

Dialogic Approaches to Writing Pedagogy

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Abstract : Teaching academic writing is a source of concern for secondary schools. Many students struggle to meet the basic standards of literacy while teacher confidence in this arena remains low. These issues are compounded by the conventionally prescriptive character of writing instruction, which fails to engage student writers. At the same time, a growing body of research on dialogic teaching has highlighted the powerful role of talk in student learning. With the intent of enhancing pedagogical capability, this paper shares finding from a co-inquiry case study that investigated how teachers think about and negotiate classroom discourse to position students as effective academic writers and thinkers. Using a range of qualitative methods, this project closely documents the iterative collaboration of educators as they sought to create more opportunities for dialogic engagement. More specifically, it triangulates both teacher and student data regarding the efficacy of interdependent thinking and collaborative reasoning as organizing principals for literacy learning. Findings indicate that a dialogic teaching repertoire helps to develop the cognitive and metacognitive skills of adolescent writers. In addition, they underscore the importance of sustained professional collaboration to the uptake of new writing pedagogies.

Keywords : dialogic teaching, writing, teacher professional development, student literacy

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