

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study documents the observed and reported experiences of a regular education teacher and her class of eighteen third grade students when using the strategies of reciprocal teaching and peer tutoring in reading and other content areas in a public school located on the edge of an urban area. All participants in the study received reading instruction from the author in the regular classroom setting. The study examines the students' use of the reciprocal teaching strategy and its effects on student engagement and interaction. The study explores the quality of student discussion and involvement with text to assist students with reading comprehension. The author defines the reciprocal teaching strategy (Palincsar & Brown, 1984) and documents the process of instructing the method, including adaptations made to the strategy to better accommodate students. Reciprocal teaching and peer tutoring are similar in their social nature and the author studies the interrelationship between the two, and the ways the strategies complement each other. The study suggests that students have increased opportunity to read, contribute answers, practice verbal and written skills, and that the social interaction provides modeling from peers. The study documents the students' ongoing use and varied levels of proficiency with reciprocal teaching and peer tutoring. Finally, the author questions how to implement reciprocal teaching and peer tutoring into other content areas.