

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

<http://www.iasce.net>

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Manchester Conference: A Big Success

The international conference on *Co-operative Learning and Responsible Citizenship in the 21st Century* was held in Manchester, England from 20-23 June, 2002, jointly sponsored by the Co-operative College and the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (IASCE). From all accounts, the conference was a big success. What was particularly exciting was the coming together of people from a wide range of backgrounds who had been working toward common ends but had previously been only vaguely, if at all, aware of what the others were doing.

Conference participants were welcomed by Mervyn Wilson, Co-operative College principal, and Lynda Baloché, IASCE co-president. Mervyn emphasized the inextricable link between building successful co-operative businesses and work to promote co-operative learning: "Co-operative businesses are based on a set of values that emphasize democracy and fairness — values that are also the basis of active citizenship. If democratic renewal is to take place we need to ensure that young people learn the skills and processes of co-operation. That is why co-operative learning is important."

In her welcome, Lynda noted that, "This conference and our collaboration with the Co-operative College is an important opportunity for IASCE to extend our international network, share our expertise about the value and use of cooperation in schools, and develop new perspectives about the Co-operative Movement and democratic citizenship."

Terry Piggott, Director of Education in nearby Rochdale, and Michele Sutton, Principal and Chief Executive of Hopwood Hall College, also addressed the opening session, explaining the UK education system to delegates from nearly 20 countries — including Czech Republic, Cyprus, Korea, Latvia, Lebanon, Singapore, Spain, and the US.

Two other plenary sessions were held. In Friday evening's plenary, Ian MacPherson of Canada's Victoria Institute for Co-operative Studies presented a historical overview of the co-operative movement, former IASCE president Neil Davidson did the same for the IASCE, and Cheryl Turner, a development officer at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (UK), examined the contemporary need to develop citizenship skills.

Saturday's plenary, chaired by the Chief Executive of the Co-operative Union, Pauline Green, featured presentations by Elizabeth Cohen of Stanford University and Stephen Yeo, Chair of the Board of Management at the Co-operative College. Elizabeth outlined the role that cooperative learning could play in healing divisions and bringing children of different backgrounds and abilities together. She said that cooperative learning was a challenging method of teaching but told delegates, "Only through travelling the road together will we be able to shape citizens who are able to function in the new, challenging and pluralistic society."

Stephen examined the concept of citizenship, high on the agenda of schools, and asked what the Co-operative Movement could add to that agenda. He noted that where citizenship had historically tended to focus on the individual, the Co-operative Movement was about the collective. Citizenship was political, while co-operation could add the economic to the political, to create the social.

Much of the conference was devoted to more than 100 parallel sessions in which presenters shared their experience in promoting cooperation inside and out of the classroom. The Friday, 21 June sessions focussed on research; the sessions on Saturday and Sunday, 22-23 June, focused more specifically on application of cooperative principles in different contexts. The complete list of sessions, with program descriptions, is available at the IASCE website: www.iasce.net.

Of course, no IASCE conference is complete without some fun and games, and this conference was particularly noteworthy. Dynamix (www.seriousfun.demon.co.uk), an organization whose goal is having "serious fun," made sure we kept moving, with fun that included cooperative parachute games, drumming, singing, and dancing to an Irish folk music band. Adding to the both the fun and the opportunities for networking was the conference facility. Participants shared meals (and some nice fair-trade, organic wine) and many tea breaks. The brightly decorated main conference hall seemed to pulsate with networking opportunities--including a jargon buster wall for asking about or defining terms, a matchmaking wall where people posted their pictures and interests in order to connect with like-minded participants, and space for people to display students' work.

In summary, the approximately 150 participants came away from the conference a bit weary but full of excitement about what is being done and what can be done to promote cooperation in schools and beyond. IASCE benefited from the conference by reaching out to new people and by reconnecting with old friends. Tentative plans are for the next IASCE conference to be held in Singapore in 2004. Watch the IASCE website for details as they unfold.

Parts of this report are courtesy of Co-op News, July 6th 2002 (www.co-op.ac.uk)



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collaboration operates through a process in which the successful intellectual achievements of one person arouse the intellectual passions and enthusiasms of others.

Alexander von Humboldt, naturalist and explorer of the 18th and 19th centuries

IASCE Welcomes New Board Members and Thanks Outgoing Members

Prior to the Manchester conference, a call went out for nominations to the IASCE Executive Board. At the Board meeting held immediately after the Manchester conference, the following changes were made to the IASCE Board:

1. Joining the Board are Giorgio Chiari of University of Trento, Trento, Italy; Ghazi Ghaith of American University of Beirut, Lebanon; and Pavla Polechova of Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic. Below are short bios of our new Board members.
2. Mark Brubacher and Angela O'Donnell are leaving the Board. Mark was the key organizer of our 1999 Toronto conference, as well as the person who taught many of us how to apply the Open Space concept. Angela has been a leader in conducting and disseminating research on cooperative learning. A recent example of her work can be seen in this issue of the IASCE Newsletter.

