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Comparing Classroom Interactive Behaviors of Science and Non-Science Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract: This study compared classroom interactive behaviors of science pre-service teachers and pre-service teachers of other subjects. Participants included pre-service teachers enrolled in a general methods course for secondary educators and its school-based fieldwork counterpart. Statistical tests found that science pre-service teachers had fewer incidents of “teacher talk” (lecturing, giving directions), and more frequently asked closed-ended questions than their non-science counterparts. There was no significant difference in the frequency of asking open-ended questions or with types of responding behaviors. Implications include the important role of teacher preparation programs and faculty in exposing future teachers to pedagogical strategies necessary for effective instruction.

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Facilitating Peer Discourse to Support Third Graders' Comprehension of the News

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Abstract: This study explored how one third-grade teacher facilitated daily peer-led discussions around articles from a local newspaper. Two students were assigned to select and summarize an article, then lead a whole-class discussion with the teacher's help. The teacher differentially scaffolded engagement with newspaper articles, adaptively responding to different pairs of student-reporters as he corrected comprehension failures and guided summarization attempts. The teacher played two main roles during the whole-class discussions: facilitating construction of meaning by acting as an intermediary between students and the complex texts, and supporting students' self-management of conversation by acting as a discussion moderator. Illustrative examples are provided and implications for practice are discussed.

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Exploring the Social Validity of Teacher Praise Notes in Elementary School

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Abstract: The use of teacher-written praise notes has the potential to positively influence student classroom behavior and relationships. However, few studies have examined the social validity of praise in schools. The purpose of this study was to evaluate student, teacher, and parent perceptions of a school-wide praise note intervention implemented by teachers at a Title I elementary school. Social validity surveys were completed by 23 teachers, 203 parents, and 203 students at the end of the school year. Results indicated that participants believed praise notes helped improve classroom behavior, relationships, and home-school communication. Results also suggested that praise notes were sustainable and had a good level of teacher buy-in, though suggestions for improvement were noted. Implications and limitations of this study are addressed.

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Disruptive Practices: Enacting Critical Pedagogy through Meditation, Community Building, and Explorative Spaces in a Graduate Course for Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract: This study showcases classroom interactions that reveal the transformational potential of educational practices which disrupt traditional notions about teaching and learning. These disruptive practices create qualitatively different social relations within a classroom which open spaces for students to co-create knowledge in new and creative ways. Based on an ethnographic study, conducted in a foundational course for pre-service teachers, that explored the pedagogical practices of a teacher educator committed to a social justice-based critical pedagogy, analysis of classroom interactions revealed the following disruptive teaching practices: providing spaces for creative explorations, a focus on community building, and using secular mindfulness practices.

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