INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

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Dear Colleagues:

IASCE is pleased to bring you the first Newsletter for 2006.

As I read the articles and abstracts for this issue, I found myself genuinely touched by Philip Flaming's college graduation speech, in the article "Friendship and Learning." It seems that when Philip was a new college student, he, like many students, did not envision a strong link between school learning and social learning. Unfortunately, that probably says a great deal about Philip's previous educational experiences. Fortunately for Philip, his college experience was different and, fortunately for us, this issue of the Newsletter brings together a wealth of new resources and research about the value and use of cooperation in higher education. For instance, Clements and Johnson share their work in faculty development. For those who have concerns about how cooperation and individual responsibility and achievement "fit together," Jensen, Johnson and Johnson (see the section From the Journals) remind us that positive interdependence—developed through carefully structured peer interaction—has positive effects on individual achievement. Multiple abstracts in the From the Journals section describe work that examines the cooperative possibilities and intricacies of on-line learning; they investigate factors that influence the choices students make in, and the outcomes achieved through, on-line engagements.

It is exciting to read this new work and to reflect on previous work about cooperative learning in higher education. In 1993, IASCE published an entire themed issue of the magazine *Cooperative Learning* (which was the predecessor of the current IASCE newsletter) about applications of cooperative learning in higher education. During the 1990's, Jim Cooper, Karl Smith, Philip Cottell, Barbara Millis, and many others wrote extensively about cooperative learning and higher education. Richard Light disseminated early work from Harvard University that examined the efficacy of using cooperative goal structures and strategies in a wide variety of undergraduate teaching situations. His 2001 book, *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds* is an invaluable follow up to Alexander Astin's provocative work (cited in the Friendship and Learning article).

The body of work that examines the use of cooperation in higher education is so rich. It reminds us that the use of cooperation for learning has a proud, strong, and long history. Yael Sharan's reflection on the *Forum* series of articles in past issues of this Newsletter reinforces and expands this view. For the past four years, Yael has collaborated with educators on several continents to bring us reports about the contexts for, and implementation of, cooperative learning. Teachers, staff developers, and administrators at all levels of education, in all corners of the world, have large and strong shoulders on which to stand as they continue to develop, adopt, adapt, implement, and disseminate the use of cooperation for learning.

The IASCE is proud to be part of the history and strength of cooperative learning and we thank you for your continued support and contributions. Please share your newsletters with colleagues. Perhaps you could utilize them to stimulate conversations about teaching and learning in your own

professional learning community. Remember that the IASCE website contains past newsletters (just in case you missed an installment from the *Forum* series) and is updated regularly with information about conferences and with links to resources and contacts around the world. Please contact George Jacobs about abstracts and possible articles for the Newsletter, and Lynda Baloche with conference announcements and additional links for the website.

Cooperatively yours,

Lynda

Lynda Baloche
Co-president IASCE

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Strengthening Ties between IASCE and New Members: What I Learned from the Forum Series

Yael Sharan
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What is it about cooperative learning that causes it to continuously spread around the world? Several factors come to mind. The increasing diversity in classrooms everywhere, for one, propels teachers to turn to CL as the most appropriate mode of instruction. CL practice is supported by ongoing research and is constantly refined, earning it the title of "best practice" in education. It has spawned a wealth of books, handbooks and guidebooks, and its researchers and practitioners are eager roving ambassadors. The IASCE, from its inception in 1979, has also played a vital role in the dissemination of CL by providing a venue for the global exchange of ideas about research and practice in the field, through the newsletter and at regional and international conferences.

Historically the '70s and '80s were years of intense development of ideas, strategies and techniques for CL. It was fascinating to discover at the time how many teachers were devising similar strategies. For example, at a conference in Canada in 1985, Peter Forrestal of Australia presented a version of Group Investigation for his English curriculum that he had developed independently of the work on GI that Shlomo Sharan, myself and others were doing at the time in Israel.

The '90s saw a spurt of growth in the number of countries interested in CL. At the IASCE conference in Manchester in 2002, sessions led by researchers and educators from the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, and Cyprus gave everyone a glimpse of their work in CL. Both the similarities and differences between their experiences and those of the "veterans'" aroused everyone's interest. The Forum series in the IASCE newsletter was established at that conference to give these countries and others a platform for describing how and why they developed CL. The October, 2002 issue marked the initial appearance of articles (Fall, 2002, vol.21 no.3; back issues available at: http://iasce.net/newsletters_menu.shtml#previous_newsletters). I would like to attempt to summarize some of the patterns that emerge from the thirteen Forum articles that have appeared so far and suggest some topics for future articles.

Introduction to CL

The first thing that strikes me in the Forum articles is that teacher educators in several countries who became interested in CL in the 90s generally avoided the pitfall of adhering to any one CL method associated with a well known person in the field. The writers in the series testify to the luxury of "shopping" in a "CL supermarket" full of tempting "products." In most countries represented in the Forum series, teacher educators learned more than one of the better known methods or strategies, and then went on to adapt what they learned to their own settings and needs. It seems a given today that CL is not to be identified with any single developer and that there is much to learn from all cooperative learning methods and strategies.

Initiating CL

A major point in most Forum stories is that interest in CL was initiated by a university or a government ministry as part of their search for solutions to severe educational problems in schools. Whereas a few innovators became interested in CL to improve the teaching of a specific

content area, typically ESL (e.g. Lebanon and Hong Kong), most teacher educators were charged with running a sweeping change project. They had to learn about cooperative learning and *at the same time* learn how to teach it to teachers. They didn't have the benefit of trying out different approaches and strategies in their own classrooms before teaching teachers how to use them. Their solution was to form their own study groups in which they learned various cooperative learning techniques, strategies and methods, as well as how to teach them to teachers (e.g. Latvia and Lithuania). (Incidentally, this is how the Canadian founders of GLACIE - Great Lakes Association for Cooperation in Education -approached CL in the 80s.) They were simultaneously learning about cooperative learning while teaching it at a university or a teachers college or while conducting a change project. As part of this process they turned to experienced CL researchers and trainers for further guidance. In some cases the process resulted in the development of a unique model for teacher education for CL (e.g. Germany).

