Tutor Evaluation by Self-Assessment
for Chabot College Tutorial Instructional Program

by
Charles Russell Natson

TUTOR EVALUATION BY SELF-ASSESSMENT

FOR

CHABOT COLLEGE TUTORIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

A Dissertation Presented to

The Faculty of Northern California Graduate University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of The Requirements For The Degree
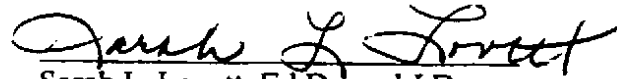
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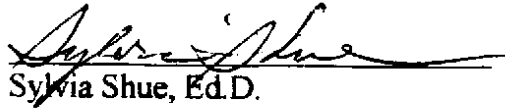San Mateo, 1998

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Society's evolving perception of the role of and value of higher education

relates to education's role in employment. Employment is the most cited reason for

school completion. The creation of peer tutoring programs was to improve the

academic performance of underprepared students.

This study evaluated tutors registered in the Tutorial Training Course T-15

at Chabot College, Hayward, California. The Tutor Evaluation and

Self-Assessment Tool (TESAT) was utilized to measure the tutors'

performance. Thirty tutors performed the pre- and post-assessments. The

instructor also evaluated the tutors with the TESAT, after the tutors'

post-assessments to investigate the relationship between the tutors' and

their instructor's perception of their tutorial skill.

The tutors rated themselves as being proficient. There was a moderate correlation between the tutors' and the instructor's assessments. Attempts are currently being made to certify Chabot College's Tutorial Instructional Program with the College Reading and Learning Association. This certification in the field of tutorial education will assist the enhancement of the tutoring profession.

Acknowledgments

The following acknowledgments are to state for the record that any problems with this work are the sole responsibility of this author, and not the responsibility of the following family and friends that have worked so hard to see this work come to fruition.

First and foremost I would like to thank my ancestors, for without their blessing this effort could not go forward. I give special thanks and love to my wife, Harveyette, for her patience, understanding and love for over thirty-one years, particularly the last five years. I also give thanks to my son, N'Gai, for never failing to make me laugh when the going got tough; to my daughter, Anika, who believed that her Dad could do no wrong and gave encouragement when I was struggling; and to Elza Minor, my friend for over forty years, who suggested to me that it was time to get my first graduate degree.

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And lastly to my many friends and family members, too numerous to mention, who supported me in my struggles, I am in your debt. Please know that I thank you all for your kindness and support.

Dedication

In memory of my Mother, Lillian Ford Natson Maury.

Mother was the most inspirational figure in my life. During my early childhood years, she instilled in me the notion that I would be an educator and would be in the service of serving young people. It was her vision of me that helped shape my ideas of what education should be, to take a student where he or she might be and proceed to teach from that perspective. I give thanks to the Creator and my Mother.

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Doctoral Dissertation
Charles Russell Natson
Northern California Graduate University

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Introduction

Background of Need for Peer Tutors

To fill the needs of underprepared students, programs classified as college

preparatory since the mid-1800s have served many of the same goals as those

programs that have more recently been labeled academic development, learning

assistance, or developmental studies (Tomlinson, 1989). Webb (1987) tells us that

peer tutoring was a standard practice in schools in the nineteenth century, although

there was little mention of it in educational literature until the 1960s when several

factors popularized it as a practice, particularly in urban areas.

The reasons are many for the evolution of preparatory programs into what

has now become the field of Developmental Education. Tomlinson (1989)

provides several reasons for the change in labeling. Ability rather than

socioeconomic status became a determinant of attendance to college or university.

Also, the student population now admitted to institutions of higher education

reflects a wide range of status in terms of race, ethnic origin, socioeconomic

background, high school grade point average, age, and career objectives. A major

factor in this diversification has been admission policy in response to society's

evolving perception of the role and value of higher education.

Webb (1987) informs us of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of

1965, which provided the impetus for the creation of peer tutoring programs and

practices designed to improve the academic performance of student populations.

