

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION**
<http://www.iasce.net>
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July 2008

Dear Colleagues:

IASCE is pleased to bring you our second member newsletter of 2008.

As you know, 2008 has already been a busy year for the IASCE. In January we traveled to Torino, Italy and in June to Nagoya, Japan. In Nagoya, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the founding of the IASCE and were fortunate to co-sponsor a conference with the Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education. The beauty of Japan, the graciousness and careful planning of JASCE, a fascinating day visiting an elementary school in Inuyama, and enthusiastic and diverse conference participants all contributed to making Nagoya vibrant and memorable. We are most grateful to JASCE for making this conference possible.

If I were to sum up my trip to Japan in a single word, I think that word would be balance. Throughout Japan, I was struck by the juxtaposition of ancient temples and modern trains, ornate architecture and simple gardens, large cities and small neighborhood shrines. At the conference itself, I was delighted by the juxtaposition of an exploration of the history of cooperative learning and the IASCE (special thanks to board member Yael Sharan) with participation and presentations from the new voices of young researchers, graduate students, and teachers. For me, each of these juxtapositions made sense and seemed, when viewed as a whole, to represent a balance similar to that offered by cooperative learning itself—a balance that includes and values both positive interdependence and individual responsibility, both reflection and planning, both strong academic learning and the careful development of interpersonal skills.

In January, IASCE announced a new awards program. In Nagoya, we were delighted to present the first Elizabeth G. Cohen Award to Julia Tsu-chia Hsu. Additional information about Julia, her work, and this award is included in this newsletter. We expect future awards to be presented in conjunction with our international conferences. Please remember to visit our website to learn more about the IASCE awards program.

In January, IASCE also announced that we would be holding board-member elections. We are delighted to welcome three new board members: Lalita Agashe, Rich Cangro, and Laurie Stevahn. Please visit our website to learn more about them. We also extend our best wishes to Larry Sherman who is leaving the board. Among other contributions to the IASCE, he developed the first IASCE website, was a guiding force for the Ohio conference in 1996, and created a terrific visual history of the organization for the Nagoya conference. Thank you Larry.

We expect the remainder of 2008 to be busy. We will be sponsoring a strand focused on cooperative learning at the upcoming conference of the International Association for Intercultural Education. This conference will be in June 2009 in Athens, Greece. We are pleased to continue our collaboration with IAIE that began at our Torino conference. Please watch our website for further details. We would love to see you in Athens.

As always, we hope you find this issue of our newsletter helpful. Please remember to share the newsletter with your colleagues. Thank you for your support.

Cooperatively yours,



Lynda Baloche
Co-president IASCE

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Over 200 Attend “Cooperative Learning in Japan and the World” Conference

The joint IASCE/JASCE (Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education) conference, “Cooperative Learning in Japan and the World”, June 6-8, 2008 in Nagoya, Japan was attended by more than 200 people from 13 countries, mostly from Asia/Pacific, also from North America, Europe, and Africa. The conference, IASCE’s second in Asia after the 2004 Singapore conference, included bilingual Japanese-English sessions, as well as Japanese only and English only sessions. In all, there were more than fifty papers sessions (including Roundtable papers), nine workshops, two plenary sessions, and two guest lectures. Furthermore, two Japanese newspapers featured coverage of the conference.

The presentations covered a wide variety of topics. Among the more familiar topics were: CL and PBL (Problem-Based Learning), building peaceful communities, inclusive education, faculty collaboration, bridging cultural differences, problems in CL implementation, CL in classes of different sizes, CL in language teaching, and Celebratory Learning. Among the less familiar topics were: Lesson Study and CL, and students' readiness for CL. A welcome surprise was the participation of Barbara and David Shwalb, who had been active in IASCE in Utah, USA in the 1980s and had attended IASCE conferences back then. Their presentations explored the cultural context of CL among Native Americans. A conference highlight for many people came when Prof. Shuji Sugie of Chukyo University, a driving force in CL in Japan and the conference chair, had an opportunity to demonstrate his Buzz Group method.

The conference began on Friday, June 6, with a day-long field trip for interested participants. In the morning, we travelled to Inuyama, a city that for many years has been at the forefront of CL in Japan. We spent a few hours at an elementary school there, visiting classes and talking with teachers and administrators, before enjoying a Japanese lunch. The afternoon was spent in tourist mode, first at Inuyama Castle, designated as a National Treasure, and then on the grounds of a traditional tea house.

