

9. Discourse and Cooperative Learning in the Math Classroom by Karen Hillen

In this action research study of my 6th grade math classroom I investigated the effects of increased student discourse and cooperative learning on the students' ability to explain and understand math concepts and problem solving, as well as its effects on their use of vocabulary and written explanations. I also investigated how it affected students' attitudes. I discovered that increased student discourse and cooperative learning resulted in positive changes in students' attitudes about their ability to explain and understand math, as well as their actual ability to explain and understand math concepts. Evidence in regard to use of vocabulary and written explanations generally showed little change, but this may have been related to insufficient data. As a result of this research, I plan to continue to use cooperative learning groups and increased student discourse as a teaching practice in all of my math classes. I also plan to include training on cooperative learning strategies as well as more emphasis on vocabulary and writing in my math classroom.