Designing change projects

Many Forum authors have written about the benefit of applying lessons that they learned from veteran innovators, such as designing a change project for whole schools and not for random teacher groups or specific content areas. In some small countries the change project was nationwide (e.g. Lithuania). From the start, the goal of most teacher educators was not just to use a few CL strategies in every lesson, which is a widely accepted practice when initiating CL, but to develop a comprehensive perspective of cooperative learning, and focus on an understanding of its basic principles and on the mastery of fundamental skills (e.g. Finland and Italy). Most teacher training and school-based change projects have been accompanied by ongoing research, which helped develop a local empirical base for CL.

Another lesson that Forum authors have learned from veterans' experience was to conduct experiential workshops and use a variety of CL methods to train teachers. As we all know, experiential workshops enable teachers to learn directly the advantages and difficulties of CL. This is especially important in countries with highly centralized and authoritarian traditions of education (e.g. Armenia).

As an outcome of their commitment to CL, many countries established regional cooperative learning associations or centers, organized regional conferences, and joined the IASCE (e.g. Cyprus, Japan). Some sent representatives to IASCE international conferences, where we've all been enriched by the face to face exchange of ideas and experiences. Such was the case in 2004, when Singapore, after many years of research and practice, gallantly hosted the IASCE international conference.

Problems encountered

Although CL is becoming familiar to teachers all over the globe, problems and challenges remain. These are not unique to countries new to the practice and dissemination of CL, and there is still much we have to learn from one another. Among the most prevalent problems cited by Forum authors are the lack of long term, in-depth teacher training, the lack of appropriate instructional materials, and the need for more research. Another issue is that while ministries or universities may view CL as the means to realizing broad social and educational goals, they still send double messages to teachers. Teachers all over struggle to find a balance between the need to innovate their teaching methods, on the one hand, and the demand to meet standards and "cover the curriculum," on the other hand (e.g. Australia).

Future topics for the Forum series

The authors of the Forum articles write about the problems and satisfactions they experience as CL continues to develop in their respective countries. In future articles we hope to hear more from them and from all members of the IASCE about the ongoing problems and solutions of teaching CL to students and to teachers. It would be instructive to hear more about CL's contribution to areas such as intercultural education, special education, e-learning, adult education, university education, student collaboration outside the classroom, and the perennial issue of CL assessment. We all have much to learn from the creativity and determination of educators all over the world who strive, by means of CL, to introduce change in their country's educational systems.

Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education Holds Annual Conference

The Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (JASCE) held its second annual conference at Nerima 3rd Elementary School in Tokyo, February 11-12, 2006. Approximately 120 people from 19 of Japan's 47 prefectures attended. The conference was chaired by Professor Kazuhiko Sekita of Soka University. JASCE's president is Professor Satoru Yasunaga of Kurume University.

The conference began with four research presentations: one on group decision-making, another on teaching Japanese literature, and two on English teaching. The afternoon featured the conference keynote address by Professor Hidenori Fujita of International Christian University, a well-known educational sociologist, who spoke on "Educational Reform and a Vision for Education and Society in the 21st Century."

The afternoon of the conference's first day also included various types of roundtable sessions on such topics as starting with CL and whether CL is really important in schools (in case you are wondering, the answer was Yes), as well as a mini-symposium, chaired by a retired principal, in which a current principal and a superintendent spoke on their perspectives on CL. There was also a presentation, using ICT, in which the BBCoach (Broadband Coach) project was demonstrated (http://bbcoach.mnw.jp/modules/news). This project prepares teachers to coach students in website making, such as in ThinkQuest (http://www.thinkquest.org).

The second day was devoted to four workshops, with topics such as using CL in English teaching and social skills training (particularly designed for fostering group work skills). Also, Professor Yasunaga did a workshop on the Learning Through Discussion (LTD) technique of W.F. Hill http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3673/is_200404/ai_n9345138#continue), that Professor Yasunaga has been implementing and advocating. Additionally, Professor Shuji Sugie, a leading scholar of CL in Japan, conducted a guidance session for improving implementation of task-based CL lessons.

JASCE's third annual conference will be held at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Aichi on August 5-6, 2006. The Japanese academic calendar begins in April and ends in March. Thus, the February, 2006 conference and the upcoming August, 2006 conference are in different academic years. For more information on the upcoming conference or on JASCE generally, please visit the JASCE website: http://jasce.jp.

From the Bookshelf

English, R., & Dean, S. (2004). *Show me how to learn: Key strategies and powerful techniques that promote cooperative learning*. Markham, Ontario: Pembroke Publishers. Pp. 96, ISBN: 1-55138-178-8. Originally published in 2001, in Australia by Curriculum Corporation, www.curriculum.edu.au.

The key term in this book from the first sentence of the Introduction to the last sentence of the Conclusion 74 pages later is "learning community." The authors provide us with many practical ideas for helping students to enjoy learning and to learn how to learn. Cooperative learning, which appears in the book's subtitle, is central to the authors' goal and their path toward that goal. Gardner's work on Multiple Intelligences and Glasser's work on human needs provide additional theoretical grounding for English and Dean's ideas, because learning communities and CL work best when everyone's diverse learning preferences and individual needs are taken into account. While the book's examples seem to be taken from primary school, many of the ideas would also be relevant to older students.