This Act can be seen as a response to society's changing attitudes regarding the role

and value of higher education. Webb (1987) emphasizes the importance of peer

help relationships, which come from young people helping each other in many ways

beginning in childhood. Children play together, learn important lessons from each

other about: sharing, communicating, and cooperation. Webb also mentions the

importance of desegregation in increasing interracial understanding through

diverse, structured peer relationships.

Changes in the perception of higher education and the role it plays as stated

in A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform, by the National

Commission on Excellence in Education, triggered a push to upgrade the quality of

American schools at all levels (Markham, 1993). From a financial perspective,

peer tutoring may be seen as a response to personnel and resource limitations.

Statement of Problems and Purpose of the Study

Peer tutoring programs have been incorporated into the regular classroom

environment, the laboratory, and the resource room. Independent tutoring centers

have also been popularized. Webb (1987) informs us that there are numerous

studies that have demonstrated the effectiveness of the peer tutorial relationship.

Also, students in effective programs consistently reached higher levels of academic

achievement than students in conventional learning, or mastery learning situations.

Generally, students can more easily identify with peer tutors than with adult

authority figures. Modeling is an important dimension of peer tutoring. Tutors

often prove more effective, because students believe their effort may result in

achievement equal to a tutor's, while matching a teacher's ability is inconceivable.

Further, by helping others in academic developmental education, tutors reinforce

their own knowledge and skills. This in turn builds the tutors' self-confidence and

self-esteem.

Research has shown that students can benefit from structured in-school helping relationships in which peers assume formal roles as tutors. Peer tutoring can be seen as a result of change in perception of the role and value of higher education. However problems exist with tutors. There is a dearth of literature on the level of proficiency of current peer tutors, and as DePaulo et al., (1989) caution, the effectiveness of peer tutors may be moderated by similarity in age and achievement level of tutors and tutees due to the lack of authority. Willis and Crowder (1994) also express the problem of academic deficiency of tutors.

To further complicate matters, there is no consensus held by educational institutions regarding the benefits of a consistent state-wide and uniform vision that would afford legitimacy to all tutorial programs in the State of California. For instance, at Chabot College in Hayward, California, the tutorial program is funded through general funds. Whereas, other institutions struggle to garner sufficient funds to continue their programs. It is beyond the scope and purpose of this study to evaluate the overall politics and policies that govern economic availability given to tutorial programs.

As we move into the twenty-first century, tutorial programs are not adequately funded. Money for supplies, computers, desks, chairs, tables, and other basic needs have not been available for the tutorial programs. Professionals in the field, will have to play a more active role in advocating the need for additional monies. Tutorial programs that are funded like the one at Chabot College, through general funds, often are taken for granted. Consequently, the funding is often inadequate to meet the ever increasing demand for tutorial assistance college-wide. Needs assessment to increase funding are not required to evaluate an increase of

funding Chabot College's Tutorial Program, because the Program is already a line item on the general funds budget.

Noel (1978) contends that the means to improve programs for student retention depend on the institutions ability to examine itself closely. This is a study that evaluated the skill levels of Chabot's peer tutors, registered in Course T-15 (Tutor Training). Tutors are a key support component to the academic survival for many students, as well as tutorial program enhancement. As suggested by Noel (1978) this investigation partially fulfills that examination, by way of a needs assessment of Chabot College's Tutorial Program. The purpose of this study was focused on the proficiency of peer tutors, in Course T-15, at Chabot College, Hayward California.

Justification and Implications

The relevance society has placed on schooling is related to the connection between education and employment--Employment is the most cited reason for concern about school completion. Academic success is essential to school completion. Peer tutoring, has increased school completion and achievement of the tutors as much as the tutees (Grannis, 1991).

Butler (1991) discusses the ramifications and importance of selecting and training tutors. Chabot College Tutorial Program as an item on the general funds budget, has not made a focused effort to evaluate either the quality of their program, or the skill level of its tutors. The significance of this study is that it empirically evaluated the expertise of the staff working at Chabot's tutorial program. Results revealed a high proficiency among the tutors, and this study will be used to support an application for international certification for the program and

tutors with College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), which sponsors the International Tutor Training Certification Program.

