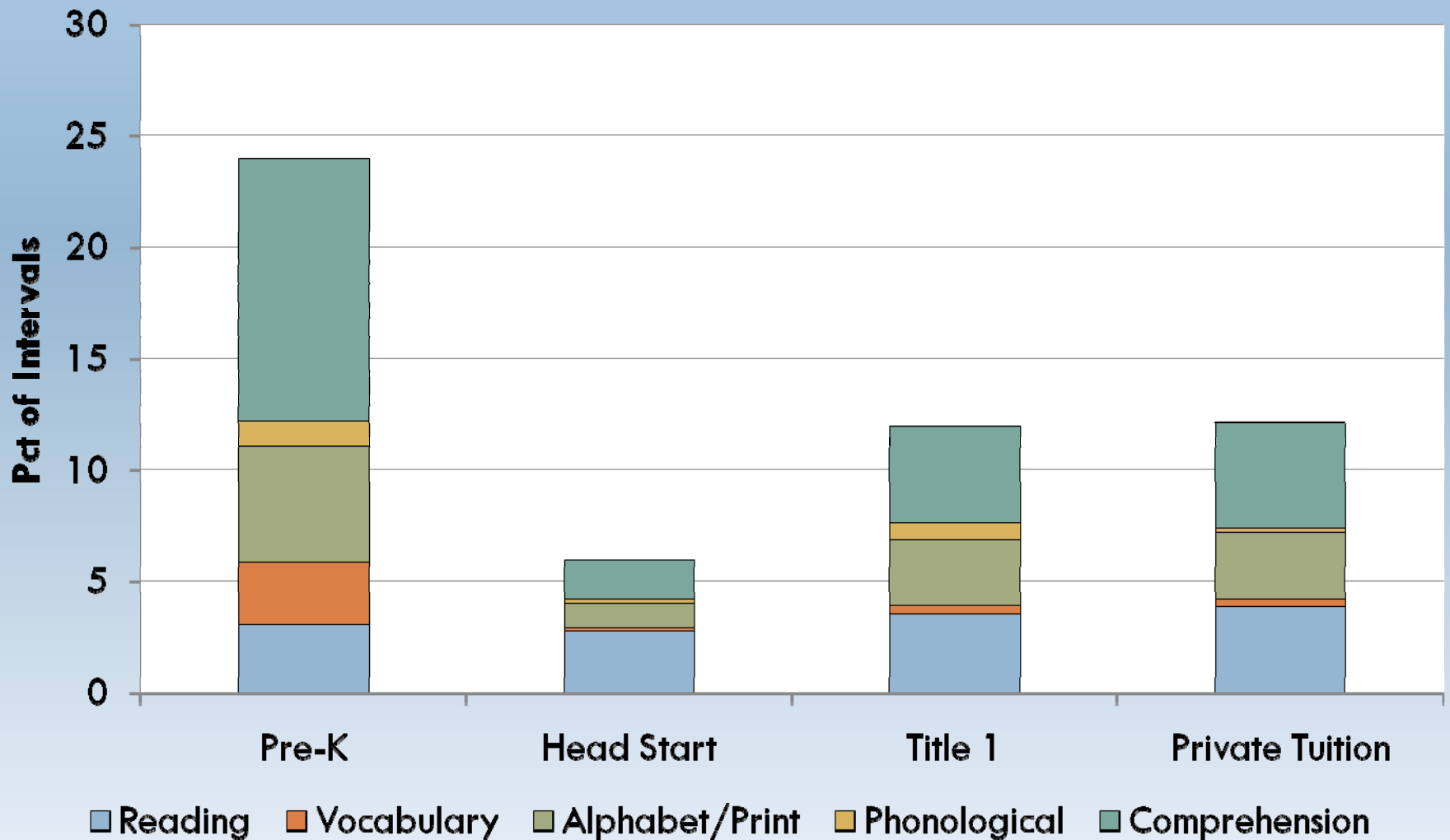


CIRCLE: Any Literacy Focus by Teacher



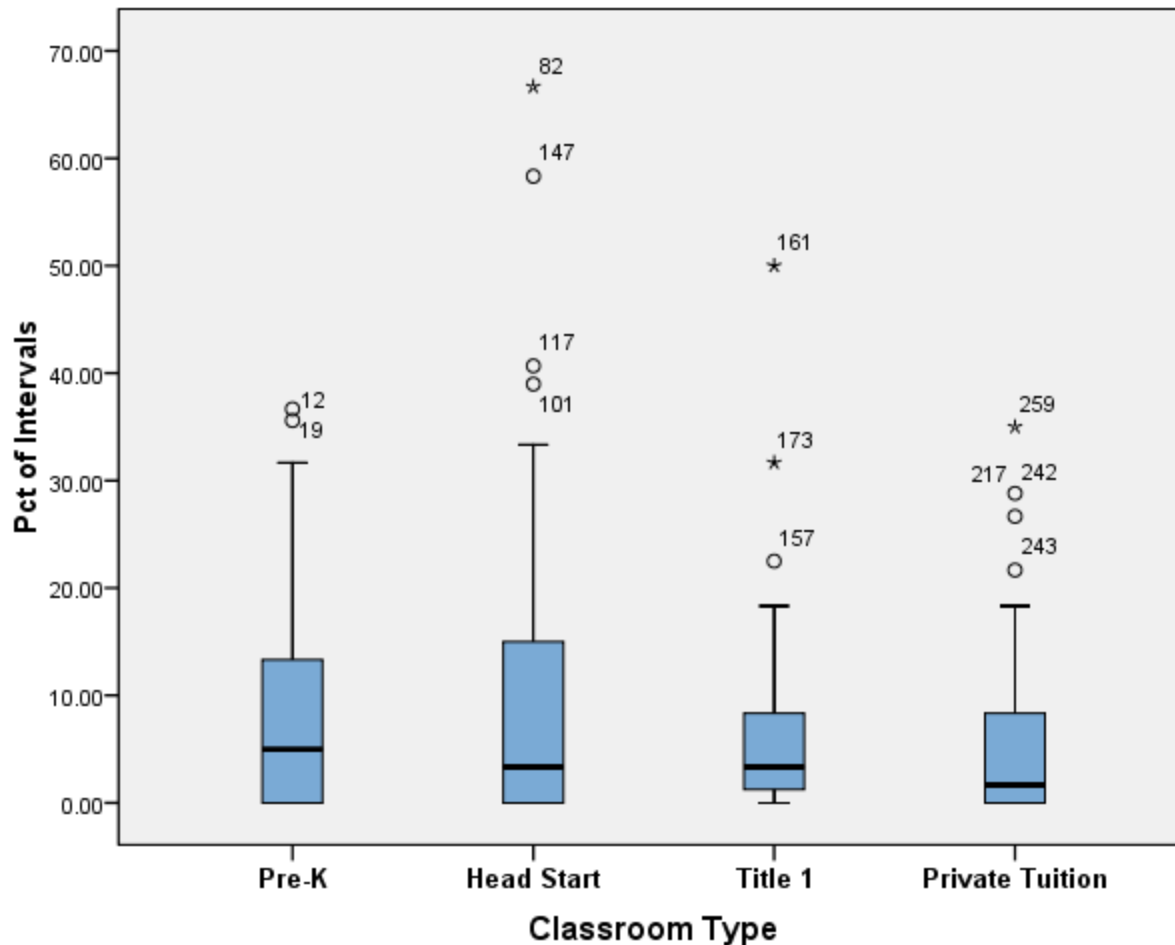


CIRCLE: Unpacking Literacy Focus



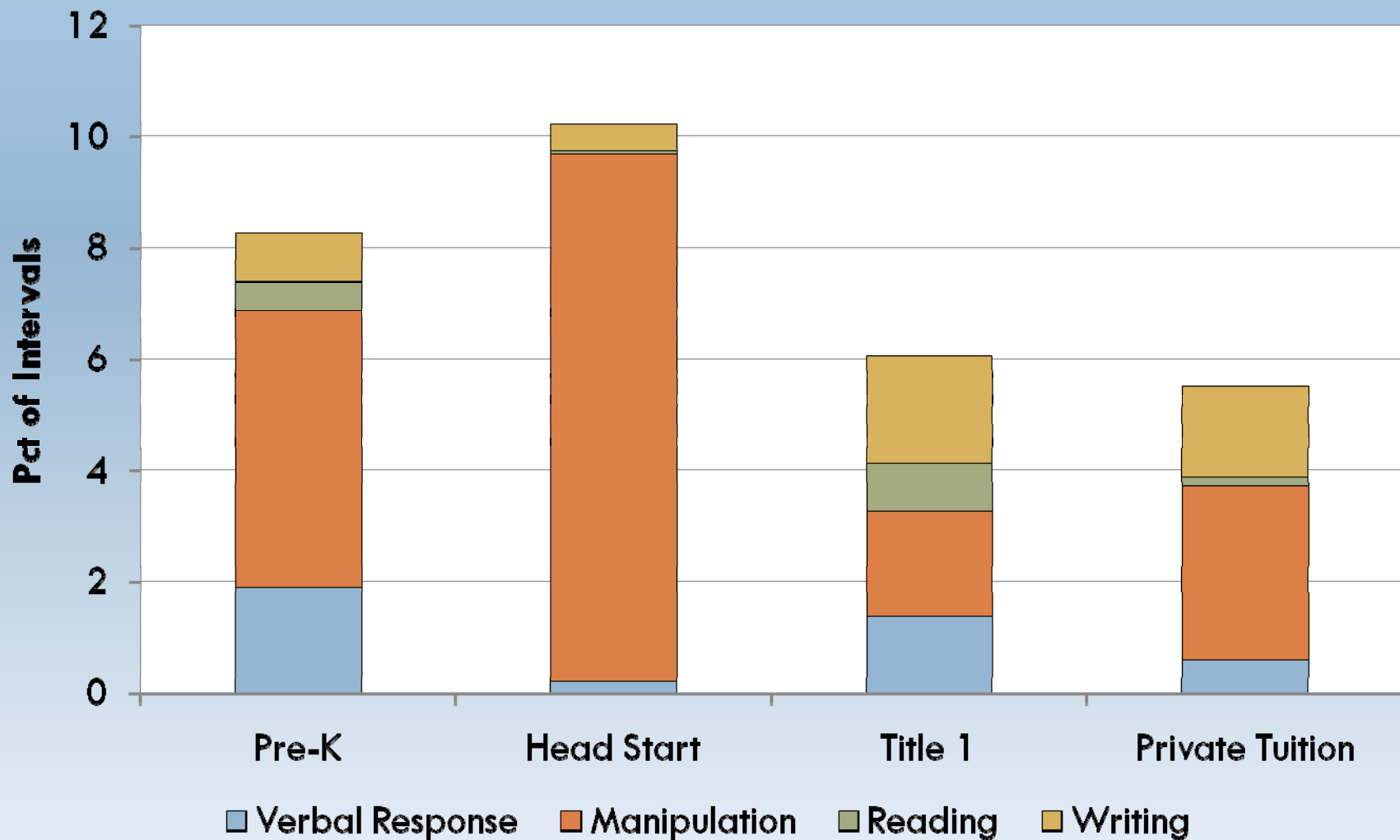


CIRCLE: Child's Active Academic Engagement



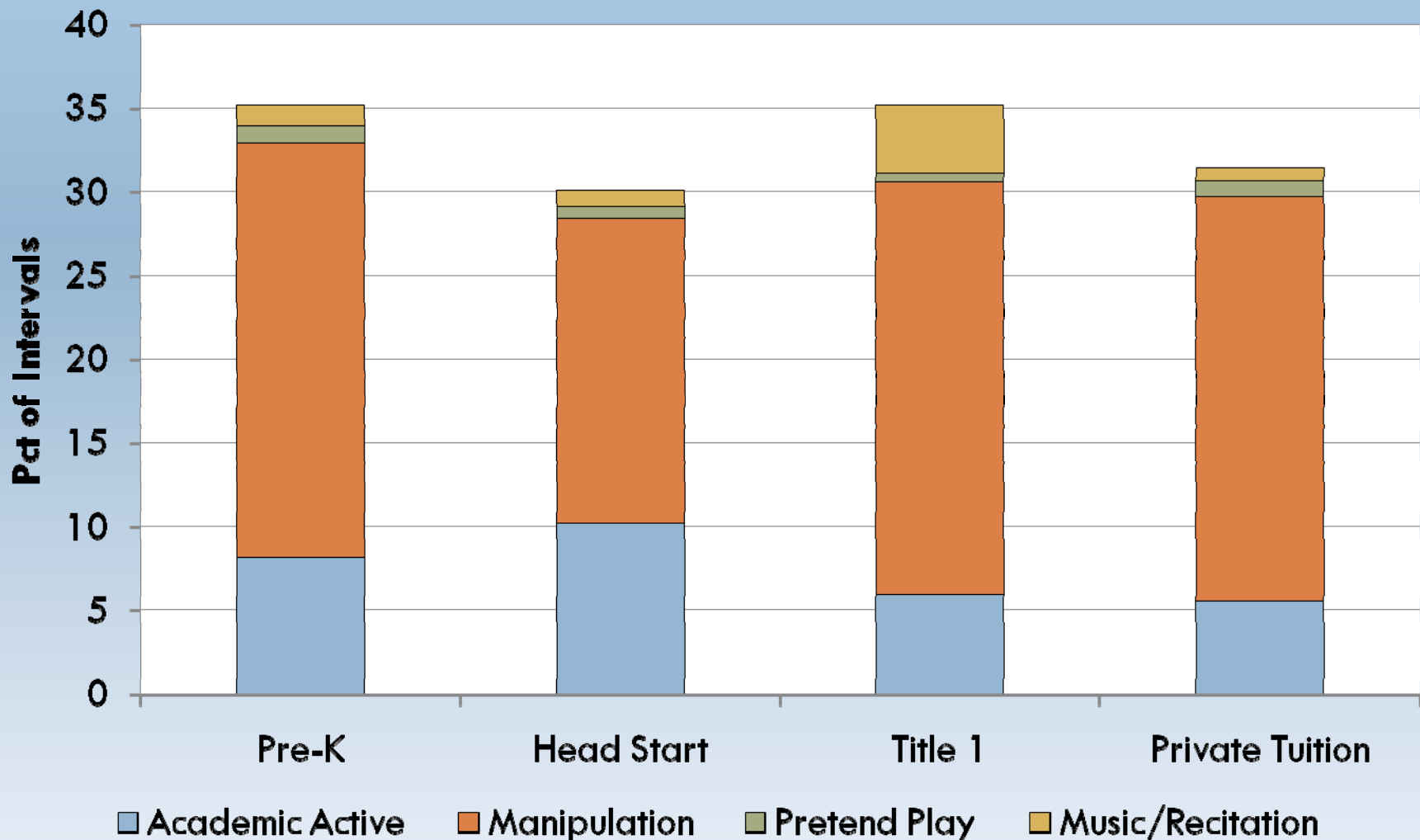


CIRCLE: Unpacking Active Academic Engagement





CIRCLE: Academic Engagement in Relation to Other Active Engagement





What we have learned so far

- Community-based classrooms in our sample differ considerably in children served, in quality as measured by the CLASS, and in the context of learning activities.
- Despite differences, we found consistently low ratings for instructional support, which is the score most closely related to support for early literacy.
- From the perspective of individual children, teacher support for language and literacy varied considerably within and across classroom types.
- On average, a child received teacher language support and literacy support from the teacher approximately 5% and 8% of the time, respectively, or:
 - Less than 4 minutes during a 30-minute observation
 - Less than 25 minutes during a 3-hour classroom session



What more do we need to learn?

- How do Tier 1 quality and classroom experiences vary for different groups of children (i.e., dual language learners, children with IEPs, and children who may need Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention?)
- How are differences in quality, context, and teacher behavior related to children's active engagement in learning activities?
- Are differences in curriculum related to quality, classroom experiences, and children's engagement?
- Given the diversity of children and classrooms within this study, what are we learning about children's early literacy skills and the implications for instruction?