Saturday and Sunday, 7 and 8 June, were spent in more traditional conference mode. As the conference marked the 30th anniversary of IASCE’s founding in 1979, a sense of our history was brought out in several ways. First, both keynoters, Masato Takahata and Yael Sharan, reflected on the evolution of CL. Professor Takahata of Chugoku Gakuen University showed a video of CL in use in Japan about 30 years ago, and Yael, of the IASCE Board of Directors, spoke about the early days of IASCE. A second way that our history was brought out was in a poster display of the history of CL in a wide variety of countries, from Korea to Finland. The third and more visual way was IASCE Board member Larry Sherman's photographic history of all past IASCE conferences, featuring their locations and the people who had attended.

The conference’s historical tone was also featured in statements from past leaders of IASCE, including Shlomo Sharan, an IASCE co-founder and past president, who wrote in part:

It is a source of considerable satisfaction to all advocates, researchers and practitioners of Cooperative Learning and Cooperative Teacher Staff Work that the ideas that first propelled this Association into existence in 1979 have proven sufficiently viable and resilient to sustain its vitality for the past 29 years. I am sure that each and every member has made a critical contribution. In addition, this Association always recognized its sources in the work of the great educators of the 19th and 20th century, namely John Dewey, John Goodlad and Seymour Sarason, among others. Continuity with the

relevant past adds considerable stability and a deep dimension of identity to all professional undertaking in the field of classroom instruction.

Last, but not least, the conference's historical element was also honored via a birthday cake and Happy Birthday songs enjoyed after dinner on Saturday evening.

Each of the conference participants went away with different memories. Perhaps the most oft-mentioned memory was of how friendly everyone was despite the language barriers. The relatively small size of the conference, the field trip on the opening day, and the conference organizers' ever-ready smiles and offers of assistance set a tone that encouraged participants to meet new people and discuss burning issues.

Other than the conference organizers, perhaps the friendliest group at the conference were the youthful teachers from Korea who represented the Korea Cooperative Learning Association. One of them in particular, Lee Jae Hoon, brought smiles to everyone as he went around with his video camera conducting interviews for what he dubbed CNN (Cooperative News Network). He works at a school in Korea run according to the principles of the late Polish educator Janusz Korczak. Another conference memory is of a slogan that Professor Takahata told us is used in the implementation of CL in Japan where students are urged to "Ask until you understand, and teach until everyone understands."

Many people asked where the next IASCE conference would be held, and people from two different countries came forward to offer to organize such an event. Furthermore, two other possibilities exist. See the Letter from the Co-President on p. 1 for news about Athens in June, 2009. More news will appear on the IASCE website – <http://www.iasce.net> – and in this newsletter. Furthermore, many electronic means, such as the CL List (see elsewhere in this issue for details), exist for CL practitioners and researchers to exchange ideas.

Conference photos (courtesy of Pam Flood and Emily Liebling of Maine Support Network) can be viewed at: <http://picasaweb.google.com/emily.gearup/JASCEIASCENagoyaJapan2008>

Julia Tsu-chia Hsu Receives First IASCE Elizabeth G. Cohen Award for Outstanding Dissertation in Cooperative Learning

At the 30th anniversary IASCE conference in Nagoya, Japan, jointly sponsored with JASCE (Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education), in June 2008, Julia Tsu-chia Hsu received IASCE's inaugural Elizabeth G. Cohen Award for Outstanding Thesis/Dissertation in the field of cooperative learning. Her thesis, completed in 2008 through the School of Education, University of Durham, England, is titled, "A Cooperative Task-Based Learning Approach to Motivating Low Achieving Readers of English in a Taiwanese University."

The Study

This action research grew out of Dr Hsu's concerns while teaching university students in Taipei, Taiwan. Students with low achievement levels are required to study English in order to pass their final qualification for the bachelor's degree. However, these students often have low levels of motivation. Julia wanted to improve her own practice and demonstrate that it is possible to bring new methods into traditional, lecture-oriented classrooms, with a view to inspiring such students and improving universities for the future.

Dr Hsu located her problem within the political and policy context of higher education in Taiwan, showing the need for change in teaching and learning to position Taiwanese to compete in the global economies. Based on a careful review of the literature on foreign language learning, motivation theory, task-based learning approaches and cooperative learning, she created an imaginative research design where she was both the teacher and researcher. Using a group of designated low achieving students in one of her English classes, she carefully structured cooperative group strategies using a task-based approach for improving reading skills. She used several data collection instruments focusing on the responses of students to the new methods and whether their motivation for reading English increased. The findings suggest that cooperative group strategies within a task-based approach to reading instruction improved student motivation as well as overall English language proficiency.

