

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

<http://www.iasce.net>

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February 2007

Dear Colleagues,

IASCE is pleased to bring you the first member newsletter for 2007. This issue is full of good news and references to good work.

First, the good news: In this issue, we include the official conference announcement of our upcoming, co-sponsored conference in Torino, Italy in January 2008. The conference strands look exciting and varied and we anticipate a lively exchange of ideas that will be greatly enhanced by our collaboration with the International Association for Intercultural Education and the University of Turin. We urge you to join us.

And more good news . . . We are delighted to introduce a new board member, Kazuhiko Sekita. In our next newsletter, we expect to publish details of our upcoming co-sponsored conference in Japan. This conference is scheduled for June 2008 and will be a joint effort with the Japanese Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (JASCE). IASCE is looking forward to celebrating our 30th birthday in Nagoya.

Second, the good works: In this issue, we include reviews of three new books about cooperative learning and cooperative fun. Research by our friend in Singapore, Ivy Tan—with co-authors Christine Lee and Shlomo Sharan—another offering by our newsletter editor George Jacobs, and a volume by Dynamix—the folks who brought us movement, laughter, and serious fun in Manchester, UK—remind us how varied and vital contributions to the field continue to be. Yael Sharan, our Forum coordinator, has, once again, helped to develop a fascinating portrait of cooperative learning implementation. This story, from Turkey, chronicles the thinking and implementation of Emine Supcin, a fifth-grade teacher. Emine's story reminds us of the need to set realistic goals for implementation and reminds us how important it is to think systemically about pedagogical reform. Thank you Emine.

And more good works . . . The journal abstracts included in this issue are interesting and varied. When I think of them as a whole, I can't help but be struck by several recurring themes: the importance of cultural relevance and sensitivity, the importance of the direct teaching of interpersonal and small-group skills, and the importance of modeling.

These are lessons we all need to remember and ideas I am sure we will hear more about in Torino and in upcoming issues of our newsletter.

And more good works . . . We want to thank you--our membership. Our conferences, newsletters, and website are supported by your membership dues. Please accept our thanks and please help us "spread the word" about our upcoming conference in Torino, Italy.

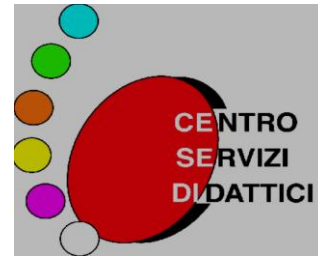
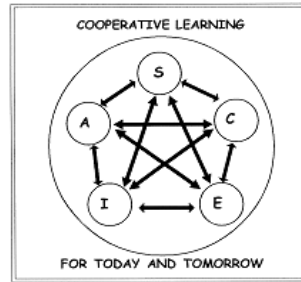
Cooperatively yours,

Lynda

Lynda Baloché
Co-president IASCE

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Università degli
Studi di Torino

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

(Separate website to follow)

COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

An International Conference Organized By

- International Association for Intercultural Education
- International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education
- University of Turin

In Conjunction With

- Cesedi (Centro Servizi Didattici) - Province of Turin

**January 19-22, 2008
Turin, Italy**

The fields of intercultural education, cooperative learning and intercultural awareness will converge at an international conference hosted by several organizations active in the field of cooperative learning.

The conference organizers have combined efforts to convene this conference in response to the critical need to promote communication and cooperation in today's diverse learning communities. The conference offers concerned educators a venue to explore formal and informal educational means for the development of successful cooperation in intercultural education.

At the conference you will be able to interact with other educators who are dealing with the increasing diversity of the ethnic and cultural composition of classrooms, and share your resources and expertise. There will be many opportunities - lectures, workshops, symposia and informal interaction - to exchange ideas about theory and practice for enhancing cooperation in intercultural classrooms and societies, as well as to learn new methodologies and skills. The conference aims to engage educators in discussion about ways to:

- increase students' meaningful, active participation in learning
- develop teachers' and students' positive attitudes towards and acceptance of diversity
- promote equal access to knowledge for all students
- manage diversity in a learning community
- encourage learners' sense of belonging to groups, without the loss of individuality
- enable learners to contribute their diverse interests, experiences and knowledge to the learning experience
- refine research design in cooperative learning and intercultural education.

