Child-child discourse during literacy practice: Impact on learning

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The Study

A year-long investigation conducted in 1 first-grade classroom as children participated in two daily classroom practices—Partnership Reading & Writer’s Workshop

Question:
What is the nature of children’s discourse in the margins of the classroom—apart from adults—and what impact does children’s discourse have on literacy learning?
Theoretical Framework

- **Sociocultural Perspective** (Rogoff, 1995; 2003; Vygotsky, 1967; 1978)
- **Key Constructs**
  - Learning (Rogoff, 2003)
  - Culture (Rogoff, 2003)
  - Community (Rogoff, 2003)
  - Literacy (UNESCO, 1958; 1978)
  - Discourse (Cazden, 2001; Gee, 1999; Lankshear & Knobel, 2000; Rogoff, 2003)
Empirical Literature: Child-Child Investigations


- Established “types of talk” as a means for gaining insight into the nature of children’s discourse (Fisher, 1993; Gianotti, 1994; Hyun & Davis, 2005 Wells, 1994)

- Related “types of talk” to children’s learning (Fisher, 1993; Gianotti, 1994; Hyun, 2005)
Reflected child-child talk as a valuable resource for understanding children’s learning process (Dyson, 2003; Griffin, 2002; Kumplainen, 1996)

Established the value of child-child talk apart from adults (Dyson, 1993; Fisher, 1993; Gianotti, 1994; Griffin, 2002; Hyun & Davis, 2005)

Storylines used as a means of positioning (Bomer & Laman, 2004)
Research Design

- Qualitative
- Methodologies: Case Study/Discourse Analysis

Study Context
- Federal Title I Elementary School
- One first-grade classroom (16 students)

Participants
- Poor/Working-class Families
- White (8), Native American (1), Latino/a (7)
Data Collection

- **Cases**
  - 4 Males; 4 Females; the classroom

- **Data Collection Methods**
  - Participant-Observation
  - Fieldnotes
  - Audio tape recordings
  - Interviews
  - Survey
  - Collected student artifacts
  - Weekly collaboration sessions with teacher
Data Analysis

- Transcription
- Fieldnotes
- Artifacts
- Data Reduction
- Data Display
- Triangulation
The Nature of Children’s Discourse

Evidenced in 6 types of talk and patterns within those types of talk:

- Play Talk
- Personal/Experience Stories
- Self Talk
- Accelerated Reader Talk
- Social Talk
- Warning: Impending Adult
Children’s Discourse Reflected

- How children viewed their roles and responsibilities as readers and writers relative to peers
- Process
- Changing participation over time
- The influence of one child to impact change in another
Discussion

- Cultural community distinctly different from that of adults/traditional school

- Types and Patterns of Talk: Mediational Practice

- Talk as Text
  - Meaning of text: Culturally determined
  - Text in its broadest sense (Bakhtin, 1986)
  - Talk as a textual form
Implications

- For how we view children/role in learning
- For classroom practices
- For structuring classroom instruction
- For use of commodified educational programs
- For future research
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References


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