Meet the New IASCE Executive Board Members

Ghazi M. Ghaith is an associate professor of Education at the American University of Beirut. He teaches graduate and undergraduate courses and conducts regular in-service training in Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East. His professional interests include curriculum development and material writing, and his research focuses on the applications of cooperative learning in language teaching and teacher education.

Ghazi has served on the High Committee for Curriculum Development of the Lebanese National Center for Educational Research and Developed (NCERD) and he coordinated the work of several committees of authors that developed the English language national textbooks. He has conducted dozens of cooperative learning workshops for teachers all over Lebanon and Saudi Arabia and was instrumental in introducing cooperative learning as an instructional framework in several schools and educational settings.

Ghazi has researched and applied cooperative learning in his own teaching. His recent publications have appeared in *System*, *Foreign Language Annals*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Language Problems and Language Planning*, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *Journal of Language and Identity in Education*, *TESL Reporter*, *English Teaching Forum*, and in other TEFL and Applied Linguistics journals.

Giorgio Chiari is a professor of Sociology, University of Trento, Italy. He coordinates in-service teacher education in cooperative learning in the northern provinces of Italy, has authored and co-authored many articles and books on education, and recently submitted a proposal to the educational authority of Trento province for a project to train facilitators and teachers in cooperative learning.

Since 1995, Giorgio has jointly directed a research project on *Groups and Cooperative Learning* for the introduction in Italy of cooperative learning methodology, along with Robert Slavin, Johns Hopkins University; Yael and Shlomo Sharan, University of Tel Aviv; Jerome Freiberg, University of Houston; and David and Roger Johnson, University of Minnesota.

Since 1998, Giorgio has been president of the Scientific Committee of Didactic Research at University of Trento, and since 1999, he has been building an Internet site "CIRCLE" for consulting materials on cooperative learning and a distance learning site "ONCLE" (On-line Cooperative Learning Education) for teacher development via the distance mode. (See the next IASCE Newsletter for details.)

Pavla Polechova is an analyst with the Headquarters of the Czech School Inspection and with Charles University, Prague. Since 1999, Pavla has been an International Coordinator of Project Socrates / Comenius 2.1, INCLUSIVE - INTERPERSONAL CLUES FOR UNDERSTANDING IN SCHOOLS WITH INTERCULTURALLY VALID EDUCATION. This project, supported by the British Council, Prague and the Czech Ministry of Education, is institutionally based at Charles University, Faculty of Education. Its partners are Blaagaard Statsseminarium in Copenhagen (Denmark), Nottingham Trent University (United Kingdom), and Universitat de Barcelona (Spain). In the Czech Republic, the inputs of the project include demonstrations of cooperatively structured lessons with pupils of ages 8 to 17 in schools involved in the project. Internationally, the outputs of the project now include cooperatively structured lessons as examples of good inclusive practice, outlined and tested by Czech, British, Spanish, and Danish teachers.

Pavla has also been Country Coordinator of Project Socrates / Comenius 2.1, Equality in Education: Teaching for cultural and ethnic diversity in Europe. This project's main output was a week-long course for educators across Europe (July 8th - 13th 2002) and Pavla's responsibility was to present cooperative learning as a strategy for promoting maximum inclusion.

Pavla teaches cooperative learning as an optional course in initial teacher training at the Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague. In addition to introducing pre-service teachers to cooperative learning, since 1994, Pavla has been running in-service training workshops of various lengths on cooperative learning across the Czech Republic.

Special Issue of *Theory Into Practice*

IASCE Executive Board member Angela O'Donnell was recently guest editor for a special issue of the journal *Theory Into Practice* devoted to the theme of "Promoting Thinking through Peer Learning". Here is information on the articles in the issues. At the bottom is information on a special offer for IASCE members who wish to purchase this issue and an earlier one on cooperative learning.

De Lisi, R. (2002). From marbles to instant messenger? The implications of Piaget's ideas about peer learning. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 5-12. [delisi@rci.rutgers.edu]

Piaget's theory is properly associated with educational practices that encourage students' active participation in the teaching-learning process. This paper describes some of Piaget's ideas about peer relationships. Professional educators might find these ideas useful for classroom applications. Any educational practice, including peer learning, should be systematically examined and evaluated. The main purpose of this paper is to provide a framework for such an evaluation using Piaget's theory as a basis. After describing two important goals of peer learning, the point is made that teachers need to be mindful of the socio-moral context in which peer learning occurs. Teachers also need to consider the impact of peer learning on students' thoughts and feelings about school work and classmates. Finally, toward the end of the paper peer interactions and peer learning using modern technology are discussed.