The College Reading and Learning Association is an international organization for professionals who work in developmental education and learning assistance. Recognizing the importance of tutoring and tutors in these areas of education, the organization implemented a professional recognition program for tutors in the Spring of 1989 through a certification process that verifies the extent and quality of training and experience that tutors acquire. In order to receive certification, a program's training methods and curriculum are reviewed by a Tutor Certification Committee of CRLA and must meet the standards set for each level of certification for the amount of training available, the modes of training, and the areas and topics included in the training.

There were seven programs certified in Spring of 1989, which received certification at all three levels: Regular, Advanced, and Master's levels. Since that time, the International Tutor Training Certification Program has filled 776 requests for information and application packets, and 308 programs have been certified as of August, 1997.

This certification enables the program to, in turn, certify individual tutors as they satisfy the training and experience criteria for each level. Regular Certification requires that a tutor complete a minimum of ten hours of specified training and have twenty-five hours of experience. Advanced Certification requires that a tutor complete a minimum of twenty hours of training and fifty hours of experience. The third level, the Master Tutor Certification, requires a minimum of thirty hours of training and seventy-five hours of experience. Certification is also endorsed by the

National Association for Developmental Education and Commission XVI of the

American College Personnel Association.

Just as institutions may or may not fund their tutorial programs as a line

item on their general budgets, institutions have varying perceptions on the benefit

of having a uniform vision of tutoring. This study's efforts were an attempt to

facilitate the development of a uniform vision by evaluating the tutors at Chabot

College, and using the results of this study to move the tutors and the program

toward international certification. This would help the legitimacy of tutors and all

tutorial programs. Tutors and tutorial programs are valuable in supporting the call

for higher educational standards, in response to society's change in perception of

the role and value of education.

When looking at the importance of education tied to employment, the

CRLA Certification levels will be tied to tutor wages, in order to provide incentive

for additional training and experience. This also helps with retention of tutors.

One must also emphasize the transferability of CRLA Tutor Certification to other

certified colleges and universities. In other words, a Level I Certification earned at

one institution would be recognized at another.

<u>Research Questions</u>

The research questions answered by this study were as follows:

1. Is the combination of Tutor Training Course T-15 curriculum, and the Tutor

    Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tool (TESAT), as an educational tool for

    reflection effective in the instruction of tutors?

2. Which are the strongest TESAT strategies of Chabot College's peer tutors, with the use of Tutor Training Course T-15 curriculum, and the Tutor Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tool, as an educational tool for reflection?

3. Which are the weakest TESAT strategies of Chabot College's peer tutors, with the use of Tutor Training Course T-15 curriculum, and the Tutor Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tool, as an educational tool for reflection?

4. Do the tutors at Chabot College who have had the combined Tutor Training Course T-15 curriculum, and the Tutor Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tool, as an educational tool, have the level of proficiency, that would warrant efforts towards obtaining international tutorial program certification with the College Read and Learning Association (CRLA) for the tutors?

Definition of Terms and Operational Definitions

PEER TUTORING is the process by which a competent pupil, with minimal training and with a teacher's guidance, helps one or more students at the same approximate grade level learn a skill or concept.

CROSS-AGE TUTORING is a process where students in higher grade levels work with younger students.

TUTORS are the individuals who help other students learn a skill or concept.

TUTORS are operationalized as an individual registered in Course T-15 at Chabot, and who have been exposed to TESAT.

TRAINING TUTORS is giving these individuals registered in Course T-15 at Chabot College an overview of what tutoring is, its values and goals, what to do during a session, and how to help the tutored students.

EVALUATE THE TUTORS is operationalized by administering the TESAT at the beginning of the T-15 Course, and after seven weeks, administer the TESAT again to check for evidence of progress using a self-reporting instrument.

EVALUATOR is the instructor of Tutor Training Course T-15, taught at Chabot College, Hayward, California. And is operationalized by having the instructor/evaluator do evaluations by rating study participant's who will be doing self-assessment using the same instrument.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations for this study are:

1. The sample population will be limited to the number of students registered in Tutor Training Course T-15, given at Chabot College, Hayward, California.