The language of the conference will be English, with several workshops during the pre-conference in Italian.

Conference Strands

The conference invites presentations that address theory and practice, and traditional and action research in the following areas:

- **Building Cooperation and Resolving Conflict in Schools and Communities with Diverse Populations**

Large-scale and/or long-term planning and implementation projects for school improvement and reform that incorporate cooperative learning. Models and programs for the development of cooperative social skills for conflict resolution in settings where cultural diversity may lead to social adversity.

- **Cooperative Learning in In-service Teacher Training**

Projects and programs to prepare teachers who value collaboration and cooperative learning and contribute to sustainable incorporation of cooperative learning principles and methodologies in their work.

- **Using Cooperative Learning for Intercultural Education, Social Justice and Equity**

Examining the close connection between intercultural education, social justice and equity issues and the role of cooperative learning. How does cooperative learning promote the development of critical attitudes, responsibility, independence and democratic citizenship.

- **High Quality Implementation of Cooperative Learning**

Task design, strategies and models of CL that address the challenge of rigorous implementation in varying subject areas at all levels, including second language learning, inter-religious understanding and adaptation of CL in the specific context of intercultural classrooms.

- **Cooperative Learning in Higher Education** Projects, models and programs that address the challenges of cooperative learning in colleges and universities.

- **Promoting Intercultural Dialogue Through Technology**

Ways that collaboration on online interactions and other technologies contributes to understanding and strengthening of cultural diversity.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Saturday and Sunday, January 19th and 20th, 2008

Two pre-conference days - half-day intensive experiential workshops for those who wish to learn more about

- the implementation of cooperative learning in specific settings
- the intercultural classroom
- intercultural education and social justice

Monday and Tuesday, January 21st and 22nd, 2008

Two days of plenary sessions, symposia and informal interaction.

A **Call For Papers** will follow In February/March 2007 on a separate conference website, together with more information about fees and other details. Check the IASCE website: <http://www.iasce.net>

How to Subscribe to the CL List

Want to dialogue with others about your use of CL? Not receiving enough email (hahaha)? 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@vegetarian-society.org, and he'll do the necessary. Talk to you soon!



From the Bookshelf

We are pleased to feature three CL-relevant books this issue.

1. Tan, I. G.-C., Sharan, S., & Lee, C. K.-E. (2006). *Group Investigation and student learning: An experiment in Singapore schools*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish.

A study compared CL and Whole-Class instruction and found no significant differences on either academic achievement or motivation to learn. That sounds a bit disheartening, doesn't it? Please think again. This book, which reports that study, is one that everyone concerned with the use of CL and research on CL will want to read, as reading the book will strengthen our resolve to use CL and to improve our understanding of how to use it well.

The study was done as doctoral dissertation research by the first author, Ivy Tan, one of the organizers of the 2004 IASCE conference in Singapore. Tan's co-authors, Shlomo Sharan and Christine Lee (chair of the 2004 conference), helped supervise the research. The study involved two groups of Singapore secondary school students (approximately age 14). The three classes in the control group studied via Whole-Class (WC) instruction, while the four classes in the treatment group used the Group Investigation (GI) method of CL (Sharan & Sharan, 1992). Dependent variables were academic achievement, motivation to learn, and perceptions of GI as measured by written statements. Results showed no statistically significant differences between the two groups as to academic achievement or motivation to learn. In other words, each group (WC and GI) did as well as the other, with neither group coming out ahead on achievement. As to perception of GI, based on analysis of 900 written statements, two-thirds of those in the experimental group were considered to have indicated a positive view of the method, while one-third were considered as holding an overall negative view.

Among the book's many useful features are:

- a. An overview of six CL methods - Student Team Learning, Jigsaw, Structural Approach, Learning Together, Complex Instruction, and Group Investigation - in terms of their philosophy, academic goal, social goal, process of learning and characteristics of the tasks typically used
- b. An explanation of the theoretical foundations of Group Investigation
- c. A review of research on CL, including research done in Singapore
- d. A critique of research on CL, e.g., the point that "teacher competence, school-wide support for the experiment, class session duration, frequency of class meetings, and so forth, are often allowed to vary uncontrolled in experiments, making their comparison problematic" (p. 43).

