

Integrating Reading and Writing as a Strategy to Increase Students' Literacies in One of the Formerly Disadvantaged Universities in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The paper aims to validate and explore, through action research, whether peer assessment tasks entailing integration of reading and writing lead to improvement of literacy gaps and possible increased learning. The research adopted a quantitative paradigm and a mini survey design that tested the hypothesis whether the year 2012 SWP (Personal Growth and Development) 210 students' literacies (through integrating writing and reading) in one of the formerly disadvantaged universities can be improved through classroom peer assessments tasks. A questionnaire was used as a research instrument to capture the perceptions, attitudes and the thinking of 24 students on whether integrating writing with reading helps bridge their literacy gaps. Findings indicate that peer assessment tasks increase reading, revision and increased learning, the tasks help bridge or close learners' literacy gaps, and facilitates integration of reading and writing to enhance learning and possibly increase learners' throughputs. The study, therefore, validated the hypothesis that the year 2012 SWP 210 students' literacies can be improved through classroom peer assessments tasks that integrates reading and writing. The researcher calls on all the teachers in the studied university to adopt action research and use peer assessments of students to improve literacy gaps and increase their learning, and urges the administration of the studied university to enforce that all the lecturers take a postgraduate diploma in higher education and training (PGDHET) to equip themselves with action research skills.