Webb, N. M., Farivar, S. H., & Mastergeorge, A. M. (2002). Productive helping in collaborative groups. *Theory Into Practice, 41*(1), 13-20. [webb@ucla.edu]

The past 20 years has seen a tremendous increase in the use of peer-directed small group work to give students an opportunity to learn from each other. Students can learn from each other in many ways, for example, by giving and receiving help, by recognizing and resolving contradictions between their own and other students' perspectives, and by internalizing problem-solving processes and strategies that emerge during group work. This paper focuses on the mechanism of helping behavior, specifically the exchanging of explanations about the content being learned. We describe several conditions that must be satisfied for help given to be effective, and we describe the responsibilities of the help-seeker, the help-giver, and the teacher to make helping productive for learning.

Our examples are drawn from a study of a semester-long program of peer learning in middle school mathematics classrooms. The cooperative learning program was conducted in six 7th-grade classes for three four-week phases spread out over the course of the semester, with each unit corresponding to a curriculum unit (decimals, fractions, percents). Prior to each phase, classes participated in activities designed to help students work effectively in small groups. Although students were given instruction and practice in developing communications and helping skills, their group work was fairly unstructured. At the beginning of each class period, the teacher introduced the whole class to the day's material and solved a few example problems with the class. The teacher then assigned problems for students to solve in small, heterogeneous groups. Students were reminded to work together and help each other, to make sure that they agreed on their answers, and to consult each other before asking the teacher for help. Groups were tape recorded as they worked and were tested on the material (individual test) several weeks later.

Donovan, B. (2002). An illustration of theory in search of practice. *Theory Into Practice, 41*(1), 21-25. [donovanb@tcd.ie]

This paper is written from the perspective of a classroom teacher in a secondary, vocational (ages 13-17) school in Dublin, Ireland. The school is located in an inner-city area with significant amounts of social disadvantage and all of the educational consequences that such an environment implies. The paper will briefly describe the social area in which the school is located, the situation within the school and classrooms that militate against learning taking place, and then explores how a theory of peer learning was used to address the problems. More specifically, the effort made, influenced by peer learning and other educational theories, will be placed in the context of seeking to extend the literacy skills of first year students.

The goal of the paper is to examine how theory can contribute to solving problems of practice in the school, and do so in such a way as to help motivate all students to become engaged learners. The first section will describe the social circumstances in which this particular school exists and then look at problems experienced with the students and the goals of instruction within the school. The next section will describe one teacher's efforts at working with students as a group, encouraging all students to work together on issues of perceived relevance to their lives as students. While looking at literacy extension within the school and democracy as a peer-orientated device, this section will offer hope that students can work together discussing such issues, and offer constructive suggestions for the entire school. Finally, the conclusion will look at the theory that provided the path the teacher was looking to explore. The conclusion will show that an effort was made in which students did engage, but that more theory-informed practice is needed.

Palincsar, A. M., & Herrenkohl, L. R. (2002). Designing collaborative learning contexts. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 26-32. [annemari@umich.edu]

As this special issue entitled, *Promoting Thinking through Peer Learning* attests, the social aspects of learning command considerable attention in contemporary discussions of schooling. Consistent with the emergence of social constructivist learning theories, concomitant with educational reform efforts that aspire to shape classrooms as learning communities, and spurred on by the design of new technologies that lend themselves to collaborations within and across contexts, there has been a burgeoning of interest in the role that interactions with others play in academic engagement and learning. Despite this enthusiasm, orchestrating productive peer learning remains an enormously complex undertaking. In this article, we summarize lessons learned across two programs of research, each of which featured peer collaboration for the purpose of promoting advanced literacies, including text comprehension and scientific reasoning.

King, A. (2002). Structuring peer interaction to promote high-level cognitive processing. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 33-39. [aking@csusm.edu]

High level cognitive processing involves making inferences, drawing conclusions, synthesizing ideas, generating hypotheses, comparing and contrasting, finding and articulating problems, analyzing and evaluating alternatives, monitoring thinking, and the like. The focus of this article is on the kind of peer learning that demands high-level cognitive processing. Peer learning tasks that require critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making can be challenging for both teacher and students. However, there are ways to structure peer learning so as to ensure that learners engage in high level cognitive processing.

van Boxtel, C., van der Linden, J., & Roelofs, E. (2002). Collaborative concept-mapping: Provoking and supporting meaningful discourse. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 40-46. [C.vanBoxtel@fss.uu.nl]

In this article we discuss the potential of collaborative concept-mapping tasks. In our research, we used a concept-mapping task in three experimental studies. Participants in the studies were 15 to 16 years old students from physics classes in intermediate general secondary education. The students collaborated in pairs on a concept-mapping task that functioned as the introduction to a new course about electricity. In each study we manipulated the task design and compared the student interaction that emerged in the different task conditions. In all studies, we videotaped and transcribed the student interactions and analyzed the transcripts.