2. The TESAT was not designed to be measured against a national norm.

3. The TESAT was designed to provide information about a moment in time regarding an individuals' tutorial skill level.

4. There is only one instructor for Course T-15, thus there will only be one evaluator to check the reliability of the study participants self-report ratings.

5. The results of the study participant self-assessment, and the evaluator's rating will determine if effort will be made to obtain international certification for the participants, as well as for Chabot College's Tutorial Program. Tutees must score at the level of two (2) for proficiency, before certification efforts begin.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The change in the perception of the role of and the value of higher education

has been primarily influenced by education's relationship to future employment.

This literature review will discuss the call for higher educational standards to meet

the challenges of today's societies. Following that, the recent changes in

developmental education will be discussed, as well as some new techniques that are

being implemented to improve educational standards. The remaining discussion

will provide an overview of a new model currently in use at City University of New

York City. This literature review will conclude with some discussion specifically

on the recent history of peer tutoring.

A Call for Higher Educational Standards

Changes in the perception of the role of and the value of higher education

generated the release of A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform.

This report was followed by less dramatic reports, sounding similar themes, and

prompting calls for reform based in higher educational standards. Educators in

various disciplines have already begun setting standards. Although all these efforts

attempt to delineate the knowledge and skills students should acquire, the

specificity of curriculum standards varies across subjects (Markham, 1993).

Part of the difficulty in devising standards for student performance has been

deciding who will participate in creating them and how they will be implemented.

Sizer and Roger (1993) state that the standard should not be developed by an

"objective" group of experts. Schools are accountable to all of us, and the development and implementation of standards should be a communal process involving many voices.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) urges parents, educators, representative of higher education and business as well as school boards to participate in deciding what the core values of the school as an educational institution are. Further, districts should solicit input that reflects the racial and ethnic makeup of the community to ensure that cultural diversity is not lost (Education Commission of States, 1992).

Conley (1993) feels this urging would not only reflect the educational goals of different communities, but also emphasize aspects of education generally valued by society at large. Historically, American schools were committed to conducting specified educational processes, not to producing outcome. Emphasis was placed on "seat time" rather than students' actual knowledge (Conley, 1993).

O'Neil (1991) argues that time spent in the classroom and minimum competence as reflected on standardized tests must be replaced with better indicators of students accomplishments.

Conley (1993) says that standards should reflect the minimum expectations society holds for schools and should have both content and process-related components. The content component reflects mastery of the information base of a recognized discipline or body of knowledge. The process component describes an intellectual process consisting of attitudes, behaviors, and skills that may be applied to a wide variety of content in the processing of information.

In an attempt to achieve higher education standards, Conley's perception that education should include process-related components, and Webb's (1987)

thoughts on sharing fit well with peer tutoring, which consists of students teaching other students, at the same or different ages. Tutoring can be done on a one-to-one basis, or one tutor may work with two or three students simultaneously. Tutoring by peers is a cooperative undertaking in which students share, not only the answers, but the process used to reach answers. Though there is continued dialogue on setting standards in various disciplines of education, there is a dearth of literature in regards to the standards for tutors, who are key stakeholders in developmental education programs.

Changes in Developmental Education

In order to respond to demands for access, assessment and accountability for higher standards, at every level of education, institutions are focusing increasingly on the enhancement of academic support services (Prager, 1991). These support services, or learning centers, include peer tutoring as key stakeholder in the process of responding to the demand for higher educational standards in line with the changing perception of the role and value of higher education in societies.

The changes in academic developmental education are not being addressed at just the post-secondary education level. Gannis (1991) relates that the President's National Education Goals for the year 2000 include: (a) increasing the percentage of students graduating from high school to at least 90 percent, and as well as the percentage of dropouts who return later to complete a high school degree or its equivalent to 75 percent; and (b) closing the gap in high school graduation rates between American students from minority backgrounds and their non-minority counterparts. During the last decade, hundreds of dropout prevention and recovery programs have been initiated, and as a result, the number of students

requiring academic developmental education at the post secondary education level,

is increasing (Tomlinson, 1989).

