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PEER TUTORING PRACTICE AND ITS BENEFITS

Peer tutoring is the process by which a pupil, with guidance from a teacher, helps one or more students at the same grade level learn a skill or concept. Put very simply, peer tutoring is students helping students. Peer tutoring offers one-on-one assistance for students having difficulties in a specific course.

Nowadays, peer tutoring becomes more and more popular, in higher educational institutions of Europe and the United States of America. The American National Tutoring Association held the last “Tutorpalooza” festival in 2009. Different peer tutoring programs and manuals for tutors, tutees and teachers have been elaborated, tutoring workshops created.

Many teachers feel that they do not have enough time to work one-on-one with every student; while peer tutoring benefits both students and tutors. Students who need assistance benefit by getting help from tutors who have been successful (A or B) in a similar course and are in a unique position to help others learn the material. Tutors benefit by deepening their understanding of the material by learning how to communicate it to others.

The tutor and student may, for instance, meet once a week and together they address difficulties the other student has encountered; it can also be an example of a class activity.

Researches and studies (by John Fantuzzo, Lauren Heller, Charles Maher Debra Whorton and Joseph Delquadri) show that *Classwide Peer Tutoring* works for all students, including students who have problems paying attention, problems learning, and problems with emotions and behavior. It is helpful in reading, spelling, and writing.

What is the teacher's, the professor's role? There are some general tips:

- You have to explain and demonstrate peer tutoring and give your class time to practice tutoring before they do it for real. Two teachers can pretend to be a tutor and a tutee while the students watch. Show the class how to get into pairs quickly and quietly, then pretend to go through a reading vocabulary. Then the students can practice or role-play. Teachers can give feedback to the students while they practice.

- Teach students what good tutor and tutee behaviors are before starting Classwide Peer Tutoring. Explain how to tell their partners in a respectful way when they are wrong. Give them tips and demonstrate how not to get angry when another student tells them that they made a mistake. Research shows that practicing these behaviors will avoid many problems later.

- Teach them how to keep track of their partner's right answers or their own. The tutees will then see that they are getting better over time.

- Have students tutor with new information as soon as they have learned the old material. This way they will not get bored.

Make sure that students have: someone to sit next to them and personally explain the work in a way that is just right for them—not too slow and not too fast; more opportunities to talk about what they are learning, to practice what they are learning, to read aloud, and to write; more opportunities to ask questions when they are confused, without fear of being embarrassed in front of the whole class; someone who can tell them right away whether their answers are right or wrong; and someone to help and encourage them to finish assignment.

But the greatest benefit of classwide peer tutoring lessons is the possibility to learn how to work independently, control yourself and take responsibility for the other student's knowledge. Tutors usually receive additional points, and tutees receive knowledge. Teachers save their time, for they don't have to explain the material or check it with each student personally; it is very important in the case of teaching languages on non-linguistic departments of higher educational institutions of Ukraine.