We concluded that concept-mapping, as a *collaborative* learning activity, is successful in provoking and supporting a student discourse that contributes to the appropriation of physics concepts. Students in the three studies in which we used concept mapping as a group task showed significant learning gains. It appeared that the learning outcomes were related to the quality of the student interaction. The more talk about physics concepts and the more elaborative that talk, the higher the learning outcomes. We present our experiences with the concept-mapping tasks that we used in our research. We try to identify the features of the concept-mapping task make the task successful in provoking and supporting a productive student discourse.

Hoffman, J. (2002). Flexible grouping strategies in the multiage classroom. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 47-52. [johoffman@eclipse.net]

In a multiage classroom, children of different ages and ability levels are taught together without division into grade designations. The age range of the students is commonly three or more years. Curriculum and teaching practices are such that children can approach tasks according to their developmental levels. Some grade-specific teaching may occur because of state mandated curricula and testing, but cross-grade teaching is the norm. In this kind of educational setting, frequent instructional opportunities for peer learning are planned. The children often work in collaborative small groups that are teacher or student-led. Multiage teachers understand the important role that social interaction and collaborative learning plays in the classroom. In fact, due to the broad range in ages and abilities, collaborative peer learning contexts are necessary. A variety of arrangements for peer learning are utilized in a multiage classroom depending on the task.

This article will focus on peer learning contexts that typically occur in multiage classrooms. The first part of the article will illustrate some of these flexible configurations and discuss how different perspectives and theories of peer learning are required to account for their intended effects. A classroom example is provided as an illustration for each context discussed. The second half of the article provides a more detailed example as an instructional strategy in one multiage classroom is described wherein the teachers designed a collaborative context for solving word problems in math. Providing a specific example such as this one illustrates how peer learning theories influence decisions in the classroom.

Cooper, S. M. A. (2002). Classroom choices for enabling peer learning. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(1), 53-57. [mcooper@immaculata.edu]

Weekly television schedules attest to the enduring popularity of home remodeling and craft programs among the American public. Viewers watch in fascination to see precision tools transform raw materials into objects of usefulness, beauty, and sometimes even elegance. As many a do-it-yourselfer has found to his/her chagrin, however, outcomes are not guaranteed. The best tools offer their most positive results in the proper supportive structure and under the guidance of those who know their power, and exercise the wisdom and self-discipline to use them within their limitations. The image applies well to the tools of education. This paper looks at one powerful and versatile tool, peer learning, and considers supporting structures and strategies for its optimum application.

Purchase the Winter 2002 (41:1) issue of Theory Into Practice, "Promoting Thinking Through Peer Learning," guest edited by Angela O'Donnell and get the Spring 1999 (38:2) issue, "Building Community Through Cooperative Learning," guest edited by Margarita Calderon and Robert Slavin for \$6.00 (a 50% discount) plus shipping. For ordering information, visit the TIP web site at www.coe.ohio-state.edu/TIP and click on the "Ordering Information" link. And be sure to mention code IASCE702 to receive the discounted price.

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Making Cooperative Learning Work
David W. Johnson, Roger T. Johnson

Comprehensive Approaches to Cooperative Learning
Robert E. Slavin

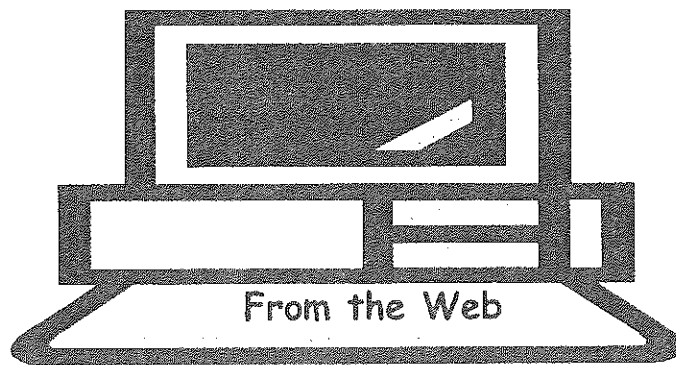
Complex Instruction: Equity in Cooperative Learning Classrooms
Elizabeth G. Cohen, Rachel A. Lotan, Beth A. Scarloss, Adele R. Arellano

Building a Culture of Collaboration Through Hybrid Language Practices
Kris D. Gutierrez, Patricia Baquedano-Lopez, Hector H. Alvarez, Ming Ming Chiu

Teachers Learning Communities for Cooperation in Diverse Settings
Margarita Calderon

A Middle School Venture Into Cooperative Learning: Successes and Dilemmas
Carmen Jemente Stearns

Cooperative Learning in Israel's Jewish and Arab Schools: A Community Approach
Rachel Hertz-Lazarowitz



So much stuff about CL on the Internet and so little time to read it all! As usual, when online articles are sited, an asterisk indicates the abstract was specially created.

