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Dissertation Reflection

Elementary Students’ Perceptions of Classroom Technology

I thought this dissertation was a very easy read and extremely interesting. Because its subject matter and area of interest is exactly what I am getting my master’s in, I was drawn in and intrigued. I think the researcher, Amie Weinberg, did a fabulous job of clearly defining the specific parts of research within the dissertation; I followed each of her steps with ease. I constantly want to incorporate technology more within my classroom and realize the importance of student-centered classrooms versus teacher-centered classrooms. What this case-study really relayed most importantly to me is that students truly start to learn and take responsibility for their own learning when they have ownership within the classroom and are able to take an active role in the learning process. When the teacher is the one doing all of the teaching and showing, the students don’t benefit like they would if they actually were able a hands on approach and given the role of learning how to learn and teach themselves. The role of technology within the classroom was the focus of this case-study, and what the students’ perceptions were when it came to using that technology were observed and reported. What the researcher discovered was that overall students really prefer technology; they think it’s fun and effienct. A small number of students did have a few complaints with it, like computers can freeze at time or not do what you want them to do, or even while using the internet the search engines may be too broad. Having mentioned those frustrations, the students still prefer the use of technology in the classroom compared to the alternative of not using it. They believe they learn more when given the option of using it and enjoy the process of learning more.

 I learned that when leading a research case-study, the research questions need to be clearly defined. I enjoyed reading about her process she took, from choosing the research site and focus groups all the way to observing and interviewing the students to collecting the necessary data. The figures, charts and tables really helped paint a picture of what the process looked like and mapped out the collected data in a clear and precise way.