

## Секція 2. Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти: тенденції та виклики

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### STRATEGIES OF TEACHING IN SMALL GROUPS

Group work is influential interpersonal process that takes place in groups. Most people prefer to live in groups. Virtually all the activities of our lives—working, learning, worshiping, relaxing, playing, and even sleeping—occur in groups rather than isolated from others. Most people belong to many different groups, so the number of groups in the world probably reaches well beyond six billion. The world is literally teeming with groups.

For centuries, sages and scholars have been fascinated by groups—by the way they form, change over time, dissipate unexpectedly, achieve great goals, and sometimes commit great wrongs. It is believed that group work can minimize the occurrence of confusing moments and enhances learning students' motivation and encouragement that result from working in small groups.

As a matter of fact, group working has been a heated topic in second language learning for the past two decades. Its role as a significant supplement to teacher feedback has been well demonstrated in various scientific sources. According to grounded researches, a number of experienced scientists have investigated effectiveness of group working for improving students' learning outcomes (Paulus, 1999; Shihhsien, 2011; Yang, Badger, & Yu, 2006) and the dynamics of pair interaction in peer feedback sessions (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Storch, 2002a; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; Zhu, 2001). However, most of the previous researches on students' interaction in peer feedback sessions was conducted in ESL and mainly investigated how students interacted with each other. Although Topping proposed that students should be of equal status when paired into peer assessment dyads, this is a rather idealistic situation since “there are evidently individual differences that affect perceived status and may impact peer feedback perceptions and subsequent performance” (Strijbos, Narciss, & Dneber, 2010) [1-2].

The views expressed by Paulus, Shihhsien, Mendonca & Johnson, Slavin confirm [1-2] that dividing students into small groups seems to provide an opportunity for students to become more actively engaged in learning and for teachers to monitor students progress better and properly, assess progress through questioning, discussions, and checking workbook exercises and quizzes geared for the particular group.

According to David Berliner, teachers who engage in small group instruction seem to attend five strategies of teaching [1].

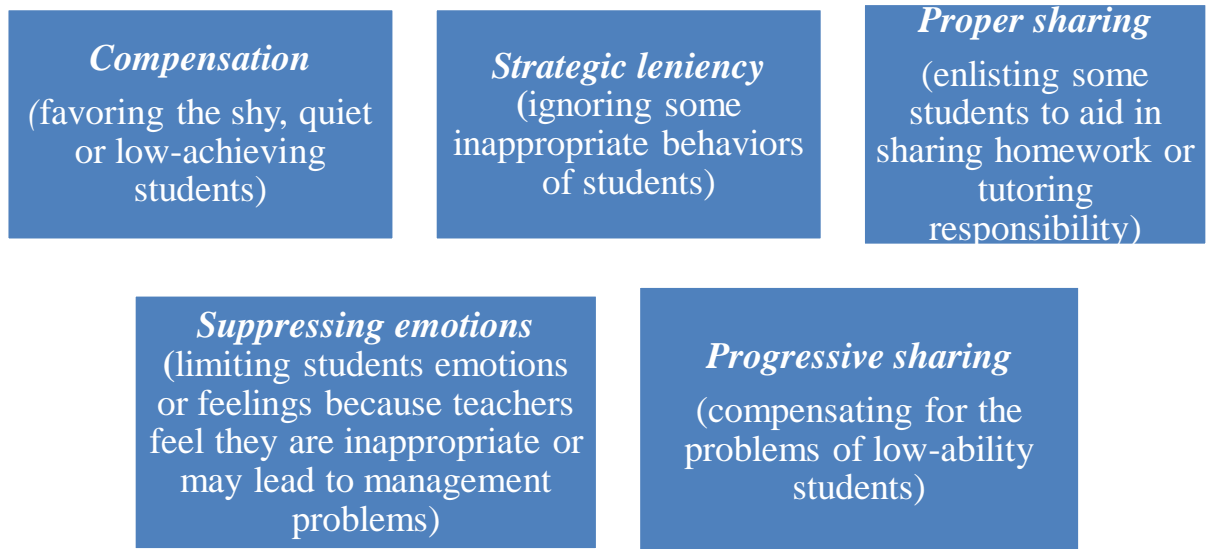


Table 1. *Strategies of teaching in small groups according to David Berliner.*

Thus, the apparently simple task of organizing small groups involves numerous complex decisions and strategies. Researchers have found that students benefit from peer-tutoring because the curriculum and instruction are tailored to the students' abilities.

Overall, group work is also called pairing students, that is the assignment of students to help one another on a one-to-one basis or in small groups in a variety of situations. There are three types of pairing: students may tutor others within the same class; older students may tutor students in lower grades outside of class; two students may work together and help each other as equals with learning activities. The purpose of the first two types is to pair a student who needs assistance with a tutor on a one-to-one basis, although small groups of two or three tutees and one tutor can also be formed. The third type, also called peer-pairing, is more than tutoring.

It is worth saying that experienced researchers R. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden indicate that of the three pairing arrangements, peer tutoring within the same class is the most appropriate. A student who is a higher achiever or who has completed a lesson and has shown understanding of the material is paired with a student who needs help. One noteworthy facet of the research concerning peer tutoring, highlighted by Slavin and Nancy A. Madden in "What Works for Students at Risk" and by Theresa A. Thorkildsen in "Those Who Can Tutor" [3], suggests that through group-pairing students are less threatened by peers, they are more willing to ask fellow students questions that they fear the teacher may consider "silly". Particularly, they are less afraid that fellow students might criticize them for being unable to understand an idea or problem after a second or third explanation.

In summary, a tutorial program shows that the students being tutored not only learned more than they did without tutoring, they also developed a more positive attitude about what they were studying. In addition, the tutors learned more than students who did not tutor.

### **Resources**

1. David C. Berliner. Laboratory Setting and the Study of Teacher Education // Journal of Teacher Education (November-December). - 1985. – P.2-8.
2. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden. What Works for Students at Risk // Educational Leadership (September). – 1989. P. 4-13.

