

Chapter 16

Inclusion of Dyslexic Students in Heterogeneous Groups to Write Essays in a Virtual Environment

Gabriel Herrada Valverde

Universidad de Almería, Spain

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the incidence of the type of grouping strategy (homogeneous or heterogeneous groups) on a virtual learning environment for development of reading comprehension and writing expression skills and for inclusion self-perception of college students with phonological dyslexia diagnosed. A quasi-experimental design is established that considers writing an individual essay as pre- and post-test measures; and writing group essays in Blackboard Collaborative as the treatment or test. Concretely, it is selected a sample of eight groups (four homogeneous and four heterogeneous) made up of three members (one diagnosed with phonological dyslexia). The results showed that dyslexic students integrated into heterogeneous groups when working cooperatively, and felt more included in their groups. This had positive repercussions on the individual essays carried out by these students, as they move from a low competence level to a medium competence level.

INTRODUCTION

Confinement occurred in Spain in 2020 related with the COVID-19 pandemic led to the suspension of university face-to-face learning spaces and, consequently, the transfer of teaching-learning processes to virtual learning environments. In this context, the need to adapt work models that were being carried out up to that moment became latent, to satisfy the needs of university students who showed inclusion problems in the classroom. According to this, the potential of virtual learning environments to promote teamwork, such as Blackboard Collaborate platform, could improve students' inclusion and their competency-based learning.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-9072-3.ch016

Dyslexic Students in Heterogeneous Groups to Write Essays Virtually

The present work analyzes the incidence of the type of grouping strategy on a virtual teaching environment for inclusion of university students with phonological dyslexia and for individual improvement of the reading and writing skills of these students. This study, specifically, contemplates the incidence of heterogeneous or homogeneous groups in the self-perception of inclusion of university students with phonological dyslexia diagnosed and in the structuring of academic essays carried out by these students individually.

To carry out this research, firstly, it is described what working as a team implies based on grouping criteria (homogeneous or heterogeneous groups) and type of strategy used (cooperative, collaborative, individual). Secondly, it is analyzed how an academic essay is globally structured and what recent works associated with the study of phonological dyslexia in a university context says. Take this into account, the methodological design of the study is addressed and the results obtained are described, which are discussed according to the theoretical aspects treated. Finally, a conclusion is made to recap the most important aspect treated and a prospective on future lines of research is provided.

Teamwork Strategies

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has brought with it, among other aspects, a greater interest on the part of teachers for promoting the acquisition of teamwork skills, essential in the interconnected world in which we live. The main problem that the teacher encounters when pursuing this goal is that working as a team involves much more than integrating students into groups to carry out certain tasks, assuming they know how to organize group work appropriately to carry out these tasks (Herrada-Valverde et al., 2008; Kaendler et al., 2015).

When students have not been trained in group work strategies (cooperative or collaborative), since teachers assume that these strategies have been acquired in previous educational courses or stages; students usually implement strategies that they use to work individually. This type of procedure, called individual-group work, involves separating the task into parts, working on each part individually and putting them together without carrying out a joint review (Johnson and Johnson, 1999a; Martin and Rose 2007; Herrada-Valverde et al., 2008; Herrada, 2013).

To avoid the use and abuse of this type of group work strategies, it is essential to train students to use cooperative and collaborative strategies. In this sense, it should be considered that cooperating and collaborating do not imply the same type of procedure.

Cooperative strategies imply dividing work into a set of differentiated subtasks attending to personal skills of each member of the group (Johnson and Johnson, 1999a, 1999b, 2002; Haataja et al., 2015). Therefore, a positive interdependence is created between the different members of the group, since to achieve the final goal each one of its members must adequately carry out the subtask that has been assigned to them. Taking this as a reference, this type of strategy could be more effective within heterogeneous work groups, whose members have different skills and levels of competence (Abellán and Herrada, 2016).

Working collaboratively, as opposed to cooperatively, implies the performance of equivalent tasks or subtasks by each member of the group, and therefore, supposes a symmetry in the individual performance of each member of the group (Barkley et al., 2007; Pujolàs, 2008, 2009; Durán and Monereo, 2012; Watts, 2016; Anwar, 2020). In this sense, each member of a work group performs all tasks or subtasks regardless of their level of competence to perform them. In this sense, collaborative strategies could be more effective when are implemented in homogeneous work groups, whose members have similar skills and levels of competence.

16 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/inclusion-of-dyslexic-students-in-heterogeneous-groups-to-write-essays-in-a-virtual-environment/329193

Related Content

Cultural Agents: Who They Are and What Role They Play

Salvatore Colazzo (2006). *Teaching in the Knowledge Society: New Skills and Instruments for Teachers* (pp. 76-88).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/cultural-agents-their-role-their/30071

Some Key Success Factors in Web-Based Corporate Training in Brazil: A Multiple Case Study

Luiz Antonio Joia and Mário Figueiredo Costa (2008). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies* (pp. 1-28).

www.irma-international.org/article/some-key-success-factors-web/3015

A Roadmap Teaching Pure Mathematics Lessons in Higher Education in the Pandemic Process: Teaching Abstract Algebra in the Flipped Classroom

Emine Nur Ünveren Bilgiç and Duygu Arabacı (2022). *Cases on Practical Applications for Remote, Hybrid, and Hyflex Teaching* (pp. 215-243).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-roadmap-teaching-pure-mathematics-lessons-in-higher-education-in-the-pandemic-process/300114

Explain the Behavior Intention to Use e-Learning Technologies: A Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology Perspective

Amin A. Shaqrah (2015). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies* (pp. 19-32).

www.irma-international.org/article/explain-the-behavior-intention-to-use-e-learning-technologies/132742

Using a User-Interactive QA System for Personalized E-Learning

Dawei Hu, Wei Chen, Qingtian Zeng, Tianyong Hao, Feng Min and Liu Wenying (2010). *Web-Based Education: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools and Applications* (pp. 572-591).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/using-user-interactive-system-personalized/41366