1. The 'Fostering the Development of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Co-operative Learning Contexts' project is a three-year project funded by the Quality Education Fund of the government of Hong Kong from September 1999 to August 2000. The project's website (http://www.cityu.edu.hk/elt_ar2hk/index.html) has a good deal of information about the project, including progress reports and newsletters, and about CL generally. Of particular interest may be the small collection of lesson plans and the Teaching Resources page of the site. The principal investigator on the project is Gertrude Tinker Sachs of City University of Hong Kong: engts@cityu.edu.hk.
2. Service Learning offers a great way for cooperative learning groups to link with the communities where they live. One source for publications on service learning is the website of the National Society for Experiential Education (<http://www.nsee.org>).
3. Also on service learning is this article from College English, available online at (<http://www.ncte.org/forums/sles/sles.html>).

Schutz, A., & Gere, A. R. (1998). Service learning and English Studies: Rethinking "public" service. *College English*, 60, 129-149. [argere@umich.edu]

* The authors argue that the problems addressed by students' service-learning projects should be seen not just as situations brought about by individuals to be solved by individuals. Instead, the larger social forces at work also need to be examined and, if possible, addressed. Toward this goal, service learning might best focus less on helping others and more on working with them as equals collaborating for social change.

4. Barbara Millis (Barbara.millis@usafa.af.mil) is editor of the *Journal of Cooperation and Collaboration in College Teaching* (<http://www.newforums.com>). 'Using new technologies to support cooperative learning, collaborative services, and unique resources' is a paper of hers available online at <http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/rmillis3.html>. Millis concludes the paper by saying:

As we have seen, cooperative learning and technology are natural partners. When both technology and the underlying pedagogy are supported by collaborative individuals, the possibilities are limitless. Creative use of technology, resting on all we know about human learning, involves human dimensions of caring, community, and commitment.

5. Technology is making distance learning more attractive and making it easier to include student-student collaboration in distance learning. Another paper by Barbara Millis available online is 'Managing—and motivating!—Distance learning group activities' at <http://www.tltgroup.org/gilbert/millis.htm>. The paper contains concise tips for how cooperative learning can enhance distance education. Millis concludes by reminding her readers that:

No matter how carefully you plan, some things will invariably go wrong. Don't despair: numerous educators have emphasized the value of risk-taking to professional growth. The point is not to give up ("Oh, I tried online group work and it didn't work at all"). Seek help from knowledgeable colleagues and from faculty development centers where you will find books, articles, and professionals who can offer indirect advice or who can observe your online classes.

Remember that the research on deep learning is unequivocal. To reach your intended educational outcomes, you must provide students with opportunities for interactions and for active learning. These should occur in carefully structured, sequenced activities that are frequently assessed. The technology is merely a tool to help implement these techniques.

6. George, P. G. (1999). Using cooperative learning in the college classroom. *The NEA Higher Education Journal*, 15(1), 33-38. <http://www.nea.org/he/heta99/s99p33.pdf> [Email: pggeorge@wpo.nccu.edu]

* Inspired by the unprompted collaboration she witnessed among her students in Thailand, the author decided to conduct a control group study to investigate the impact of cooperative learning on the achievement and attitudes of students at a US university. Participants in the study were 61 undergraduate educational psychology students in two sections of the same course. The scores of the cooperative learning class were higher to a significantly significant degree on measures of both achievement and of affect.

The author concludes:

I am now replacing my professor-centered classroom with a more student-centered one. This shift has not been entirely comfortable for me—I have spent decades on "center stage" in my teaching. But with

this new found evidence, cooperative learning methods are becoming my newest teaching strategies. The Thai students' "homework cartel" helped me to create more effective American college classrooms.

7. Schniedewind, N., & Davidson, E. (2000). Differentiating cooperative learning. *Educational Leadership*, 58(1), <http://www.ascd.org/author/el/2000/september/schniedewind.html>

The authors explain why CL can be more than a teaching method in which everyone learns the same material with higher achieving students helping their lower achieving groupmates understand that material. They present and illustrate ideas for differentiating instruction when CL is used:

- Within a heterogeneous cooperative group, differentiate tasks by complexity and quantity.
- Use high-achieving students' work
- Employ cooperative groups to enhance individualized work
- Plan peer tutoring that challenges tutors and tutees
- Add options for enrichment within cooperative learning
- Design cooperative activities for multiple intelligences
- Vary criteria for success

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is a great resources with 100s of papers and other resources related to cooperative learning: <http://www.eric.ed.gov>. Here are two recent ones based on the same study done in Singapore.

8. Lim, W. L., & Jacobs, G. M. (2001). *An analysis of students' dyadic interaction on a dictogloss task*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 456 649.

