

Public Abstract

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Title:A Qualitative Study of the Perceptions of the Use of the Teacher Work Sample Methodology in Student Teaching

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Early Childhood student teachers. This happened through the use of think-aloud journals documenting the use of the methodology of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS). Two participants completed the study and showed transformation in using the methodology. "What perceptions of their cognitive processes occur in student teaching as Early childhood teacher candidates prepare their Teacher Work Sample Units?" resulted in two themes. The amount of influence of the cooperating teacher had during the process did not seem to have any bearing on the success of the unit. The tone of the think-aloud journal revealed that confidence was evident from the highest scorer while the lowest seemed stressed and overwhelmed. "How do Early Childhood student teacher candidates describe the use of the Teacher Work Sample Methodology in planning a unit of instruction?" revealed two themes. One participant was able to connect all the pieces of the TWS. The ability to use the rubrics and reflect on previous semester work was apparent in both participants. "How do Early Childhood student teachers perceive the process of the Teacher Work Sample methodology as an effective planning tool for use in their future classrooms?" was answered through the follow up exit interview. Both completing participants discussed the importance of knowing your students and the positive use of the methodology. Early Childhood faculty will need to support student teachers in order for full transformation to take place. A future study could include elementary student teachers.