Chapter 1, Learning Communities, details ideas for creating a positive environment among learners. A first step is to create a classroom code, i.e., "a shared and negotiated understanding of the ways in which learners treat one another" (p. 8). One technique for arriving at a classroom code is a Y-Chart: what a learning community *Looks Like*, what it *Sounds Like*, and what it *Feels Like*. The points in the Y-Chart can be represented pictorially and even made into classroom posters. The chapter also explains how the code connects with Glasser's taxonomy of needs: belonging, power, choice, and enjoyment.

Chapter 2, Curriculum Planning and Assessment, mostly concerns how teachers can collaborate with one another to help students and to assess their development. For example, many suggestions are offered on how to conduct ongoing assessment. These include the use of focus assessment groups (focusing on a small group of students for a given period of time), peer assessment, and self assessment.

Chapter 3, Goal Setting and Reflection, explains a 5-step process for helping students achieve learning goals. The steps are:

1. set a goal
2. identify strategies for achieving the goal
3. making a plan and documenting it
4. keeping the goal in focus
5. revisiting and evaluating the goal.

Chapter 4, Student Self-Evaluation, stresses that students need to see themselves as responsible for their own learning. The chapter describes tools that students can use to evaluate themselves: checklists, judgment scales, sentence starters, learning portfolios, and annotated work samples. Another way for students to collect data is by asking peers, e.g. via peer expert

groups who analyze a specific aspect of classmates' work, such as the topic content of a piece of writing.

Chapter 5, Establishing Learning Centers, explains the value of learning centers as vehicles for group activities. Options for deciding on group membership are presented, and suggestions are made for how to start learning centers, such as starting simple and teaching students how to work together in their own group and with other groups.

Chapter 6, Putting the Principles into Practice, presents about 10 different techniques, explaining the purpose, preparation, student instructions, and teacher roles for each. Sample materials are included. Most of the techniques, such as Concept Mapping, are well-known, but the clear descriptions are welcome.

In keeping with its practical nature, the book concludes with 10 blackline masters for implementing the various ideas presented therein, such a self-evaluation guide and a self-evaluation survey. In conclusion, *Show Me How to Learn* reinforces the valuable point that learning-to-learn skills are best acquired when a CL component is included, and that a key way to be life-long learners involves developing opportunities to learn with others.

Encouraging Collaborative Learning in the Classroom: What Universities Can Do

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Introduction

Collaborative learning is a teaching method that emphasizes teamwork and consensus-building in learning. While varied in form, its emphasis on interdependence in achieving learning outcomes and its student-centered approach are perhaps its most constant features (Butler & Coleman, 2003; Davidson, 1994; Freeth & Reeves 2004; Panitz, 2004). In collaborative teaching the faculty member becomes a facilitator rather than a transmitter of learning (Alderman, 2000; Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2004; Matthews, Cooper, Davidson, & Hawkes, 1995). In highly structured experiences (e.g., the COLT program at William and Mary College) such collaborations span time zones and continents (Hamada & Scott, 2000).

Although numerous studies demonstrate the efficacy of collaborative based learning activities, obstacles to university implementation remain high (Dillenbourg, Baker, Blaye, & O'Malley, 1996). Objections come from students and instructors (Panitz, 1996). Student objections typically include preferences for traditional knowledge transmission models (Drane, 2000), objections to working with others, and complaints about doing the professor's job for them. Educator objections include fears of increased time commitments, lack of familiarity with teaching strategies, and concerns about negative evaluations from students (Francescato et al., 2006; Panitz & Panitz, 1998). Furthermore, few faculty were exposed to this type of learning as students, and even fewer received formal training once they began teaching.

With years of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (e.g., Bridges, Kuh, & Day, 2002) data portraying alarming rates of disengagement from the learning process, universities are increasingly pressed to implement techniques designed to encourage active learning. Collaborative learning necessitates student engagement and thus is an obvious antidote to disengagement. To

facilitate this process, in 2005, the provost at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNCW) directed the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) to address student disengagement in learning as a top priority for Center activities. The provost announced this decision at a full faculty meeting, underscoring administrative support for these efforts. Such administrative support is a critical component of any university's efforts to implement collaborative learning across the curriculum. As it now stands, the provost's directive is being accomplished in a number of ways, two of which are highlighted in this article.

Implementing Collaborative Learning – Phase 1

First, the CTE Director, in association with the Director for University Planning and the Director of the Center for Faculty Leadership, is sponsoring a number of faculty and staff workshops highlighting relevant NSSE findings. These information sessions are essential in laying the groundwork for subsequent workshops designed to teach effective collaborative learning techniques. The obstacles to implementation of collaborative learning techniques are real, and faculty are unlikely to tackle such obstacles without a clear understanding of the necessity for doing so.

We have found that simply offering workshops on collaborative learning techniques often results in us "preaching to the choir." Our goal is to contact all teaching personnel to generate institution-wide commitment to collaborative learning. By the end of this year, we estimate that all department chairs and the majority of faculty will be acquainted with NSSE findings for our institution. Once faculty see NSSE data from their own students, they seem to understand the mandate we have as educators to create an environment in which students are actively engaged in achieving learning outcomes. Reactions to these workshops have been overwhelmingly positive.

Phase 2

With the groundwork laid, we are now engaged in phase two of the process. In this phase, we are offering seminars teaching collaborative learning techniques. Again, the directive from the provost is quite broad. Therefore, the scope of the training is also broad. Small group workshops and large group seminars are offered as well as one-on-one consultation. In addition, we are in the process of creating a voluntary team of peer reviewers who will visit classes and offer constructive feedback as faculty implement collaborative learning techniques. Such review is designed solely for the faculty member's benefit and is not part of the reappointment and tenure process, removing most evaluative concerns.