Perhaps the two most interesting sections of the book are the preface by Seymour Sarason, who has written extensively on school change (e.g., Sarason, 1996) and the authors' discussion of the study's results. Sarason argues that changes in instructional methods need to occur in tandem with "appropriate changes in the school's expectations for student learning and social behavior in classrooms. Otherwise the students are likely to feel anxious and insecure about the consequences of learning in a way to which they had not been exposed previously" (p. ix).

In the book's discussion chapter, the authors make a similar point and urge that future researchers attempt to broaden their efforts to prepare students, teachers and other players in the educational drama for the use of innovative approaches to learning. Tan, Sharan, and Lee also note that the majority positive view of GI by those students who had experienced the method gives hope that with proper preparation students can adapt to student-centered approaches.

Fortunately, as can be seen elsewhere in this issue of the *IASCE Newsletter*, such as in the report from Turkey, cooperative learning and other aspects of the student-centered educational paradigm are becoming more common. Indeed, this study played a part in promoting change in Singapore because it exposed four classes of students to a picture of what education can be. Thus, perhaps even when the dependent variables in a control-group/experimental group study fail to show special benefits for CL, CL may still be of benefit, because it lays the groundwork for change by showing students and teachers the potential of student-centered learning and by helping them learn how to carry it out. In conclusion, this book is worth reading, as it assists us in understanding the paradigm shift toward student-centered learning, how to implement it, and why it is so important.

References

Sarason, S. (1996). *Revisiting "The culture of school and the problem of change."* New York: Teachers College Press.

Sharan, Y., & Sharan, S. (1992). *Expanding cooperative learning through Group Investigation.* Colchester, VT: Teachers College Press.

2. Shephard, C., & Treseder, P. (2002). *Participation: Spice it up!* Swansea, Wales: Dynamix Ltd. Serious Fun (www.seriousfun.demon.co.uk), published by Save the Children Fund U.K. 159 pp. £18.95

Reviewed by Yael Sharan, yaelshar@zahav.net.il

Archipelago? The Wind Blows? Zombies? Not exactly titles that we're used to hearing in the cooperative learning classroom. These and many others (some with more familiar sounding names) are in this book, which is written in the lively spirit of the Dynamix team that demonstrated their concept of "serious fun" at the IASCE conference in Manchester in 2002. The book includes many of the activities they conducted at the conference and conveys their joy at working with people, at encouraging and enabling the full participation of people of all ages and backgrounds in any setting. These activities are intended to facilitate teambuilding, promote discussion, and clarify values in any setting that calls for participation in planning and decision making.

After spelling out the Dynamix team's purposes and values, the authors list many activities with clear instructions. They add a few words about why they like each activity, when they've used it and suggest adaptations and developments of the activity. In the last chapter, they present detailed "menus" of programs that they actually carried out with various groups, using the activities recommended in the book. Finally, they offer a list of resources for further reading.

One of my favorite activities is Archipelago, an activity which we experienced in Manchester. This activity is designed to get people moving and encountering different people. In a circle, everyone stands on a piece of newspaper, (together the pieces of newspaper form the archipelago), scrunches up another piece of newspaper, and throws it into the middle of the circle, where it becomes a "shark." The people are not standing on any ordinary islands, but on an alphabetical archipelago, so they have to rearrange themselves accordingly and, in the process, be careful not to fall into the shark-infested waters. Sounds confusing? Read the directions and it will become easy.

Another not-so-usual activity combines the visual arts and is called "Arty Mural." People are encouraged to express their views on a topic or problem by drawing - in pairs or individually - pictures and images on a large roll of paper hung on the wall. The authors point out that the ideas depicted in the mural can lead to further discussion of possible solutions, points of view, or issues to be investigated in the future.

Above all, these activities follow the Dynamix credo for increasing participation: be flexible, be enthused, have lots of ideas ready, and be uninhibited.

3. McCafferty, S. G., Jacobs, G. M., & DaSilva Iddings, A. C. (Eds.) (2006). *Cooperative learning and second language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

This edited book is the latest addition to the list of books that address the use of CL in second language education. The term "second language education" concerns instruction in any language other than one's first language or mother tongue, e.g., someone born in Italy would probably have Italian as their first language, and if they went to study in a university in China, they would probably need to learn Chinese as a second language.

