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Talk it Out: Peer Collaboration in the Writing Process

Alyssa Dorning
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Let's Talk It Out: Peer Collaboration In the Writing Process

Alyssa Dorning and Leah Nillas*

Educational Studies, Illinois Wesleyan University

Research Question

- What effects does peer collaboration have on developing writers?

Literature Review

- *Peer Collaboration* is defined as students cooperatively working with their peers to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions (Wilcox, Jeffery, & Gardner-Bixler, 2015).
- According to Forman and Larreamendy-Joerns (1995), students seemed to change their ideas about the task because of writing with a partner.
- By working with a partner, students increased their awareness and control over grammar structures (Daute & Dalton, 1993).
- *Peer Collaboration* adds to the learning process while also giving a variation in the way students learn (Forman and Larreamendy-Joerns, 1995).
- Wilcox, Jeffery, and Bixler (2015) found that *peer collaboration* and feedback decreased negative self-talk among students, offering confident-boosting suggestions.

Methodology

- 20 third grade students
- Writing workshop occurred three to four times a week.
- Writing workshop went introduction/review, mini-lesson, small discussion, and then writing or meeting with a partner.
- Students shared their writing with a peer on a bi-weekly basis.
- Identified common themes through my data sources that reflected the attitudes and thoughts of how students utilized their writing partner.
- Utilized student work, field notes, and lesson plans as evidence of effects of working with a partner and writing development.

Student-Ranking of Personal Narrative (1-5)

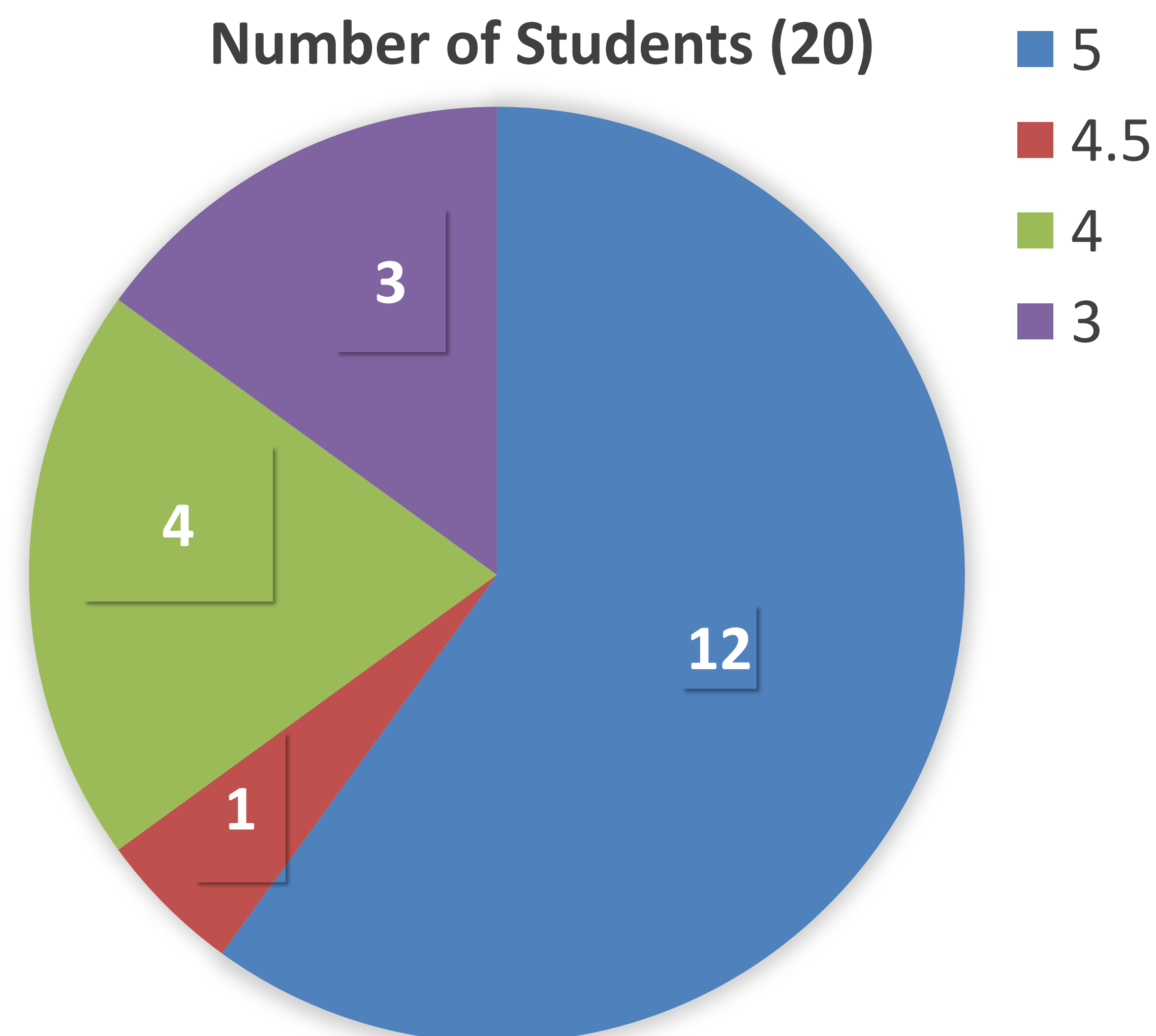


Figure 1. Students had to reflect and rank their story on a scale from 1-5. Of the twenty students, over 60% were so proud of their story that they would share them with family members. The numbers stand for how much effort each student believed they put into their writing.

Results and Data Analysis

- Students made helpful and specific suggestions directly related to their partner's writing.
- Having a partner gave students a new perspective on their story.
- Peer collaboration was a factor in the confidence in students ranking their personal narratives (See Figure 1).
- Students offered support to one another and paid attention to the details of one another's writing.
- Students found having a partner was helpful for fixing student's grammar and sentence-structure mistakes.
- Students received a new perspective of their story from a partner.
- Students who were paired by different strengths were able to offer support and guidance to combat their partner's areas of improvement.
- At the end of the unit, students said "I can now write a story."

Conclusion

- Students were excited to socialize and talk with a peer about their paper, making writing engaging (see Figure 2).
- I observed improvement in social interactions and growth among students.
- Allows for teachers to reach a variety of learning needs.
- Allows for students to have a variety of ways to express their knowledge.
- Teachers should incorporate some form peer collaboration starting from the beginning of a writing unit to the end.
- Teachers should pair students with different partners throughout the writing process so students receive different feedback from peers.
- More research should be further conducted to examine this topic.

Figure 2. Students working with their partner during the editing and revising stage of the writing unit by conducting "surgery." Making this stage of the writing process more hands-on for the students gave them a variety of tools and resources to use with their partner.