Collaborative learning is broadly defined in CTE workshops as learning that occurs as a result of collaboration between a faculty member and any other partner in a professional context. This model is deliberately inclusive in order to attract the widest range of faculty. In CTE workshops, faculty learn how to model collaborative learning for their students, as they are encouraged to partner with other faculty members, students, and community members. Workshops demonstrate how collaborative learning affords a myriad of opportunities for faculty to optimize their efforts in teaching, research, and service. In addition, faculty are shown how collaborative efforts in these three areas can reinforce each other, allowing professors to "double and triple-dip" with each learning project.

Means of encouraging collaboration between and with students is the skill most emphasized in CTE workshops. Depending on skill level, students may collaborate with faculty as performers in faculty productions in the arts and humanities, co-authors, or research associates. Such

collaborations render academic learning more "real," highlight opportunities for students beyond the classroom, and increase student motivation and engagement. Most faculty readily see the benefit of such faculty-student partnerships and many professional organizations (e.g., the National Collegiate Honors Council) encourage faculty members to publish with students. This is perhaps the easiest form of collaborative learning to "sell" to faculty and, thus, may be a wise first step.

Encouraging faculty to implement collaborative learning based on student-to-student partnerships is often a tougher sell, for all the obstacles noted above. Recognizing that faculty are scholars who have acquired their roles through respect for academic practice, we have found that a data-driven approach works best. Scholarly presentations of papers, conference proceedings, and data documenting the efficacy of collaborative learning techniques, obstacles to implementation, and evidence-based solutions to such obstacles tend to win more support than appeals to change. Once faculty see the efficacy data, once they learn what techniques work in ameliorating time constraints and evaluative concerns, they are much more likely to begin the process of implementing collaborative learning techniques in their own classes.

The admonition to start small is worth repeating at every workshop. Such a warning tends to alleviate anxiety created by the suggestion that one's teaching approach needs to be totally transformed. It is also best practice. Collaborative learning grows best within the individual's own teaching style and discipline (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Peer-based transmission of discipline specific techniques is a very important component in this regard and is planned for the UNCW campus.

Conclusion

Obstacles to implementation of collaborative learning practices are varied and real. Ameliorating time constraints and evaluative pressures requires an institutional commitment to active learning practices across the curriculum. Overcoming lack of familiarity with collaborative learning techniques requires that faculty be given the time and training to "retool and rethink" their teaching approach. Despite these and other challenges, our mandate not only to teach our students but to *affect* them in meaningful ways is clear. A passive, disengaged student becomes a passive, disengaged adult. The opportunity to change this process, though challenging, is one we can ill afford to miss.

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Dillenbourg, G. P., Baker, M., Blaye, A., & O'Malley, C. (1996). The evolution of research on collaborative learning. In E. Spada & P. Reiman (Eds.), *Learning in humans and machine: Towards an interdisciplinary learning science* (pp. 189-211). Oxford: Elsevier.

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From the Journals

Akan, O. H. [Obasi-Akan@utc.edu] (2005). Concrescent conversations: Generating a cooperative learning experience in principles of management - a postmodern analysis. *Journal of Education for Business, 80* (4), 214-217.

By taking a postmodern ontology that elevates becoming over the modern ontology of being, the author of this article proposes a theory and describes a method that teachers can use to enhance students' cooperative learning of management principles. The author asserts that the social construction of learning groups is an effect of organizing micropractices embedded in a special type of talk, referred to as "concrescent conversation." The author offers an instructor's guide for generating concrescent conversation or disclosing, questioning, and steering verbal behaviors that facilitate students' cooperative learning of management principles.

Zhang, R. (2004). Using the principles of Exploratory Practice to guide group work in an extensive reading class in China. *Language Teaching Research, 8*, 331-345.

Exploratory Practice emphasizes integrating research into pedagogy, and attaches great importance to the quality of life in the classroom. It suggests that we work primarily to understand language classroom life, to bring people together, and to develop students' language competency in a harmonious atmosphere. By putting EP principles into my teaching practice, I explore ways of solving a problem I experienced in teaching English extensive reading to English majors in a Chinese University.

Hernandez, S. A. [hernandez@rider.edu], Morales, E., & Baker, I. (2005). Developing study skills in a team learning class: An intervention by the learning center. *Journal of Student Centered Learning, 2* (3), 223-230.

A class intervention by the university's learning center in a day section of Marketing Principles was established so that students in a team learning course could read and comprehend text material on their own effectively. Weekly journal writing and end-of-semester course evaluations provide evidence that most students found the study-skills workshop useful. The majority of students in this class reported using more effective study methods as a result of the intervention.

Malmqvist, A. (2005). How does group discussion in reconstruction tasks affect written language output? *Language Awareness, 14* (2&3), 128-141.

This article reports on a small-scale study involving adult L1 Swedish learners of L3 German. The main aim of the study was to investigate the effects of group interaction on written German output employing the dictogloss technique. Three short texts were selected for reconstruction, the first and third ones individually, and the second one collectively. The group interactions during the reconstruction of the second text were audiotaped. The first stage of the analysis compared the individually reconstructed with the collectively reconstructed ones, and differences in length as well as in complexity between the two categories were demonstrated. In the second stage the audiotaped interactions were analysed with respect to what features were

focused on in the identified language-related episodes (LREs), content/ meaning, lexical or grammar. The results show that the majority of the LREs were directed towards grammar, more specifically towards the noun phrase, with case and gender as the most frequently negotiated issues. The last stage of the analysis concerned the outcomes of the LREs, relating them to the participants' proficiency levels and personality traits, as well as to interpersonal dynamics. Some implications are drawn for further research on the effects of negotiations of meaning and form on written output.

