
A two-way mirror: The role of peer learning in the program “Amit-Academy” at Gordon College of Education

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Abstract

This study examined the extent to which students in a unique training program, Amit-Academy (at Gordon College of Education in Haifa), shape their professional identity. In this program groups of 10-12 students are being trained twice a week; each group has a professional and affective assistance from leading pedagogical instructor. The experience of peer learning process is part of lessons' evaluation led by the students. This qualitative study examined engaged and active learning, as well as the role of the group as a community.

80 students on their third year of training were interviewed in a semi-structured interview. These students were also asked to write a reflection about their experience as students in the program. The findings point out three main subjects (each one has personal and professional aspects:)
(a) group learning provides a moral support to the learners; (b) group learning empowers active and engaged learning through intra-personal aspects; (c) the pedagogic instructor empowers active and engaged learning.

This new partnership model of teachers training is focusing on interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects. It can help student teachers, from the beginning of their training, to cope more efficiently with the professional and affective demands of teaching in the future.

Key words: interpersonal and intra-personal reflection, learning community, partnership model of teachers training, peer learning, practical teacher training.

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