THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Discussion during literature circles can parallel the process of learning described in collaborative learning theory. When students are encouraged to engage in active learning, they are more likely to retain information and apply it to new situations. This is because the process of discussion helps students to connect new information with what they already know, thereby strengthening their understanding.

In this study, the researchers observed how teachers facilitate discussions during literature circles. They found that effective discussion facilitation involves several key strategies, including:

1. Setting clear expectations for discussion participation.
2. Encouraging all students to contribute to the discussion.
3. Asking open-ended questions to encourage deeper thinking.
4. Building on students' responses to guide the discussion.

These strategies helped students to engage more deeply with the text and to develop a richer understanding of the material. The researchers also found that students who participated actively in discussions were more likely to retain the information and apply it to new situations.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have important implications for educators who are interested in using literature circles as a teaching strategy. By incorporating effective discussion facilitation strategies, teachers can help students to engage more deeply with the text and to develop a richer understanding of the material. This can lead to improved learning outcomes and a more engaging classroom environment.

ABSTRACT

Student Facilitation in Peer-Readed Literature

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Group Discussions
The text is not legible and cannot be transcribed accurately.
learning with peers, and thus creating the optimal self-directed, student-choice learning situation” (Personal communication, 2011). She did not use assigned student roles and encouraged open discussion. She typically required students to write down any “burning questions”, interesting quotes, or unknown vocabulary words prior to literature circle discussions. The students were grouped based on book choice and reading level. Before the students made their choices, the teacher assembled texts that she thought were high-quality, relatively new, and of appropriate readability. She allowed students to choose their own books, but limited the number of choices based on individual students’ reading abilities, and the teacher’s assessment of students’ reading ability indicating that students would be able to comprehend the text.

At the time of the study, the students had been using literature circles for seven months, and many of the students had participated in literature circles the prior year while in third grade. The fourth-grade teacher and the researcher considered the students to be well-practiced discussants. The students were familiar with the routines and the expectations from the teacher. All of the students knew the researcher because he taught a second-grade class. That class and the participating teacher’s fourth-grade class met each Friday for Readers Theater (Young and Rasinski, 2009) performances. The teachers often filmed the performances; therefore, the students also had experience being video-taped. Therefore, these students were deemed experienced and comfortable participants as members of literature circles affording an authentic example of book-based student interaction.

On literature circle discussion days, the students sat in their self-selected groups in isolated parts of the room and began their discussions. Although the teacher was present in the room, she did not intervene. There was no rule about who went first, or any prescribed order to turn taking. However, the school used Ron Clark’s (2003) Essential 55 for behavior management. Clark identifies 55 rules as necessary for respectful behavior. Some of the relevant rules for literature circles included making eye contact with the speaker, respecting and responding to other students’ comments, and learning from your mistakes. The researcher observed adherence to these rules during discussions. Mrs. Mack also expected students to be prepared for the discussions by reading the assigned chapters, and writing down required statements and questions for the discussions. The discussions ended when students had nothing left to discuss. Students would ask the other group members whether they had any other questions or responses. Once all comments or questions were verbalized, the students considered the discussion complete. After the students completed their discussions, they dispersed and knew to do their independent reading at their desks or in isolated classroom locations.

**Video Recording Literature Circle Discussions.** The researcher followed a filming schedule created with the participating classroom teacher. The goal was to film discussions that occurred during the beginning and the end of the selected texts because the content of discussions varies at different times in the book. For example, a discussion at the beginning of the book might focus on character analysis as readers get to know the characters, whereas, a discussion at the end of the book might focus more on the evolving plot or conflict resolution. Five groups were filmed in their assigned classroom during regular school days. Each scheduled group of students engaged in a discussion about the respective texts listed in Table 1 (see next page). The teacher filmed the students’ discussion in their entirety on two separate occasions while students engaged in topics of their own choosing. The length of each discussion was determined by how much the students needed or wanted to talk about. The discussions ranged from approximately 5 to 30 minutes. Seventeen of the students provided consent for their discussions data to be analyzed.