Messier, W. P. [wpm@umac.mo] (2005). Traditional teaching strategies versus cooperative teaching strategies: Which can improve achievement scores in Chinese middle schools? *Journal of Student Centered Learning,* 2 (3), 231-238.

This study examines two teaching styles in Chinese middle schools, tradition lecture-based and cooperative learning. The study uses simple descriptive statistics to analyze economic status and achievement scores for both strategies in four Chinese middle schools. There were 145 randomly selected middle school students involved in the study. The results showed that the participants in the traditional lecture-based group obtained higher achievement scores during the course of the semester. The paper concludes with some discussion about the application, implementation and recommendation of traditional and cooperative learning and their impact on educational leaders, school improvement, educational policy, and educational reforms.

Jensen, M., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2002). Impact of positive interdependence during electronic quizzes on discourse and achievement. *Journal of Educational Research, 95* (3), 161-166.

* Examined the effects of positive interdependence versus no interdependence on college students' academic achievement. Students took weekly electronic quizzes where they could interact with groupmates in a chat room. Achievement was measured via biweekly examinations. Students in the positive interdependence condition engaged in significantly more interaction and more promotive interaction during the quizzes and achieved higher scores on the examination.

Sutton, M. [masutton@kean.edu] (2005). Three teachers of first-year collaborative writing. *Journal of Student Centered Learning, 2* (3), 213-221.

This article profiles three teachers of First-Year Composition, who include collaborative writing assignments in their courses, and compares and contrasts their pedagogical choices without judging them. The goal of these profiles is to present ideas that other instructors may adapt in their own classes.

Straton, J. C. [straton@pdx.edu] (2005). Communicating in a group. *Journal of Student Centered Learning, 2* (3), 195-203.

Student-centered learning requires teachers to provide students with opportunities to learn from and with each other, but most students come to group-work ill-equipped to handle the responsibility of cleanly communicating with each other. This paper provides one set of group-communication tolls that helps students to become conscious molders of their own communication styles in relation to those of their peers.

Topping, K. [k.j.topping@dundee.ac.uk] (2005). Trends in peer learning. *Educational Psychology, 25* (6), 631–645.

Developments in forms of peer learning 1981–2006 are reviewed, focusing mainly on peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and peer assessment. Types and definitions of peer learning are explored, together with questions of implementation integrity and consequent effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. Benefits to helpers are now emphasized at least as much as benefits to those helped. In this previously under-theorized area, an integrated theoretical model of peer learning is now available. Peer learning has been extended in types and forms, in curriculum areas and in contexts of application beyond school. Engagement in helping now often encompasses all community members, including those with special needs. Social and emotional gains now attract as much interest as cognitive gains. Information technology is now often a major component in peer learning, operating in a variety of ways. Embedding and sustainability has improved, but further improvement is needed.

Johnson, D. W. [dwj@visi.com], & Johnson, R. T. (2005). Essential components of peace education. *Theory into Practice, 44*(4), 280-292.

Peace education is a key for establishing a consensual peace and maintaining it over time. There are 5 essential elements in building a lasting peace through education. First, a public education system must be established that has compulsory attendance for all children and youth, integrated so students from previously conflicting groups interact with one another and have the opportunity to build positive relationships with each other. Second, a sense of mutuality and common fate needs to be established that highlights mutual goals, the just distribution of benefits from achieving the goals, and a common identity. In schools, this is primarily done through the use of cooperative learning. Third, students must be taught the constructive controversy procedure to ensure they know how to make difficult decisions and engage in political discourse. Fourth, students must be taught how to engage in integrative negotiations and peer mediation to resolve their conflicts with each other constructively. Finally, civic values must be inculcated that focus students on the long-term common good of society.

Grenier, M. [grenier@cisunix.unh.edu], Dyson, B., & Yeaton, P. (2005). Cooperative learning that includes students with disabilities. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 76*(6), 29-35.

Inclusionary practice is based on the premise that students with disabilities can contribute to class learning while attaining targeted learning goals through the general physical education curriculum (Individuals and Disabilities Education Act, 1990; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997). Meaningful placement in an inclusive setting involves a careful analysis of the curricular and instructional goals, and the determination of whether these goals effectively meet the needs of the student with disabilities (Block, 2000). This practice challenges teachers to value and accept diversity, to collaborate with colleagues in all aspects of teaching, and to use instructional practices that have proven efficacy with heterogeneous classes (Sapon-Shevin, 1999; Villa & Thousand, 2000).

In this article, cooperative learning is discussed as an instructional strategy that encourages students to work together and that enhances motivation for learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Polloway, Patton, & Serna, 2001). Cooperative learning is presented through the depiction of a scenario inspired by observations made during a research study, which took place in an elementary school in southern New Hampshire. Support for cooperative learning was enhanced by the school's strong inclusionary stance and by collaborative practices between general and special educators. The context for the scenario is a third-grade classroom containing a child with

cerebral palsy who is unable to walk or sit without support and has delayed processing skills. Having taught the student for several years, the general education teacher was familiar with his Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and knowledgeable about ways to adapt the curriculum to meet his particular needs. The student's physical goals include increasing mobility skills in his wheelchair as well as the range of motion in his upper and lower extremities. His social goals include enhancing his self-advocacy skills through partnering with peers. When used in physical education, cooperative learning allows students with disabilities to learn to interact with their peers in ways that promote the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective goals that are highlighted in the national standards (National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NASPE], 2004). In the scenario, this instructional strategy fulfills the student's social goals, while the fitness and throwing components of the class target the student's psychomotor goals.

Gaze, E. C. (2005). Manipulating the gradient. *Primus: Problems, Resources, and Issues in Mathematics Undergraduate Studies*, *15* (2) 109-116.