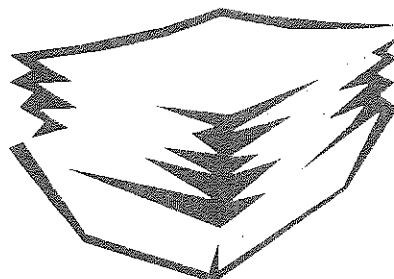
Using a Vygotskian perspective, the researchers investigated the possibility of secondary school second language students providing scaffolding for each other's learning during dyadic verbal interaction on a dictogloss task. Participants in the study were 19 English as a Second Language students from China, Hong Kong, and Korea who were studying at a girl's secondary school in Singapore. The researchers examined students' exchanges for the presence of discourse strategies that occur in the zone of proximal development. To understand the students' socio-affective responses to collaborative work and the effect of these responses on the quality of their dyadic interaction, data were collected via student journals, questionnaires and interviews. Findings suggest that second language students are capable of providing assisted performance, though in ways different from traditional methods of scaffolding. Further, socio-affective factors may also play a key role in the success or failure of scaffolding. The implications of the study make a case for the validity of student-student interaction as a tool for second language learning, while suggesting the need for collaborative skills to be taught and for students to understand the value of cooperation.

9. Lim, W. L., & Jacobs, G. M. (2001). *Detrimental behaviours in collaborative tasks*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 457 685.

Using a Vygotskian perspective, the researchers investigated the interaction of secondary school language learners engaged in a dictogloss task that called for collaborative reconstruction of a text. The investigation focused on the students' behaviors that were detrimental to effective interaction and made it less likely that students would be able to provide scaffolded help for the other member of their dyad. Participants in the study were 19 English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) learners from China and Korea who were studying at a girls' secondary school in Singapore. Data sources were transcripts of one dyad's interaction, student journals, questionnaires, and interviews. A wide range of detrimental behaviors were displayed by the participants in the current study. However, the overall picture

provided by the data suggests that with help from educators, students can become more skilled at assisting one another and more willing to do so. Ideas are put forward as to how educators can supply such help.

From the Journals



Below is our usual potpourri of articles. As usual, an asterisk indicates that the abstract was specially created, rather than appearing with the article in its original form. The articles are in alphabetical order, according to first author.

Belz, J. A. (2002). Social dimensions of telecollaborative foreign language study. *Language Learning and Technology*, 6(1), 60-81. [<http://llt.msu.edu/vol6num1/BELZ/default.html>]

Previous research on network-based foreign language study primarily has focused on: a) the pedagogy of technology in the language curriculum, or b) the linguistic characterization of networked discourse. In this paper, I explore socio-institutional dimensions of German-American telecollaboration and the ways in which they may shape foreign language learning and use. Telecollaborative partnerships represent particularly productive sites for the examination of social aspects of foreign language study since, by definition, they entail tight sociocultural and institutional interface. Within the theoretical framework of social realism (e.g., Carter & Sealey, 2000; Layder, 1993), any human activity is thought to be shaped by both macro- and micro-level sociological features. These include social context and institutional setting, situated activity and individual agency, respectively. In this analysis, I intertwine the socially and institutionally contingent features of language valuation, computer know-how, Internet access, and learning accreditation and the micro-level features of situated classroom interaction and individual psycho-biography in order to provide a rich and multi-faceted characterization of foreign language learning and use on both ends of a German-American telecollaborative partnership.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1997). Safe houses in the contact zone: Coping strategies of African-American students in the academy. *College Composition and Communication*, 48, 173-196.

Republished as Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). Safe houses in the contact zone: Coping strategies of African-American students in the academy. In Austin, K. (Ed.), *Trends & issues in postsecondary English studies* (pp. 23-49). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

[Email: ARABB@cunyvm.cuny.edu]

* This article is older than the others mentioned here, but one that is worthy of belated attention because of its ideas about how groups can alter the power relations of the classroom and of education generally. By "safe houses", the author refers to places - brick and mortar places (in and out of classrooms) or virtual ones, such as a course electronic bulletin board or chatroom - where students can meet "to collaboratively

work through the conflicts and challenges they face" (pp. 46-47). Writing from the perspective of critical pedagogy, Canagarajah (p. 46) urges teachers to "become sensitive to what is typically regarded as disruptive behavior during class time--such as the ubiquitous whispers, secret notes, and digressive comments Brooke [Brooke, R. (1987). *Underlife and writing instruction*. *College Composition and Communication*, 38, 141-153.] reports in his analysis of class underlife--for what they show about incipient oppositional discourses and critical learning strategies."

We teachers have to find ways to gain insight into what is going on in the safe houses so that we can learn from them. Also, what we learn may lead us to change our views about what contributes to learning and what kind of learning is valuable. We should "provide institutional support for nurturing safe houses (without appropriating their subversive edge). But it is important to remember that such sheltering is for the eventual purpose of negotiating with mainstream discourses and institutions for the empowerment of minority students and pluralization of dominant discourses, rather than being an end in itself" (p. 47).

Finkbeiner, C. (2001). One and all in CALL? Learner-moderator-researcher. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 14(3-4), 339-361. [Email: cfink@hrz.uni-kassel.de]

In this article I will present the results of a research project on CALL (computer assisted language learning) and on cooperative learning in CALL, conducted as a democratic joint venture between teachers and students in the university setting over the last couple of years. The project consists of several sub-studies, all of which deal with the three-fold perspective I consider as most crucial for 21st century students: learning, moderating, doing research.

