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Exploring the Dynamics of Cross-Cultural Collaboration in Writing Classrooms

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Exploring the Dynamics of Cross-Cultural Collaboration in Writing Classrooms

Allaei, Sara Kurtz ; Connor, Ulla, 1948-

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As teachers of writing have adopted the idea that writing should be taught as a process ,from the generation of ideas to the fine-tuning of the final editing, much interest has been focused on the use of peer collaboration at various stages of the writing process, particularly in guiding students in responding to the writing of peers. Bruffee ("'Conversation'"), an early advocate of the use of peer collaboration, argues that "collaborative learning provides the kind of social context .... in which normal discourse occurs: a community of knowledgeable peers". In this context, "students can practice and master the normal discourse exercised in established communities in the academic world and in business , government and the professions" (644). Of course, students are not yet members of these established knowledge communities, but Gere argues that they can negotiate their way toward acceptable discourse: many of the comments they make as they respond to each other's writing begin with the phrase, "I don't know..." or "I don't think...". Student writers comment on and question their own work: they ask, "Does this example make sense here?", or "I'm trying to show why Joe is so alienated from his family. Does this idea come trough clearly?" (70)

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