We introduce a cooperative learning group lab for a Calculus III course to facilitate comprehension of the gradient vector and directional derivative concepts. The lab is a hands-on experience allowing students to manipulate a tangent plane and empirically measure the effect of partial derivatives on the direction of optimal ascent.

Paulus, T. M. [tpaulus@utk.edu] (2005). Collaborative and cooperative approaches to online group work: The impact of task type. *Distance Education,* 26(1), 111-125.

One purpose of online group projects is to encourage collaborative dialogue for new knowledge construction. During such projects students have a dual objective: learn through constructing new knowledge together while also completing the task. Cooperative approaches to task completion are an alternative to collaborative dialogue. The impact of task type on collaborative versus cooperative approaches to group projects has not been greatly examined in online environments. Transcripts of 10 small groups completing two types of tasks, synthesis or application, in an online graduate course were analyzed using Herring's computer-mediated discourse analysis and Pearson's chi-square tests to determine (a) whether groups took a collaborative or cooperative approach to task completion when explicitly encouraged to collaborate; and (b) whether the type of task affected the approach used. Overall, groups chose to cooperate more than collaborate, with application task groups taking a significantly more cooperative approach and synthesis task groups a significantly more collaborative approach. Implications for the design of online group tasks are discussed.

Downing, K., [sckevin@cityu.edu.hk] & Chim, T. M. (2004). Reflectors as online extraverts? *Educational Studies, 30* (3), 265–276.

Increasingly, online learning is perceived as an effective method of instruction. Much recent educational research has focused on examining the purposes and situations for which online education is best suited. In this paper, students enrolled in two online courses are compared with their peers enrolled in equivalent classroom-based courses to investigate aspects of the relationship between learning style and mode of delivery. Student satisfaction measures are taken from participants in both modes of delivery and compared with student learning style. Feedback from the 'Reflector' learning style demonstrates higher satisfaction levels with the online mode of delivery compared with their matched counterparts following equivalent classroom-based courses. Therefore, whilst 'Reflectors' might be regarded as Introverts in the

traditional classroom setting, the additional time for reflection offered by online delivery makes this group more likely to contribute to online discussion, report higher satisfaction levels and generally behave more like online Extraverts.

Williams, D. [devonwilliams92@hotmail.com] (2004). Improving race relations in higher education: The jigsaw classroom as a missing piece to the puzzle. *Urban Education, 39* (3), 316-344.

This article suggests that colleges and universities can improve intergroup relations on campus by implementing a cooperative learning technique known as the jigsaw classroom. What is argued is that use of the jigsaw classroom will facilitate a recategorization process by which members of racial-ethnic groups other than one's own ("them") will begin to be seen as being members of a more inclusive "we." Included in this article is an examination of on-campus racial discrimination, a discussion of some social psychological work that is useful in helping us understand why this discrimination exists, and a discussion of the ways in which the jigsaw classroom has the potential to reduce this discrimination.

Tocalli-Beller, A. (2003). Cognitive conflict, disagreement and repetition in collaborative groups: Affective and social dimensions from an insider's perspective. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 60* (2), 143-71.

The paper examines conflict, disagreement, and repetition in a collaborative group and the social interactions and lessons that occur due to them. By examining my own participation and reflections in a content-based collaboratively structured course and analyzing them from within a sociocultural theory of mind, the point is made that the study of cognitive conflict, disagreement and repetition in collaborative groups holds substantial potential for understanding the socially mediated process of learning. This understanding will, in turn, provide insightful information about group work in L2 classrooms.

* Abstract from ERIC - http://www.eric.ed.gov.
** Abstract is the introduction to the article
*** Abstract written for this compilation

Friendship and Learning

Editor's Note: One rationale for the use of CL is the importance of supportive interpersonal relationships to success in learning. Some research suggests that the two most important factors in academic success at university are not textbooks or the quality of lectures, but the student-faculty and student-student relationships. Probably the best-known of this research is presented in Alexander W. Astin's book "What matters in college? Four critical years revisited." San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993. Richard Felder summarizes Astin's work at http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Columns/Astin.html.

Here's my favorite paragraph of Richard's summary:

> *Astin concludes, however, that as important as the student-faculty relationship may be, "...the student's peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years."[p. 398] Frequency of student-student interactions (including discussing course content with other students, working on group projects, tutoring other students, and participating in intramural sports) correlates with improvement in GPA, graduating with honors, analytical and problem-solving skills, leadership*

ability, public speaking skills, interpersonal skills, preparation for graduate and professional school, and general knowledge, and correlates negatively with feeling depressed [p. 385].

These thoughts were very nicely expressed by a community college student, Philip Flaming, in a speech at his college's December 2005 graduation ceremony. His speech is reprinted, with permission, below.

Good evening everyone. To those of you who don't know me, my name is Phil, and it has been a great pleasure to serve as the vice president of the student body over the course of the last semester. The only regrettable instance of serving in this position seems to be that, when we were deciding who to get to do these speeches, I was close by; so here I am.

I wasn't really sure what to talk about when I accepted, and over the last week or so I have spent quite a bit of time thinking about what BCC (Broward Community College – Singapore campus) means to me. No matter what road my mind wandered down, there always seemed to be one central aspect that it always gravitated back to: friendship.

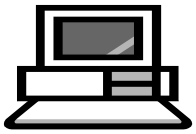
When I first came to BCC, I didn't really plan on making a lot of friends. I mainly just wanted to do well in my studies and keep my social life outside of school. However, within just a couple weeks, the warm and friendly student body of BCC had drawn me out of my little shell as I forged strong friendships which I hope will last for many years to come.