The evolution of academic assistance programs can be seen as a progression

from a service for a small segment of the total population through the use of limited

techniques and limited funds, to a service for a broad span of the nation's

population by means of a more cohesive and comprehensive effort supported by

regularly budgeted programs. Expenditures for the administration of

developmental programs across institutions and states range from six million

dollars to twelve million dollars per university. Approximately ninety percent of all

institutions of higher education provide some developmental service. At least thirty

percent of the national population enrolled in higher education is involved in some

aspect of these services. Separate departments or divisions for developmental

studies or learning centers exists in thirty-three percent of America's post secondary

institutions (Tomlinson, 1989). At least four different types of program categories

have evolved: college campus tutorial/remedial programs , college outreach

programs, campus assistance centers, and off-campus instruction. Peer tutoring is a

type of support that may be involved in all four different types of program

categories.

Though society's perception of education may have changed due to the

importance education has on future employment, there are points of dissention.

Three of the conflicts are: (1) the desire to maintain high standards versus cost

efficiency, (2) the belief that developmental courses should be conducted

exclusively at the two-year community college level, as opposed to the four year

level, and (3) that developmental programs dilute academic program. Nevertheless,

there are doctoral programs in developmental education, and positive results have

been reported in evaluations of services at two-year, four-year, and university levels

for developmental education. Post secondary developmental programs have helped

to fulfill the mission of providing equal educational opportunity in a democratic

society (Tomlinson, 1989).

In addition to the four different types of program categories: college

campus tutorial/remedial programs, college outreach programs, campus assistance

centers, and off-campus instruction, where peer tutors may be used as support staff;

the campus assistance centers, or learning centers, have three models. The first

model is the learning resource center based program, which has two main

emphases. The provision of access to the materials of traditional research,

reference, and, bibliographic support to students and faculty, and the use of non-

print media to bolster learning, especially through in-house and distance telecourse

instruction. There is a third, which is developmental and literacy education,

especially through computer-assisted instruction and tutorial support which is less

widespread (Raufman et al., 1990).

The second model of learning centers, or assisted learning centers is the

discipline-based support centers. The vast majority of American colleges and

universities provide some sort of structured learning assistance to their students.

Though the literature suggests that the discipline-oriented academic support model

is found more often at senior institutions, specialized academic support structures

exist at some two-year colleges as well. An examples of a discipline-based support

center can be seen in Algebra and Calculus at De Anza College. The Life Science

Learning Center at Los Angeles Valley college, also provides a more

comprehensive learning assistance environment in which learning requirements can

be diagnosed and individual needs provided for at remedial, reinforcement and enrichment levels (Samuels, 1984).

The third model of learning centers is the stand-alone learning centers. These stand-alone centers are independent or quasi-independent units which are not an extension of other institutional functions such as libraries, or student services programs. At two-year colleges, stand-alone centers tend to focus primarily, but not exclusively upon the remedial and developmental needs of that part of an open-access population most deficient in basic study skills (Prager, 1991).

Learning centers are being used on two- and four-year campuses alike to test students at entry, to provide learning assistance supplementary to the classroom, and to retest students to demonstrate their acquisition of basic skills. The current emphasis on documenting institutional outcomes; however, requires that colleges document the acquisition of higher order skills. Learning centers need to reconfigure from a predominantly remedial mode, which only serves the underprepared, to a more comprehensive center which would serve all students (Prager, 1991).

There are numerous attempts to redesign curriculum so that learners can be actively involved in constructing meaning. As Conley (1993) suggests, students must be actively involved in constructing meaning. They simply do not retain information for which there is no clear structure or reason. Learning must have utility, rather than having the structure determined solely by the teacher (or the textbook publishing company).

The research on peer tutoring has revealed how students more easily identify with peer tutors. That relationship provides an important dimension in tutorial efficiency. These findings support the sharing nature conveyed by Webb (

1987), and process-related component discussed by Conley(1993). The

interactiveness aspect inherent in a tutor and tutee relationship is what Paulo Frier

describes in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1981) with regards to literacy.