The book under discussion here has two parts. Part I consists of three chapters by the editors dealing with roots of CL in general education, connections between CL and second language teaching and learning, and issues in implementing CL.

These three chapters lay the foundation for Part II, the main section of the book. Each of the six chapters in Part II contains a narrative by teachers in which they describe their use of CL in a particular setting. There are two chapters each from primary, secondary, and tertiary settings.

The narratives offer considerable variety. While English is the language being studied in most of the chapters, the chapter by Jones and Taylor describes the teaching of French to native-speaking secondary students. The settings also differ geographically, including Canada, Japan, Lebanon, Singapore, and the U.S. Furthermore, the chapter authors used a wide variety of CL methods. Each of the narrative chapters ends with a set of discussion points and tasks.

Some other books related to CL and second language education are listed below.

- Coelho, E. (1994). *Learning together in the multicultural classroom*. Scarborough, ON: Pippin.
- Coelho, E., Winer, L., & Winn-Bell Olsen, J. (1989). *All sides of the issue: Activities for cooperative jigsaw groups*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Ehrman, M. E., & Dornyei, Z. (1998). *Interpersonal dynamics in second language education: The visible and invisible classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gaies, S. J. (1985). *Peer involvement in language learning*. Orlando, FL and Washington, DC: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Hadfield, J. (1992). *Classroom dynamics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- High, J. (1993). *Second language learning through cooperative learning*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publications and Professional Development.
- Holt, D.D. (ed.). 1993. *Cooperative learning: a response to linguistic and cultural diversity*. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems.

- Kessler, C. (Ed.). (1992). *Cooperative language learning: A teacher's resource book*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kluge, D., McGuire, S., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (Eds.). (1999). *Cooperative learning*. Tokyo: Japan Association for Language Teaching.
- Nunan, D. (Ed.). (1992). *Collaborative language learning and teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.



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.

IASCE Forum–Cooperative Learning in Turkey:

A Personal Journey

Emine SUPCIN

This is the latest in the series of Forum members' "calling cards" that describe the development of cooperative learning in their respective countries. The Forum coordinator is IASCE Board member Yael Sharan (yaelshar@zahav.net.il).

Emine Supcin, a fifth grade school teacher in Denizli, Turkey, is frank about

her initial attempts to apply cooperative learning, as part of a project led by the World Bank. IASCE board member Pasi Sahlberg was a consultant to this project. Her description of the difficulties teachers in Turkey have in adapting CL resonates with the challenges other countries faced at the beginning of their adaptation of CL, as we

have learned from many authors in the Forum series.

A few years ago, the Turkish government decided to modernize the education system. This led to renewing the curriculum, new textbooks and teacher education. The educational reform placed strong emphasis on active learning and more communicative and interactive pedagogies. As new materials and curriculum entered the schools, many teachers found it difficult to know how to use them and what was expected of them in the classrooms. This is understandable because most of them were trained in the classical/traditional university system. Universities started to include active learning, including some cooperative learning, in their teacher training programs about 10 years ago. Therefore, only teachers who have fairly recently graduated or have studied further have some understanding of these new pedagogical ideas.

There are more than 300,000 primary school teachers in Turkey. While newer teachers are familiar with alternative methods, materials and activities, more veteran teachers tend to rely on teacher talk and question-asking techniques. Many teachers in Turkey understand that the classical/traditional system will not sustain their motivation to teach well nor sustain students' interest in learning. Yet since most teachers have not been trained to understand and use cooperative learning, this remains a huge challenge to the system. In my school, teachers are like many teachers

anywhere in Turkey - they have not yet adapted to the new system.