To me, coming to Broward became something to look forward to, and I often found myself coming to school early or staying late, either to hang out in the student lounge, enjoy a refreshing beverage in the canteen (a.k.a. food court), or to shoot some hoops on the court. No matter what day it was or what classes were going on, there always seemed to be someone around to do these things with. After class we would all head out to a movie, or grab a cold one, or dinner, or whatever. One of the things that has amazed me most about relationships at BCC is that you don't have to know someone well to be friends with them; I have gone out with people who were strangers in the afternoon and close friends by midnight. It is rare to find a place where the people are so welcoming, and I am thankful to have spent what time I could here at Broward.

But it wasn't just the students who I found myself becoming friends with. At first, I attended class in the hopes of actually learning something. At some point, however, this reason turned into me wanting to attend class because I liked the teachers and actually enjoyed spending time in the classroom. School became more of a place where I went to hang out with friends and learn from friends than a place of rigorous studies. I have done better academically over the last year than I ever have in the past, and I feel that this is because I wasn't just trying to please a teacher; I was trying not to disappoint a friend.

Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end, and so too must my time at Broward. I hope that the friendships that I have formed over the last year will last many, many more, and I thank God for the time that I have spent here.

And so I would like to raise my glass in a toast;
Though years will pass, and much will change
Through times of tears and laughter
May memories last and love remain
And friendship ever after. Thank you very much.



From The Web

"We are exquisitely social creatures," Dr. Rizzolatti said. "Our survival depends on understanding the actions, intentions and emotions of others." Read the entire *New York Times* article, "Cells that read minds" by Sandra Blakeslee, published January 10, 2006: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/10/science/10mirr.html?ex=1294549200&en=2d497999fb9a642a&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss

Unpacking the Syntax of Creative Teaching through Ethnography and Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP)

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Editor's Note: This article updates a paper presented at the 2004 IASCE conference in Singapore.

In her keynote address at the 2004 IASCE international conference in Singapore, IASCE co-president Lynda Baloche explored developing creativity: http://www.iasce.net/Conference2004/Keynotes/Baloche/balochekeynote.doc. The paper I presented at the same conference offers a practical model of creative teaching that enables teaching professionals in any field or educational sector to develop their creative teaching competence: http://www.iasce.net/Conference2004/23June/Sale/IASCE%20Paper%201.doc. The current brief article summarizes and updates that work.

The objectives of my original research project were to uncover the underlying syntax of creative teaching. It was driven by the question: what do creative teachers do and how do they do it? The research model was eclectic, employing grounded theory, heuristic methodology and NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming) technologies with a wide range of teaching professionals who were observed, video-recorded and interviewed to uncover their underpinning beliefs and strategies regarding teaching and learning.

The research found that creative teachers develop their creative competence over time, just like any other form of competence is developed. In the most basic terms, creative teachers seek to be creative, continually develop the resources and strategies for creative action in their teaching, and are prepared to take the necessary risks that creativity entails. The research suggests that creative teachers are likely to become even more creative over time and develop an 'unconscious creative competence'.

Since the presentation of the paper, I have implemented the model in a number of educational institutions in both Singapore and other Asian countries. It has been well received, and I am presently writing a book based on it.

The only change from the original presentation of the model is that the mnemonic used for resources 'PEASHA' is now 'SHAPE'. SHAPE refers to:

- **S**tories told to provide context, understanding and emotional anchors
- **H**umour used to achieve rapport and provide novelty
- **A**ctivities provided to integrate, apply and consolidate learning
- **P**resentation style (e.g., words, tone, body language – as well as observation and listening) to provide clarity, meaning and influence student attention, beliefs and psychological states
- **E**xamples used to illustrate facts, concepts, principles, procedures

In observing many hours of videotape and modelling actual classroom behaviour with co-participants, it was noticeable that the skilful and creative combining of resources (SHAPE) to form effective strategies constituted much of the observed teacher behaviour. Furthermore, this is underpinned by both explicit and tacit cognitive strategies – the pedagogic syntax - that creates the learning experience at the sensory level for students.

The SHAPE framework can be effectively used in any teaching and learning context, involving any combination of methods. For example, in more traditional classrooms, teachers can be creative through the use of their presentation style, humour, stories, examples and small activities. In the cooperative learning classroom, a greater emphasis is placed on the use of cooperative learning structures, which are generic activity frames. In this learning environment, the SHAPE is more on the 'A' (**A**ctivities), so to speak.

However, it should be noted that effective cooperative learning also necessitates a highly effective presentation style, the use of humour, examples and stories. The key difference, as I see it, is mainly in the shape of the SHAPE. Cooperative learning will involve learners more actively in the learning process; hence the pedagogy is more activity orientated and incorporates more of the SHAPE of the learners. For example, learners may contribute more humour and presentation style to the learning relationship than in more traditional classroom environments. Additionally, learners need to develop and utilize collaborative skills to successfully interact with peers.

In terms of 'creative cooperative learning', this would involve teachers not simply using the range of established cooperative learning structures, but showing creative competence in their novel combination to achieve effective results in terms of student learning. Teacher creativity also manifests itself in other ways, such as how teachers seek to promote an overall cooperative atmosphere, one in which students make collaboration their first option.

I envisage refining and promoting the approach as extensively as possible in the next few years. Please feel free to contact me to question, disagree, suggest or collaborate.

Dennis Sale heads the Educational Development Section of the Department of Educational and Staff Development at Singapore Polytechnic.

IASCE 2004 Papers Now Online

Just a reminder that papers and power points from IASCE's very successful 2004 international conference in Singapore are available online at http://www.iasce.net/Conference2004/Conference2004Program.shtml. They provide resources for teaching CL to fellow educationalists and for helping oneself reflect on one's own use of CL.

