

A CASE STUDY OF PEER INTERACTION IN CHILDREN'S SECOND LANGUAGE COLLABORATIVE WRITING

Abstract

This thesis presents a case study designed to investigate the nature and quality of children's oral language interactions during the process of collaborative creative writing. This research also investigates the strategies children use to scaffold their own, and their peers learning during interactive social construction of knowledge. The data collection was conducted in an international school environment in Bangkok, Thailand, with six primary-aged children of differing language ability. The data was collected through audio and video tape recordings and analysed using transcripts and a system of analysis which classified the children's individual group functioning in terms of their social processing, cognitive processing and the functions of their verbal interaction. Observation and reflection notes provided further information on the situational contexts in which the children's talk occurred. The findings show that children's verbal interactions were highly task related, characterized by high compositional, reproductional and imaginative language use and the exchange of information, questioning, organisational and judgemental interaction. Exploratory and argumentational use of language was, however, found to be low and the general nature of peer interaction was rather procedural and context bound. Nevertheless, the data provided many instances of the more able students scaffolding their less able peers learning. The implications of these findings to theory and practise are discussed.