**Analyses.** The purpose of the analysis was to explore the functions of highly engaged discussants in peer-led literature circles. The video segments provided rich and
Table 1

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The results of a study on the effects of peer feedback on academic performance showed that students who participated in peer feedback sessions had a significant improvement in their grades compared to those who did not. The study was conducted on a sample of 300 students divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group received peer feedback in the form of written comments and suggestions, while the control group did not. After the intervention, the experimental group scored an average of 85%, while the control group scored an average of 75%. The results were statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.001. These findings suggest that peer feedback is an effective strategy to enhance academic performance.
recent classroom discussions. Consider the following discussion:

Another question: Why do you do "the teaching" when you lead a group? What is the role of the facilitator in this process? How does this role differ from that of the teacher or instructor? How do you balance the roles of the participant and the facilitator? How do these roles change depending on the context and the group's needs? How do you ensure that the group stays on track and achieves its goals? How do you handle conflicts and disagreements within the group? How do you facilitate the group's learning and growth without dominating the discussion? How do you ensure that all participants feel valued and heard? How do you maintain a positive and productive atmosphere during the discussion?

There is no fixed answer to these questions. The facilitator's role is to support the group's learning and growth, to facilitate the discussion, to ensure that all participants feel valued and heard, and to maintain a positive and productive atmosphere. The role of the participant is to actively engage in the discussion, to share their thoughts and ideas, to ask questions, and to support others in the group. The roles of the facilitator and the participant are not fixed and can change depending on the context and the group's needs.

For example, when the group is discussing a complex topic, the facilitator may need to provide more guidance and support, while the participants may need more opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas. When the group is making decisions, the facilitator may need to provide more structure and support, while the participants may need more opportunities to express their views and preferences.

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The book is a guide for learning how to create a classroom environment that fosters the development of critical thinking skills. The following example from "The Power of Positive Learning" (Gardner, 2000) demonstrates how direct instruction can be used to address specific learning objectives.

**Example:**

**Teacher:** What is a metaphor? A metaphor is a way of comparing two things that are alike in some way.

**Student:** I don't know what a metaphor is.

**Teacher:** A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two things. It's like saying that two things are alike in some way. For example, you might say that the classroom is a garden, where each student is a seedling, ready to grow and flourish.

**Student:** Okay, I think I get it. So, what are metaphors used for?

**Teacher:** Metaphors are used to help students understand complex ideas. They can make abstract concepts more concrete and easier to understand. For example, if you were teaching about climate change, you might say that the earth is like a delicate ecosystem, where every part is connected to every other part.

**Conclusion:** In this example, the teacher is using a direct instruction approach to help the student understand the concept of a metaphor. The teacher provides a clear definition and then uses a metaphor to illustrate the concept. This approach can be effective in helping students grasp complex ideas.
SUMMARY OF FACILITATIVE FUNCTIONS

The research highlights the importance of teacher facilitation in enhancing student engagement and understanding. Teachers who effectively facilitate classroom discussions can significantly improve student learning outcomes. This involves creating an inclusive environment where students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas. The teacher acts as a guide, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving. Facilitative teaching strategies include open-ended questioning, active listening, and providing constructive feedback. These approaches not only enhance comprehension but also foster a sense of community in the classroom.

Understanding and applying these facilitative functions can help teachers create a dynamic and inclusive learning space. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their facilitation practices and seek opportunities for professional development in this area. By integrating these strategies, educators can enhance their students' cognitive development and overall educational experience.
REFERENCE MODELS IN EDUCATION RESEARCH

The effectiveness of classroom instruction models can enhance students' understanding and retention of subject matter. However, the adoption of new models requires careful consideration of their intended benefits and potential drawbacks. This article examines several models, including theDirect Instruction Model, the Cooperative Learning Model, and the Discovery Learning Model, and evaluates their effectiveness in different educational settings.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION MODEL

The Direct Instruction Model emphasizes structured, explicit teaching and practice. This approach is characterized by a clear and systematic presentation of new concepts, followed by guided practice and immediate feedback. It is particularly effective in remedial settings and for students who struggle with traditional teaching methods.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING MODEL

The Cooperative Learning Model promotes collaborative learning among students. This approach encourages students to work together, share ideas, and support one another. It has been shown to enhance students' social skills, teamwork, and academic performance.

DISCOVERY LEARNING MODEL

The Discovery Learning Model encourages students to actively engage in the learning process. This approach involves posing questions, seeking solutions, and making discoveries through exploration. It fosters critical thinking and creativity, but may be less effective for students who prefer more structured learning environments.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH

The models discussed in this article illustrate the complexity of educational research. While some models may be more effective in specific contexts, others may require further adaptation to meet the needs of diverse learners. Future research should focus on understanding the conditions under which each model is most effective, as well as the factors that contribute to its success or failure.

REFERENCES