Three of the four keynotes are among the papers available on the IASCE website. Lynda Baloche discusses "Collaborative contexts for creativity and innovation," Kirpal Singh shares his insights on "Asian views on cooperation and collaboration," and Celeste Brody explores teacher education on CL in "Begin with the teacher: Focusing professional development on teacher learning for cooperative learning."

In addition to the keynotes, many other papers offer important rewards to the reader. Just a few examples are:

a. Peter Gobel's "That's not the way we do it: The effects of cultural and social factors on cooperative learning" offers a "warts and all" depiction of efforts to use Jigsaw in a university in Japan.
b. Ng Keow Eng and Tan Seng Chee's "An exploratory comparison study on scaffolding narrative writing in Chinese with face-to-face and e-discussions" focuses on the use of internet to promote cooperation among students.
c. Edward Nathan and IASCE 2004 conference chair Christine Lee's "Exploration on the use of structured academic controversies in the social studies classroom" explores a means of encouraging students to engage in deeper thinking.

Participants Sought for Study of Learning Styles and CL

Tatyana Putintsera, a university teacher in Japan, is looking for help with a study involving university students of English as a Second or Foreign Language. If your students - anywhere in the world - match the profile below, please contact her.

The research project:

Invited to participate in the research: ES/FL college teachers interested in research related to cooperative learning and learning styles.

Purpose: to see how cooperative learning accommodates individual learning styles.

Objectives: ideas and data exchange

Subjects: college students (19-21 years old)

Course: speaking skills or a course combining speaking, listening, reading, and writing

Duration: about 10 teaching sessions

What is required: the use of pair and group work during every lesson and collection of relevant data

Time allocation: within the period from March to June (inclusive)

Contact: tatyana@nucba.ac.jp

Errata

In the article "IASCE Forum - Cooperative Learning in Cyprus" in our December, 2005 issue, the last two sentences under the subhead "A Short Historical Note about Cyprus" should have read as follows:

The Republic of Cyprus was established as an independent state in 1960 and has recently joined the European Union. The total population of Cyprus is 760,000 inhabitants (Greeks, Turks and other minorities).

I apologize for the error. Please let me know of future errors. Thank you.

George Jacobs, editor, IASCE Newsletter.

How to Subscribe to the *CL List*

Want to dialogue with others about your use of CL? Then, you might wish to join the CL List, an internet discussion group about cooperative learning. Well-known CL experts as well as "just folks" belong.

Currently, the CL List isn't a busy group, but when discussions do take place, they are often enlightening. Furthermore, you can receive updates on CL related events.

To subscribe, send an email to CL_List-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. You should very quickly receive an email reply with simple instructions. If that fails, just send an email to George at george@vegetarian-society.org, and he'll do the necessary. Talk to you soon!

Writing for This Newsletter

There are so many things happening world-wide related to cooperative learning! Help others find out about them by writing articles or short news items for inclusion in this newsletter, and by submitting abstracts of published work for inclusion in the From the Journals section of the newsletter. Short pieces (1000 words or less) are preferred. The newsletter appears three times a year. Please email submissions or questions about them to the editor of the IASCE Newsletter, George Jacobs, at george@vegetarian-society.org. Put "IASCE Newsletter" on the Subject line of the email, please. Thank you for your submissions.

The IASCE, established in 1979, is the only international, non-profit organization for educators who research and practice cooperative learning in order to promote student academic improvement and democratic social processes.

What does IASCE do?

- Supports the development and dissemination of research on cooperative learning, particularly educator research and inquiry that fosters understanding of the effects of context on implementing cooperative learning.
- Helps organizations develop structures that enhance cooperation in education, working through the inclusion of people of diverse backgrounds in our schools and society.
- Works with local, national, and international organizations to extend high quality practices of cooperative learning.
- Sponsors collaborative conferences and projects that extend the understanding of cooperative learning principles in different settings.

How does IASCE do this?

Through our MEMBERSHIP DUES!

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

Our NEWSLETTER is published three times a year and provides information essential to anyone involved in cooperation in education through:

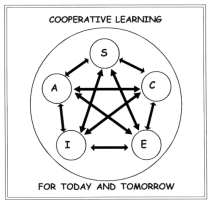
- Research and project reports from the international perspective.
- New ideas from leaders in the field.
- Reports on the latest research and journal publications.
- Book and video reviews.
- New resources for CL on the WWW.
- Articles by international experts on topics such as cooperative learning and computers, cooperative learning with different ages and populations, teacher education and staff development.

Our international and regional conferences bring together cooperative educators from around the world to share ideas, compare successes, discuss challenges, and review the latest research.

The IASCE website, which is supported by membership dues, offers many links to sites related to cooperative learning and announces opportunities for face-to-face learning with internationally recognized leaders in cooperative learning.

- IASCE also offers a membership directory (upon request) for the purposes of networking.
- A list of board members, who are veteran experts in the field, to contact for consultation and professional assistance.
- Occasional discounts on publications and conferences.

Please visit us on the web at:
www.iasce.net



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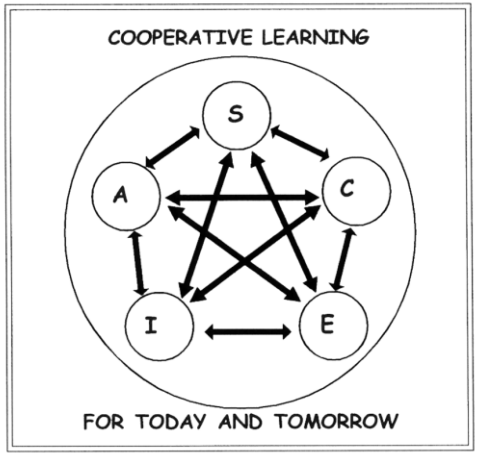

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