Hart, N. (2002). Intra-group autonomy and authentic materials: A different approach to ELT in Japanese colleges and universities. *System*, 30, 33-46. [Email: hartnicolaas@netscape.net]

Globalization and the information-technology revolution demand that Japanese citizens develop a working knowledge of English to participate in the global communication process. This requires a radical departure from traditional language teaching practices. Japanese students need to develop learner autonomy and the skills to use authentic language texts in a cooperative learning context so that they can develop the intellectual and social skills to use English as an authentic global language among Japanese language speakers.

Students at a women's college in western Japan used an Australian junior high school social science text and personal and internet resources to put these principles into practice. Small permanent groups of students chose their own areas of study in designated topic areas, engaged in collaborative research, and presented their group findings in posters supported by oral and written reports. Diaries provided students with an effective means of reporting their understanding of the learning strategies employed to the teacher. The group discussions of the collected strategies helped students expand their working knowledge of English.

LeLoup, J. W., & Ponterio, R. (2000). Cooperative learning activities for the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning & Technology* [<http://llt.msu.edu/default.html>], 3(2), 3-5. [Email: leloupj@cortland.edu]

* The World Wide Web (WWW) is a source for ready-made language learning activities created by language teachers. This article offers an example of one such site. It was created by a foreign language educator in Canada, Pete Jones, who is Head of Modern Languages at Pine Ridge Secondary School in

Pickering, Ontario. Jones developed activities for his secondary school students based on cooperative learning principles.

Maier, M. (2000). Reporting out: Closure without the tedium. *Journal of Cooperation & Collaboration in College Teaching*, 10, 117-121. [Email: mmaier@glendale.edu]

* In-class small group work often falters when students report out their work. This paper describes eleven techniques for ending group work and evaluates their relative merits based on efficiency, accountability for individual students, complete sharing of information, and student practice in articulating what they learned.

Maloch, B. (2002). Scaffolding student talk: One teacher's role in literature discussion groups. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37(1), 94-112. [Email: bmaloch@mail.utexas.edu]

This 5-month qualitative study explored the relationship between the teacher's role and the students' participation within literature discussion groups in a third-grade classroom. Using the constant-comparative method and microanalysis of teacher/student participation patterns, two salient themes emerged, including (a) the problematic nature of students' transition from a teacher-led to a student-led discussion format, and (b) the responsive nature of the teacher's interventions relative to students' difficulties within the discussions. Of particular note were the ways in which the teacher's interventions were metalinguistic and served to highlight the discussion process for students. Factors contributing to the dynamic nature of the teacher's involvement within the discussions included the degree to which the discussions approximated the teacher's discussion protocol and students' developing understanding of conversational strategies and exploratory talk. A clear progression was seen in students' use of exploratory (productive) talk, indicating the influence of teacher's interventions. This study offers theoretical and practical insights regarding how teachers scaffold students in the appropriation of new forms of discourse.

Mathews, S. (2000). Cooperative learning: A real life application. *Journal of Cooperation & Collaboration in College Teaching*, 10, 105-108. [Email: smathews@mdcc.edu]