There is a resurgence in attempts to individualize instruction, although it

might be more accurate to say personalize instruction. The emphasis in this

technique is on the student developing meaningful learning experiences in

partnership with others. Learning can be achieved by helping others, tutoring,

providing advice, and/or by studying new material independently. Team learning is

personal and interactive. It is developed in relation to goals. It has utility, and

leads to demonstrable outcomes (Newmann, 1991).

A determining factor for use of the TESAT (See Appendix B) in this study

is that it is an assessment of the tutoring skill at Chabot College, and not an

evaluation. Assessment technique is becoming an integral part of the

teaching/learning process as opposed to evaluation, which stands apart from it.

Assessment provides larger amounts of feedback to students, allowing them to

improve their performance continuously, rather than simply judging their

performance at some arbitrary ending point (Wiggins, 1991).

Multi-age groupings of varying combinations, a technique in which learners

can proceed at developmentally appropriate paces and serve as tutors for one

another, are proliferating. The idea that learning can occur only within four walls

when twenty-five young people interact with one teacher is rapidly being replaced

with models in which varying combinations of adults and children interact both

inside and outside of school (Ratzki and Fisher, 1989/1990). This is part of the

restructuring of education toward meeting the goals for higher standards in

education, and adjusting to the change in society's of the perception of the role and

value of higher education.

<div align="center">Interactive Technique</div>

Consistent with Conley's (1993) process-related thoughts, peer tutoring falls

under the educational technique of active learning. Consistently, research has

shown that traditional lecture methods, in which the instructors talk and the

students listen, continue to be the dominant format in today's classrooms. Many

instructors have asserted that all learning is inherently active and that students are

active while listening to formal presentations in the classroom (Bonwell and Eison,

1991). Checking and Gamson (1987) suggest, after a review of research literature,

that students must do more than just listen. They must read, write, discuss, or be

engaged in problem solving. It is important to be actively involved. Students must

engage in such higher-order thinking tasks, as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Thus, it was proposed that strategies promoting active learning be defined as

instructional activities involving students doing things and thinking about what they

are doing.

The classroom use of these techniques has been shown to be vital because

of their powerful impact on students' learning. Several studies have shown that

students prefer strategies promoting active learning to traditional lectures for

developing skills in thinking and writing. Cognitive research has revealed the

same directional difference between active learning and traditional lecturing

(Bonwell and Eison, 1991).

A modification of traditional lecturing styles incorporates active learning by

allowing students to consolidate their Notes by pausing three times for two minutes

each during a lecture (Penn, 1984; Ruhl, Hughes, and Schloss, 1987). Another way to incorporate active learning is to insert demonstrations, or encourage ungraded writing exercises followed by class discussion. Another alternative to traditional learning is to lecture for a time, followed by a period in which the students are allowed to write what they recall of the lecture for five minutes. Then the students would form small groups for clarification and elaboration of materials. McKeachie et al., (1986) inform us that discussion is preferable to lecture, because students are able to apply information.

Other active learning pedagogies include: cooperative learning, debates, drama, role playing, simulation, and peer tutoring, as well as problem-solving models. However, there are barriers associated with the use of active learning which include class time; a possible increase in preparation time; the potential difficulty of using active learning in large classes; and a lack of materials, equipment, or resources.

A New Model at City University of New York

Gartner (1993) informs us that research on peer tutoring indicates that the intervention is relatively effective in improving both tutees' and tutors' academic and social development. Literature reveals that the gains for tutors often outdistance those of the students receiving help. This results from reworking what they know in order to make it understandable to the tutees. This learning through teaching is a significant mechanism, and it poses an opportunity to reformulate and extend the use of peer tutoring.

The Peer Research Laboratory at City University of New York has been designing a new model that incorporates the important tutorial aspect of learning.

They are trying to build on this, and give all students the opportunity to be a tutor.

Their model is different, in that rather than using only proficient students as tutors,

they attempt to make the tutoring process a central instructional strategy, which is

fully integrated into everyday classroom work. This is in contrast to viewing

tutoring as peripheral and remedial.

