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THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF GROUP WORKING

Group working is considered to minimize the occurrence of unpleasant situations and increases learning students' motivation and satisfaction that result from working in teams or small groups.

In fact, group working or peer tutoring has been a heated topic in second language learning for the past two decades. Its role as a significant supplement to teacher feedback has been well demonstrated in various scientific sources.

According to grounded researches, a number of experienced scientists have investigated effectiveness of group working for improving students' learning outcomes (Paulus, 1999; Shihhsien, 2011; Yang, Badger, & Yu, 2006) and the dynamics of pair interaction in peer feedback sessions (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Storch, 2002a; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; Zhu, 2001). However, most of the previous researches on students' interaction in peer feedback sessions was conducted in ESL and mainly investigated how students interacted with each other. Although Topping proposed that students should be of equal status when paired into peer assessment dyads, this is a rather idealistic situation since "there are evidently individual differences that affect perceived status and may impact peer feedback perceptions and subsequent performance" (Strijbos, Narciss, & Dnebier, 2010) [2-3].

The views expressed by Paulus, Shihhsien, Mendonca & Johnson, Slavin confirm [2-3] that dividing students into small groups seems to provide an opportunity for students to become more actively engaged in learning and for teachers to monitor students progress better and properly, assess progress through questioning, discussions, and checking workbook exercises and quizzes geared for the particular group.

Generally, a peer tutor is anyone who is of a similar status as the person being tutored. In an undergraduate institution this would usually be other undergraduates, as distinct from the graduate students who may be teaching the writing classes; in an K-12 school this is usually a student from the same grade or higher. There are some basic rules to establishing your peer tutoring program, the key to success is a clear objective. Thorough planning and evidence gathering activities will contribute to substantiation of the decisions you will make [1].

Moreover, the importance of peer tutoring is emphasized in scientific works of R. Slavin and A.Madden [3] who postulate that peer tutoring within the same class is the most common in elementary and middle schools.

Researchers have found that students benefit from peer-tutoring because the curriculum and instruction are tailored to the students' abilities.

Overall, peer tutoring is also called pairing students, that is the assignment of students to help one another on a one-to-one basis or in small groups in a variety of situations. There are three types of pairing:

students may tutor others within the same class;

older students may tutor students in lower grades outside of class;

two students may work together and help each other as equals with learning activities.

So, the purpose of the first two types is to pair a student who needs assistance with a tutor on a one-to-one basis, although small groups of two or three tutees and one tutor can also be formed. The third type, also called peer-pairing, is more than tutoring.

It is worth saying that experienced researchers R. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden indicate that of the three pairing arrangements, peer tutoring within the same class is the most appropriate. A student who is a higher achiever or who has completed a lesson and has shown understanding of the material is paired with a student who needs help.

One noteworthy facet of the research concerning peer tutoring, highlighted by Slavin and Nancy A. Madden in "What Works for Students at Risk" and by

Theresa A. Thorkildsen in "Those Who Can Tutor" [3], suggests that through group-pairing students are less threatened by peers, they are more willing to ask fellow students questions that they fear the teacher may consider "silly". Particularly, they are less afraid that fellow students might criticize them for being unable to understand an idea or problem after a second or third explanation.

In summary, a tutorial program shows that the students being tutored not only learned more than they did without tutoring, they also developed a more positive attitude about what they were studying. In addition, the tutors learned more than students who did not tutor.

Literature

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