Improving computer skills of socially disadvantaged adolescents: same-age versus cross-age tutoring

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In a voluntary tutor-based training program, socially disadvantaged adolescents acquired basic computer skills. Two training groups were compared: one group was instructed by adolescents, the other by adults. Both groups achieved comparable results in a final test. The tutees' learning results did not differ with respect to their initial knowledge, gender, school type, or socioeconomic status, nor did these factors interact with the training group. We identified a significant interaction between the tutees' immigration status and training group. These results are interpreted on the basis of (1) the tutees' attitudes towards adolescent and adult teachers, and (2) the instructional styles of adolescent and adult tutors. Finally, the adolescents' self-esteem increased throughout the program.

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