Poster Presentation ES

**The Role of Gender in the Secondary English Classroom**

Jessica Bozek and Jeanne Koehler\*

Educational Studies, Illinois Wesleyan University

Gender roles in society are constantly at work and are especially relevant in the education system:  a system in which seventy-six percent of public school teachers are female, and there is a growing gap between achievement in male and female students. Issues of gender may influence how students of a particular gender participate and relate to the classroom teacher. This study explores how gender connects with and contributes to student involvement in the classroom. The study was completed using a qualitative self-study approach and included various data collection methods including field notes, quality of student work, conducting discussions, and student responsiveness to differentiated content. Through the implementation of this study, it was found that male and female students respond differently to various discussion settings and group dynamics. It was also found that the gender of the instructor greatly influences the classroom environment, causing students’ involvement and participation in class work to vary. Overall, planning and conducting class discussions and group work with attention to gender differences in the classroom is essential to creating an atmosphere in which all students can thrive.