My experience

I have been familiarizing myself with cooperative learning for the last year and have realized that I need to do more active learning than I did previously. Mostly I use CL in science and social studies projects. For instance, I plan together with my students the time line, study techniques, and the criteria for evaluation of presentations. I have found myself much more of a guide or coach than an instructor. Also, I combine cooperation with competition by using activities that involve intragroup cooperation and intergroup competition. Here is an example of how I use CL. Students are divided into small groups to study a topic which is part of the curriculum. At the end of their work, I award points for each type of presentation (demonstration, role playing, presenting a model, etc.) After each group's presentation, the other groups grade the presentation according to the criteria agreed upon at the beginning of the project. Awards are presented at the end of the unit at a party on "Project Day," to which parents, teachers, and school officials are invited, and groups exhibit their projects. A committee consisting of a teacher, the headmaster and a parent evaluates the projects. Points that were awarded during the project are added to the points given by the committee. The winning group gets a gift (an aquarium, pencils, books, CDs, or chocolate).

At this point I am emphasizing the social skills that develop when small groups work together. My students are learning that it is often easier to be successful together than alone. Also, I am becoming more creative in using active learning styles.

There is much to be done by the government, by school administrators and by teachers in Turkey in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For this, we must have high quality training

courses on cooperative learning. It is important that school headmasters, inspectors and educational administrators take part in these courses to understand what is required to make teaching and learning more cooperative. Turkey needs fundamental changes in teacher training policies. It will take time, but I believe we will be successful.

Emine SUPCIN

Ahmet Nuri Erikoğlu İlkogretim Okulu

Fatih/Denizli TURKEY

esupcin@kureseldil.com

Intercultural Education and Human Rights Conference - Sep 2007

The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) is the main organizer of a conference titled, "Living Together: Educational and Intercultural Dialogue" to be held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and [Herzegovina](#), September 3-7, 2007. The IAIE (International Association for Intercultural Education - <http://www.iaie.org>) will be responsible for a thematic group titled, "Intercultural Education and Human Rights." For more info on the conference: <http://www.wcces2007.ba>.

From the Journals

Thanks to Rashmi Kumar and Yael Sharan for helping to put together this issue's collection of journal articles.

Naughton, D. [naughton@ugr.es] (2006). Cooperative strategy training and oral interaction: Enhancing small group communication in the language classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 90(2), 169-184.

- * This study focused on the effect of a cooperative strategy training program on the patterns of interaction that arose as small groups of students participated in an oral discussion task. The underlying assumption was that students could be taught to engage with each other and the task in a way that would foster the creation and exploitation of learning opportunities. Intact classes were randomly assigned to the experimental or control condition and triads from within each group were videotaped at the beginning and the end of the experimental intervention. Data taken from the videotapes were analyzed in order to measure changes in overall participation, strategic participation and the use of the individual strategies included in the program. Results showed that prior to strategy training, interaction patterns frequently did not reflect those deemed important for language acquisition as identified within SLA and sociocultural research. Nevertheless, the strategy training program was largely successful in encouraging students to engage in these types of interactional sequences.

Brett, J., Behfar, K., & Kern, M. C. (2006). Managing multicultural teams. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(11), 84-91.

- ***** The authors conducted in-depth interviews with managers and members of multicultural teams from all over the world. Drawing on their extensive research on dispute resolution and teamwork and those interviews, they identify four problem categories that can create barriers to a team's success: direct versus indirect communication, trouble with accents and fluency, differing attitudes toward hierarchy and authority, and conflicting norms for decision making. If a manager-- or a team member--can pinpoint the root cause of the problem, he or she is likelier to select an appropriate strategy for solving it. The most successful teams and managers, the authors found, dealt with multicultural challenges in one of four ways: adaptation (acknowledging cultural gaps openly and working around them), structural intervention (changing the shape or makeup of the team), managerial intervention (setting norms early or bringing in a higher-level manager), and exit (removing a team member when other options have failed). Which strategy is best depends on the particular circumstances--and each has potential complications. In general, though, managers who intervene early and set norms; teams and managers who try to engage everyone on the team; and teams that can see challenges as stemming from culture, not personality, succeed in solving culture-based problems with good humor and creativity. Such managers are the likeliest to harvest the benefits inherent in multicultural teams.

Gillies, R. [r.gilles@uq.edu.au], & Boyle, M. (2006). Ten Australian elementary teachers' discourse and reported pedagogical practices during cooperative learning. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(5), 429-452. [Editor's note: Robyn Gillies is a member of the IASCE Executive Board.]