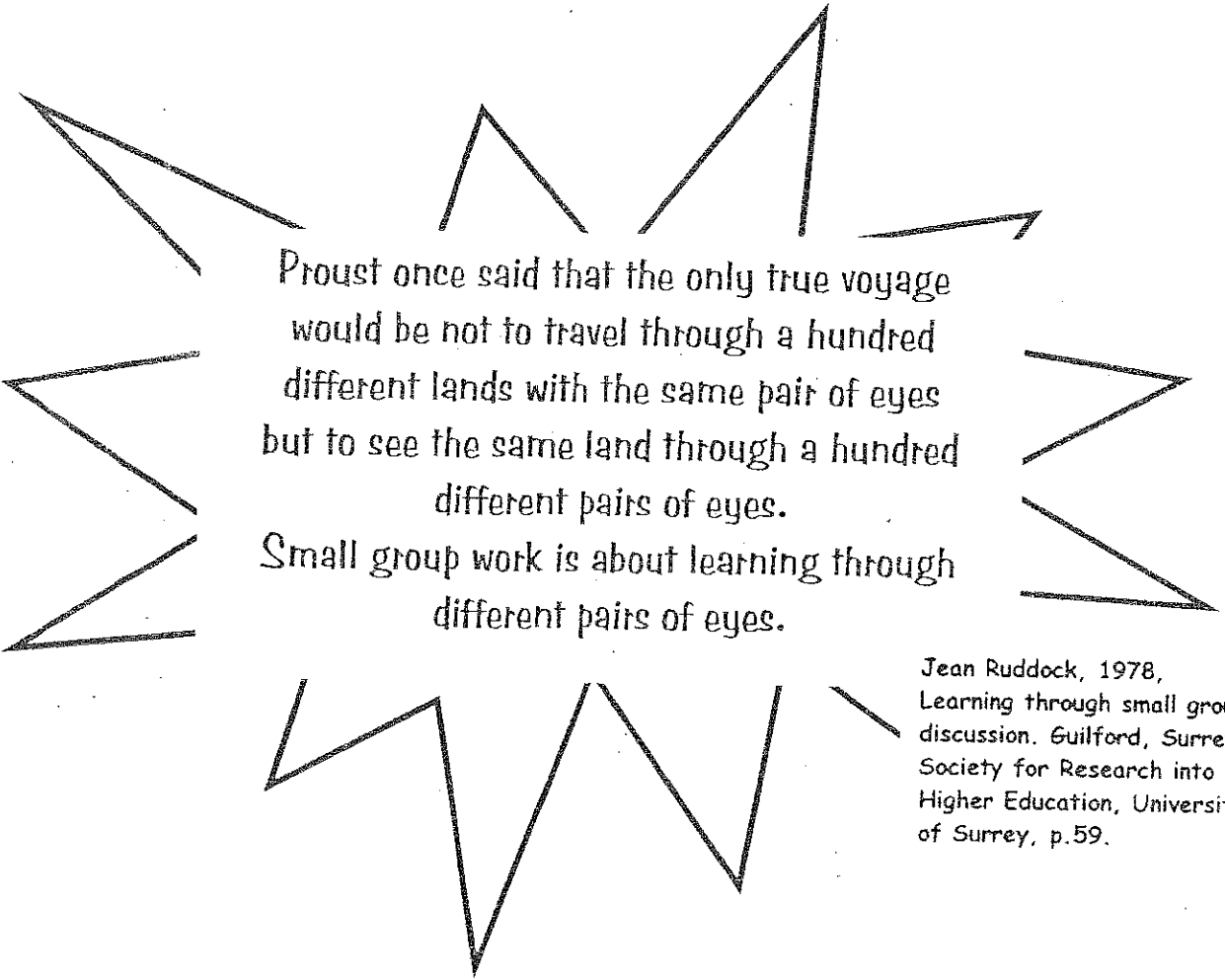
* While serving as a criminal trial juror, a college prep mathematics professor used cooperative learning techniques to facilitate a fair verdict. By trusting in the process, the jury moved from conflict to consensus under the most difficult circumstances.

Morgan, B. (2001). Cooperative learning: Teacher use and social integration. *International Journal of Scholarly Academic Diversity*, 5(1), online journal, (<http://www.nationalforum.com/ijsaidcurrent.htm>) [Email: bmorgan@utb1.utb.edu]

One hundred and thirty-eight teachers and 1,138 students from grades 2 through 11 were studied using instruments based on the work of David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson, co-directors of the Cooperative Learning Center at the University of Minnesota. The questions addressed were: (a) To what extent did the amount of training in cooperative learning a teacher received affect the amount of time the teacher structured cooperative learning in the classroom? and (b) What is the relationship between teacher use of cooperative learning strategies and student social integration? Using a two-tailed t -test, the majority of items related to teacher use were statistically significant at the .04 level. Using an analysis of variance, 8 of 10 correlations were insufficient related to social integration.

Sotillo, S. M. (2000). Discourse functions and syntactic complexity in synchronous and asynchronous communication. *Language Learning & Technology*, 4(1), 82-119. [<http://llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/sotillo/>]

The present study investigates discourse functions and syntactic complexity in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) learner output obtained via two different modes of computer-mediated communication (CMC): asynchronous and synchronous discussions. Two instructors and twenty-five students from two advanced ESL writing classes participated in this study. Answers were sought to the following questions: (a) Are the discourse functions present in ESL learners' synchronous discussions of reading assignments quantitatively and qualitatively different from those found in asynchronous discussions? And, (b) which mode of CMC shows more syntactically complex learner output? The results showed that the quantity and types of discourse functions present in synchronous discussions were similar to the types of interactional modifications found in face-to-face conversations that are deemed necessary for second language acquisition. Discourse functions in asynchronous discussions were more constrained than those found in synchronous discussions and similar to the question-response-evaluation sequence of the traditional language classroom. Concerning syntactic complexity, the delayed nature of asynchronous discussions gives learners more opportunities to produce syntactically complex language. Asynchronous and synchronous CMC have different discourse features which may be exploited for different pedagogical purposes. In the hands of experienced teachers, both modes of CMC can be used as novel tools to enhance the language acquisition process by encouraging interaction among participants, collaborative text construction, and the formation of electronic communities of learners.



Proust once said that the only true voyage
would be not to travel through a hundred
different lands with the same pair of eyes
but to see the same land through a hundred
different pairs of eyes.

Small group work is about learning through
different pairs of eyes.

Jean Ruddock, 1978,
Learning through small group
discussion. Guilford, Surrey:
Society for Research into
Higher Education, University
of Surrey, p.59.