The Researcher

Dr Julia Tsu-chia Hsu was born and raised in Taiwan. She obtained her bachelor's degree in English language and literature, and began her career in education as a teacher in a Taipei middle school. Subsequently she studied counseling education in the United States, and following some interim work, she began her doctorate in the School of Education in Durham University, England. For four-and-a-half years, she moved between Taiwan and England and finally received her doctorate in February, 2008. Julia credits the generous guidance and encouragement of her advisor, Professor Michael Byram and her co-advisor, Dr Anwei Feng, in negotiating this journey—one of the most important decisions she has made in her life. (Professor Byram nominated Dr Hsu for the IASCE award.)

At the IASCE conference in Torino, Italy in January, 2008 (jointly sponsored with the International Association for Intercultural Education), Julia presented a paper based on her dissertation. She is confident that this dissertation will not be the last CL-related study she does, "I am very committed to advocating cooperative learning because it greatly benefits both students and their teachers. Researchers and practitioners need to exchange ideas about CL and to develop a two-way path of dialogue. I expect to conduct future research with a variety of students from different nations, ethnicities, religions, and subject areas."

The Award

The Elizabeth G. Cohen Award for Outstanding Dissertation in Cooperative Learning won by Dr Hsu is a new award for the IASCE, but one that is rooted in our history. The Nagoya, Japan conference celebrated the 30th anniversary of our organization founded to promote the development and dissemination of research on cooperative learning and related concepts. Throughout its existence, the IASCE has encouraged educator research and inquiry that fosters understanding of the effects of context—cultural, regional and organizational--on implementing cooperative learning. With this award, the IASCE intends to identify promising educators and researchers in the field of cooperative learning and support their leadership in education.

Elizabeth G. Cohen, for whom this award is named, developed groundbreaking pedagogy that applied sociological theory to promote equity in classrooms. She was single-minded in her pursuit of careful research and excellent practices that built equitable classrooms. Dr Cohen was also a longstanding member of the Board of Directors of the IASCE. At Stanford University, she took particular interest in chairing doctorates in education, including those of many ethnic minorities and women. Dr Hsu's thesis reflects Dr Cohen's values of empowering teachers to conduct classroom research into the barriers that impede students at all levels of education from learning. The IASCE applauds Dr Hsu's intention to improve the conditions under which

university students are expected to learn and how to improve her own practice in the teaching of a second language (English).

http://www.dur.ac.uk/education/news/news_item/?itemno=6677&rehref=%2Feducation%2F&resubj=%20Headlines

A HISTORY OF GLACIE: PART ONE

John Myers, OISE

Editor's note: This is a brief history of one of IASCE's original regional affiliates, the Great Lakes Association for Cooperation in Education (GLACIE). The first part highlights key events. The second part, to appear in the next issue of the IASCE Newsletter, offers an explanation of GLACIE's success.

Origins

The GLACIE network could have formed as early as 1981. A project showing the positive effects of Jigsaw II on academic outcomes and intercultural attitudes among inner-city children in Toronto schools had just been completed (Ziegler, 1981). Results were published and shared with a group of curriculum and race relations consultants from several local school boards around Toronto. While the sessions were well received, follow-up opportunities were lost. We had other demands on our time and energy and our districts had other priorities.

Some of us used cooperative learning in our classes or promoted its use as curriculum consultants, resources teachers, and administrators. Such implementation was not done to promote cooperative learning *per se*, but to show the power of small group work for other purposes. For example, Myers and Taylor (1983) published an account of how STAD promoted academic and non-academic achievement in a diverse multi-ethnic high school Law class.

It was a cold morning in February 1983 when Kemp Rickett, a middle school vice-principal and myself, a curriculum consultant, met outside the Education Centre of the (then) Toronto School Board. We talked about our recent experiences with cooperative group work and thought that it was too powerful a teaching model to allow it to disappear like other initiatives. Our first decision was to contact anyone rumored to be "doing cooperative learning". As a result, we collected a core group of a dozen elementary and secondary school teachers, an elementary school vice-principal and several consultants. We represented several school districts. Our specialties included Social Studies, ESL and Language Arts. Some of us had expertise in Values Education and Race Relations. What we shared was a belief, based in small part on research and in large part on teaching experience, that cooperative small groups had great potential. Most of the members of this founding group came to serve in important positions in GLACIE during its first decade.

Informal Development 1983-1985

At first we met every two months after school to share experiences, with one or two of us taking the lead to demonstrate what we had learned. Cooperative learning proved to be a very complicated innovation with many approaches. Some were simple. Others were not. Our successes encouraged us, but we probably learned more when we were not so successful. We taught each other Jigsaw and Student Team Learning methods, collaborative approaches from the U.K., the Johnson's Learning Together Model, and Group Investigation.