- * This article describes the types of discourse 10 Australian grade 4-6 teachers used after they had been trained to embed cooperative learning in their curriculum and to use communication skills to promote students' thinking and to scaffold their learning. One audiotaped classroom social science lesson involving cooperative learning was analyzed for each teacher. We provide vignettes from 2 teachers as they worked with groups and from 2 student groups. The data from the audiotapes showed that the teachers used a range of mediated-learning behaviors in their interactions with the children that included challenging their perspectives, asking more cognitive and metacognitive questions, and scaffolding their learning. In turn, in their interactions with each other, the children modelled many of the types of discourse they heard their teachers use. Follow-up interviews with the teachers revealed that they believed it was important to set expectations for children's group behaviors, teach the social skills students needed to deal with disagreement in groups, and establish group structures so children understood what was required both from each other and the task. The teachers reported that mixed ability and gender groups worked best and that groups should be no larger than 5 students. All teachers' programs were based on a child-centered philosophy that recognized the importance of constructivist approaches to learning and the key role interaction plays in promoting social reasoning and learning.

Lou, Y. [ylou@lsu.edu], Bernard, R. M., & Abrami, P. C. (2006). Media and pedagogy in undergraduate distance education: A theory-based meta-analysis of empirical literature. *Educational Technology, Research and Development*, 54(2), 141-176.

- This meta-analysis employs a theoretical framework in quantitatively synthesizing empirical studies that investigate the effects of distance education (DE) versus classroom instruction on undergraduate student achievement. Analyses of 218 findings from 103 studies were conducted according to how media were used to support DE pedagogy. The results indicate that the effect sizes for synchronous instructor-directed DE were consistent and not significantly different from zero; in asynchronous DE, media only supporting independent learning was generally less

effective than media supporting collaborative discussion among students, although both subsets were significantly heterogeneous. Follow-up analysis of asynchronous DE findings was framed in terms of three patterns of interaction-student-content, student-instructor and student-student.

Smialek, T. [tws4@psu.edu], & Boburka, R. R. [rboburka@po-box.esu.edu] (2006). The effect of cooperative listening exercises on the critical listening skills of college music-appreciation students. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54(1), 57-72.

- * The authors investigated the effectiveness of cooperative listening exercises in developing critical music-listening skills in nonmusic majors. Subjects were college freshmen and sophomores enrolled in Introduction to Western Music. Control-group subjects attended classes taught exclusively in lecture format. Two experimental groups participated in four 50-minute group-listening exercises. Experimental Group 2 engaged in five additional group-analysis exercises, comparing known and unfamiliar musical styles. The consistent use of cooperative-listening exercises proved to be more effective in developing subjects' critical listening skills than either lecture-demonstration or occasional group work. On final exams, Experimental Group 2 scored significantly better than the other groups on identifications of texture, compositional genre, and musical style. To be most effective, group work needs to be implemented on a regular basis-for both the introduction of new material and for its review or application.

Walker, L. [lorenn@hawaii.rr.com] (2006). Violence prevention through cooperative learning. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 15(1), 32-36.

- * The author combines principles of cooperative learning where older students at risk of dropping out are recruited to teach violence prevention to younger learners. The secondary students learn problem solving and conflict resolution skills while providing a positive model through cross age peer tutoring.

Prichard, J. S. [J.Prichard@soton.ac.uk], Bizo, L. A., & Stratford, R. J. (2006). The education impact of team-skills training: Preparing students to work in groups. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 119-140.

- Despite a vast literature on collaborative learning (CL), there is little research on preparing students to work collaboratively. This two-phase evaluation investigated whether team-skills training could enhance the performance of collaborative groups through the introduction of a team development programme to a group-based undergraduate key-skills unit. Phase 1 compared two consecutive cohorts of second-year students, Cohort 1 (N = 94) who received no preparation, and Cohort 2 (N = 113) who received team-skills training. Phase 2 added Cohort 3 (N = 88), who also received team-skills training, to extend the analysis. In Phase 1, students in both Cohorts 1 and 2 worked on a series of curriculum based key-skill tasks across two semesters. Students worked in one group in Semester 1 and were then formed into new groups for Semester 2. Effects of the training were measured by student group marks and key-skill ratings. Marks and key-skill ratings were significantly higher for the trained cohort in Semester 1 ($p < .01$). However, in Semester 2 performance reduced for the trained cohort in comparison to Semester 1. To explore this further, Phase 2 of the study evaluated Cohort 3, where after training, collaborative groups remained intact throughout the academic year. Results for Cohort 3 showed no attenuation of performance effects in Semester 2. Phase 1 results support the use of team-skills training to enhance CL group performance. The findings for Phase 2 suggest that these benefits may be lost if training groups are disrupted.