One way that this model is being implemented is by having students in

higher grades tutor students in lower grades. As the lower grade students advance a

grade, they teach their junior schoolmates.

Some of the results from this new model are: the critical importance of

youth having the opportunity to participate in meaningful roles such as youth-

helping youth. this is a salient factor in preventing social problems, including

substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and delinquency. Gartner (1993) expressed the

need to expand the opportunities for all students to experience the helping role.

The four key factors in the new model include:

1. Calls for in-depth preparation and training of peer tutors and ongoing reflection
    on the tutoring process;

2. Removes the negativity usually associated with receiving help, since all
    students participate in giving and receiving help;

3. Sees being a tutee as preparation for becoming a tutor;

4. Leads to the creation of student-centered, peer-focused schools (Gartner,
    1992).

This proposed study will focus on the first key factor in this new model, by

using both the Tutor Training Course T-15 curriculum, taught at Chabot College,

Hayward, California, and the TESAT as an educational tool for reflection.

A Recent History of Peer Tutoring

Since peer tutoring is a type of support/intervention that may be involved in all four different types of developmental education program categories, as well as the three models of learning centers, it is important to review what has happened with these key stakeholders in developmental education. The history of tutoring in the California Community Colleges goes back to the early 1960's. However, the first conference did not take place until May of 1975. It was hosted by Ventura College, Ventura, California. The National Association for Tutorial Services contributed a paper describing El Camino College's Tutorial Program at that conference. Later, the Association of California Community Colleges Tutorials and Learning Assistance Organizations came into existence. Further, the landmark work of Rounds (1976), led to the expansion of the California Community Colleges, Tutorial Association (CCCTA) to include Learning Assistance. Rounds was also the leading advocate for the change in regulations which allowed community college students to receive credit for tutoring.

As professionals in Education seek higher educational standards, the specificity of curriculum standards still varies across subjects (Markham, 1993). In a like manner, educational institutions do not have a consistent perspective toward the benefits of a uniform vision of tutoring, which would afford legitimacy to all tutorial programs. The proposed study is viewed as an effort towards seeking a uniformed vision about tutoring, and thereby help legitimize tutors, and tutorial programs. Tutors and tutorial programs are valuable in supporting the call for higher educational standards in response to society's change in its perception of the role and value of education.

Peer Tutoring With Adult Literacy

Though peer tutoring may have it roots in early childhood sharing patterns (Webb, 1987), the student population at Chabot College, Hayward, California, is made up primarily young adults. Thus, it is appropriate to discuss peer tutoring with regards to adults. Adult educators have been slow to adopt the participatory peer tutoring approach. In spite of the demand generated by shrinking resources and the demonstrated success that has been achieved with the use of peer tutoring, the tendency has been to stick instead to the more traditional instructor to student approach to instruction. However, support for more participatory approaches is growing (Imel, Kerka, and Pritz, 1994). Like many small group learning approaches, peer tutoring can be used to sustain a more participatory learning environment. Part of the reluctance to adopt peer tutoring methods may be attributed to a lack of information about using this strategy in adult settings.

A number of terms, including partner learning (Dueck, 1993) and peer teaching (Whitman, 1988), have been used to describe the concept of peer tutoring. In the adult education literature, the term peer is sometimes used to describe an adult working with a learner (McLachlan, 1990; Pearpoint and Forest, 1990) as opposed to learners working together as peers.

Two types of peer tutoring are found in adult literacy and basic adult education. The first is 'near peer' in which one learner is more advanced than the other, and the second type is 'co-peer' in which the learners are fairly well matched in skill level (Whitman, 1988). Examples of 'near peer' pairings include more academically capable learners working with those experiencing difficulty. When 'co-peers' are paired, learners are able to work together as equals, and gain a better understanding of the materials by learning from each other. Although most peer

tutoring is done with pairs of learners, sometimes having learners work in groups of

three better suits the needs of both the learners and the learning task (Dueck, 1993).

Peer tutoring can enhance learning by enabling learners to take

responsibility for reviewing, organizing, and consolidating existing knowledge and

material, as well as reviewing their understanding of its basic structure; filling in

the gaps, finding additional meanings, and reformulating their knowledge into new

conceptual frameworks (Dueck, 1993); Whitman, 1988). In either 'co-peer' or

'near peer' situations, both learners are likely to understand the material better by

applying it in the peer tutorial setting.

For example, Goldgarb (1992) describes an adult literacy program in

Canada in which peer tutoring was adopted as a practical solution to helping the

teacher deal with the large size of the class. However, both the teacher and the

learners quickly realized that there were other educational benefits to be derived

from this adult learning approach. Although some learners wanted a more

traditional education with the teacher in front of the class, it was found that they

learned more effectively, "...from their common experiences, by identifying their

own learning needs, taking ownership of their own learning, and taking an active

role in evaluation (Goldgarb, 1992, p. 132)".

Adult literacy programs that are already using collaborative, and

participatory methods will find peer tutoring to be an extension of their overall

approach. Essentially, peer tutoring changes the nature of the teaching/learning

transaction. Using the peer tutoring approach in basic adult education and in

literacy education has much to recommend it. Like any other method, it must be

used appropriately and learners must be prepared to accept more responsibility in

their role of learner.

Peer tutoring can also benefit adult learners by helping them to:

*   reach the goal of self-determination as well as develop a tolerance for

    uncertainty and conflict

*   move away from dependence on professional authority toward a belief in their

    own ability to create knowledge

*   polish their communication skills and social interactive skills

*   persist in the learning situation because of bonds developed with other learners

*   increase both their motivation to learn, and to maintain their self-esteem

    (Dueck, 1993; Goldgarb, 1992; Randels, Cadrse, and Lease, 1992; Schneider,

    1989; Whitman, 1988).

<u>Use of Small Groups in Adult Education</u>

A one-on-one, individualized approach to instruction has predominated in

adult literacy and basic education, traditionally (Bingham, et al., 1990; Roskos,

1990). Ennis (1990) says this approach has been supported by the assumption that,

"...confidentiality was a treasured principle...and it implicitly helped sustain the

notion that literacy is a private matter, a process of individuals developing skills for

their own personal use (p. 105)." Recently, the use of groups has been advocated as

an effective approach for delivering adult literacy and basic education, because a

number of factors have converged to stimulate the use of small groups in adult

literacy and basic education. A desire to provide a learning environment that is

more learner centered and collaborative has been a major catalyst for the use of

small groups. Advocates of this approach also suggest that small groups more

accurately reflect the contexts in which adults generally use literacy skills. Use of

this approach acknowledges that literacy is a social process (Bingham, et al., 1990;

Ennis, 1990), and reaffirms Webb's (1987) idea of peer helping relationships beginning in early childhood with sharing and collaboration.

Another set of factors promoting the use of small groups is related to the increased use of linguistic experience or whole language as instructional approaches in adult literacy education and in basic education. These approaches use both written and oral language for, "...personally meaningful purposes while learning through active processes in the social community of the classroom, (Roskos, 1990, p. 6)". They use small groups to incorporate personal experiences into adult literacy development.

Supporters of the small group approach do not suggest that it supplants other approaches; rather, they suggest that it be used in combination with one-on-one and/or large group instruction (Bingham, et al., 1990; Ennis and Davison 1989; Garber-Katz and Watson, 1990).

Whether one is speaking of collaborative efforts in learning, small groups, or peer tutoring in adult literacy, much of the problem stems from the fact that there is no one definition of literacy. Currently literacy seems to be equated with functional literacy, but does this mean illiterates can't function well enough to hold any job, or does it simply imply that they are unable to cope with particularly difficult jobs? There are almost as many definitions of functional illiteracy as there are adult illiterates, because it is a personal issue. The common thread is the desire to gain control of their lives (Metz, 1989).

Adult Literacy and Limited English Proficiency

As the nation has become aware of the scope of adult literacy and its tremendous cost, literacy programs have proliferated. New populations of language