Summers, J. J. [summersje@missouri.edu] (2006). Effects of collaborative learning in math on sixth graders' individual goal orientations from a socioconstructivist perspective. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(3), 273-191.

- Using socioconstructivism as a theoretical framework, this study investigated the ways in which classrooms that used peer learning groups influenced students' goals. Specifically, my goal was to examine collaborative learning as a process that may influence individuals' social and achievement goals. After confirming that 2 sixth-grade math teachers had fundamental beliefs supporting socioconstructivist practices, I administered surveys designed to measure achievement and social goals in their math classes to approximately 200 of their students at 2 times during the school year. I used hierarchical linear modeling techniques, with mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance goals as dependent variables at Time 2 and a selection of social goals and achievement goals as independent variables at Time 1. At the collaborative learning level, shared achievement goals were measured by asking students questions about the importance of group work, calculated as a mean score for students in their respective peer learning groups. For the more experienced math teacher, results

indicated that students in groups that collectively valued the academic goals of group work were likely to adopt individual motivational strategies associated with performance-avoidance goals over time. I discuss explanations for this dynamic and suggestions for future research examining individual goals in the context of socioconstructivist teaching practices.

Yetter, G. [georgette.yetter@okstate.edu], Gutkin, T. B., Saunders, A., Galloway, A. M., et al. (2006). Unstructured collaboration versus individual practice for complex problem solving: A cautionary tale. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 74(2), 137-159.

- * The authors used an experimental design to compare the effectiveness of unstructured collaborative practice with individual practice on achievement on a complex well-structured problem-solving task. Participants included postsecondary students (N = 257) from a liberal arts college serving primarily nontraditional students and from 2 state universities. Three videotaped instructional procedures were used: lessons on (a) introductory set theory, (b) a problem-solving heuristic, and (c) problem-solving modeling. Participants also engaged in active practice. A posttest assessed participant skills. A 2 (individual vs. collaborative treatment condition) × 2 (nontraditional vs. traditional educational setting) analysis of variance revealed significant main effects for treatment condition. Students who practiced individually outperformed those who practiced collaboratively. Limitations and implications for future research are discussed.

Saab, N. [N.Saab@uva.nl], van Joolingen, W. R., van Hout-Wolters, B. H. A. M. (2005). Communication in collaborative discovery learning. *British Journal of Psychology*, 75(4), 603-621.

- Constructivist approaches to learning focus on learning environments in which students have the opportunity to construct knowledge themselves, and negotiate this knowledge with others. Discovery learning and collaborative learning are examples of learning contexts that cater for knowledge construction processes. We introduce a computer-based learning environment in which the two forms of learning are implemented simultaneously. We focus on the interaction between discovery learning and collaborative learning. We aim to investigate which communicative activities are frequently used in the discovery learning process and which communicative and discovery activities co-occur. The study involved 21 pairs of 10th-grade students enrolled in pre-university education, ranging from 15 to 17

years of age. Participants worked in dyads on separate screens in a shared discovery learning environment. They communicated using a chat box. In order to find a possible relationship between communicative activities and discovery learning processes, correlational analysis and principal component analysis were performed. Significant relationships were found between communicative and discovery activities, as well as five factors combining the communicative process and the discovery learning processes. Communicative activities are performed most frequently during the activities in generating hypotheses, experimental design, and conclusion construction. Argumentation occurs less than expected, and is associated with the construction of conclusions, rather than generating hypotheses. Communicative activities co-occur with discovery activities most of the time, as we expected. Further research should concentrate on means to augment communicative and discovery activities that are related to positive learning outcomes.

Phuong-Mai, N., Terlouw, C., & Pilot, A. (2006). Culturally appropriate pedagogy: the case of group learning in a Confucian Heritage Culture context. *International Education, 17*(1), 1-19.

- * Cultural heritage preservation has become a much-debated topic in recent decades. This paper contributes to the call for educational approaches that take a society's cultural diversity into account. It also attempts to draw attention to non-Western societies, where educational theories and practices from elsewhere (the West) have been imported and sometimes applied without proper consideration for the host culture's heritage. To illustrate the intricacy of developing such a culturally appropriate pedagogy, a case study of using group learning strategies in a Confucian Heritage Cultural context is introduced, which closely examines both educational and cultural issues. The results of this examination reveal a complex of cultural conflicts and mismatches that are likely to happen when a Western educational methodology is applied in another context without rigorous adaptation to improve compatibility with the host culture.

(**** by Yael Sharan) This article is particularly instructive for those who wish to learn more about the potential conflicts between Western and Asian styles of learning. The authors describe many characteristics of Asian learning styles, but I believe could benefit from a broader view of CL principles. It would be interesting to learn what our colleagues in Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan have to say about the adaptation of CL to a Confucian Heritage Cultural context.

One of the sources the above article draws on is Hofstede, G., & Hofstede, J. (2005), *Cultures and organization-software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Hofstede and Hofstede have developed a model that suggests several dimensions along which cultures vary and have translated it into some classroom issues which require special consideration, such as:

- the effectiveness of group learning
- how to phrase questions to a group
- expectations from the teacher's role
- how structured a group task should be
- male vs. female status in groups.

- * Abstract accompanied the article
- ** Abstract from ERIC - <http://www.eric.ed.gov> - or other database.
- *** Abstract is the introduction to the article
- **** Abstract written for this compilation



IASCE Welcomes New Executive Board Member

IASCE is proud to welcome a new member to our Executive Board, Professor Kazuhiko Sekita of the Faculty of Education at Soka University in Japan. At Soka, Dr Sekita teaches courses such as classroom management, instructional technology, and educational psychology. He is also a founder and the vice-president of the Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (JASCE). As such, he is very involved with the planning of the IASCE conference scheduled for June, 2008 in Nagoya, Japan.

Among the books that Professor Sekita has translated into Japanese is *Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom* by David Johnson, Roger Johnson, and Karl Smith. Currently, Kazuhiko is involved in a research project about the effectiveness of cooperative learning in elementary schools that are using inclusion programs for special needs students. The project team is also translating a book on applications of cooperative learning to inclusive practice.

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r.gilles@uq.edu.au

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george@vegetarian-society.org
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The World Bank
Washington, DC
psahlberg@WORLDBANK.ORG

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Soka University
Tokyo, Japan
sekitakazuhiko@yahoo.co.jp

Yael Sharan
Group Investigation Projects (GRIP)
Tel Aviv, Israel
yaelshar@zahav.net.il

Larry Sherman
Miami University of Ohio
Oxford, Ohio, USA
shermalw@muohio.edu

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.

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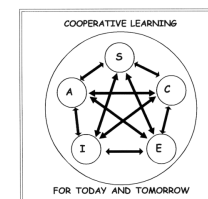
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Our international and regional conferences bring together cooperative educators from around the world to share ideas, compare successes, discuss challenges, and review the latest research.

The IASCE website, which is also supported by membership dues, offers many links to sites related to cooperative learning and announces opportunities for face-to-face learning about cooperative learning.

- IASCE also offers a membership directory (upon request) for the purposes of networking.
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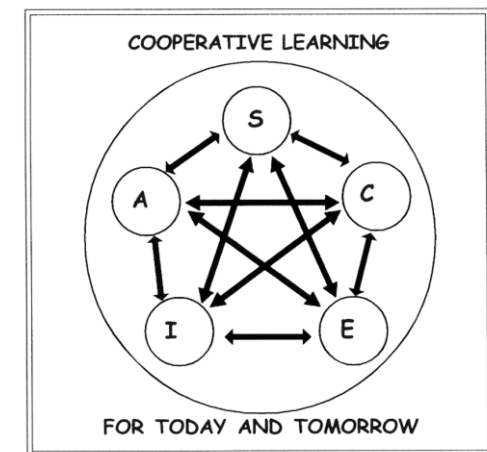
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