Several developments shaping education in Ontario confirmed our faith. One, the Ministry of Education declared that too much up-front teaching and too little small group learning were occurring. Two, the push to mainstream special education students in regular classrooms led some teachers to see small group techniques as a key strategy for promoting both academic achievement and social acceptance (for example see Myers, 1986 for an account of one such project). Three, cooperative learning was seen as a way to promote ethical reasoning among students at all age levels. Four, new curriculum guidelines for senior elementary and high schools (gr. 7-12), such as those for History and English, mandated the use of small group seminars. Five, the challenge of teaching students whose first language was not English or French led some to view cooperative learning as an important strategy for English language learners.

When we formed a network, Suzanne Ziegler, then the manager of the City of Toronto Board's research department, and Kemp Rickett, now a school principal, were already members of IASCE. We were encouraged to join.

Formal Development 1985-1987

In 1985 six of us went to the international IASCE conference in Regina, Saskatchewan, further west in Canada. We represented a wide range of backgrounds, including myself and Kemp, Mark Brubacher, a secondary school English department head, Jane Gibson, a social studies consultant with a strong elementary and multicultural background, Judy Clarke from the value education centre in Scarborough, and Jean Stevenson, who worked with local co-operative organization in both the and public and private sectors. We met researchers and teachers from around the world who were wrestling with those issues that we were facing. It was quite exciting. It was there that Kemp suggested the name (GLACIE) to represent the international nature of cooperation.

Back in Ontario, we formed a committee and held in-service sessions to expand our membership. For example, we held after-school workshops in a variety of locations around the Metro Toronto area. In these we tried to use an experiential approach in which participants learned by doing. Additionally, during 1985 and 1986, members of our network conducted sessions for both the University of Toronto and York University Faculties of Education. The first GLACIE conference was held in May 1986, co-sponsored by the Ontario Council for Teachers of English. Over 120 people attended. Participants gave the conference quite positive evaluations and made useful suggestions. The conference became an annual event, attracting several hundred participants from Ontario and beyond. Our 23rd conference was held in May, 2008.

Around the time of our first GLACIE conference, our steering committee grew to include members from nine Ontario school boards. GLACIE¹ began publishing a newsletter to share and disseminate ideas. This aspect ceased publication with the 20th conference in 2005. Some of us spent our summers taking courses in one or more cooperative learning approaches.

“Flavour-of-the Month” Years 1988-1993

Interest grew. After-school sessions for 20-25 people in 1986 attracted 50-60 a year later. By the early 1990s we could expect over 100. People started talking about cooperative learning. Administrators who a few years before were asking, "What is this cooperative learning stuff?" now requested professional development sessions with cooperative learning as the main theme. A committee of superintendents representing the six Metro Toronto school boards funded a teachers' manual in cooperative learning. A companion video was produced, and the original manual, *Together We Learn*, was revised for publication by a major publishing firm (Clarke,

Wideman, & Eadie, 1990). A number of local school boards with the Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto formed The Learning Consortium to improve teaching based on the work of Joyce and Showers' Models of Teaching². Cooperative learning was highlighted, with Consortium members involved in research, publication, workshops, and other professional development activities.

Perhaps the pinnacle of the success of the GLACIE network came with the hosting of the IASCE conference in 1993 in Toronto. Since an important goal for any innovation is to be "accepted" by teachers, school districts, faculties and ministries of education, we could say that cooperative learning had "arrived."

Or could we?

GLACIE as an "Institution" 1993-Present

In some ways the second decade and a half has proven the worth of the network. Cooperative learning fell out of favour, as assessment, accountability, multiple intelligences, and brain-based learning caught the imagination of policy-makers, workshop presenters, and the like. In general, conference attendance was reduced for most organizations, even for some promoting mandated priorities. Some organizations folded or cut back severely. I have thought on more than one occasion, "Well we've had a good run, better than most. Is it time to close shop?"

But it hasn't happened. While we no longer do after-school workshops, other organizations have more than filled in the gap with past or present GLACIE members. There is a popular graduate course on cooperative learning at my institution, and cooperative learning is a feature in many teacher education programs in Ontario. We still have a popular annual conference. We established a website in 2000: www.glacie.ca.

Not bad for a bunch of folks doing this on our own time, So, why have we hung in and continued to build for and participate in our network? How can this success be accounted for, given that cooperative learning is not a stated priority for school districts and, thus, not the beneficiary of mandated funding for professional growth?

Part two will offer an explanation and a model for assessing any voluntary network.

Notes

1. Unlike other IASCE branches we wished to have an international character to our network; hence the "Great Lakes" title. We have members in several Canadian provinces and American states, although most of our activity centres in southern Ontario. Some members who belong to G.L.A.C.I.E. are working to form their own local networks elsewhere in Ontario and Quebec
2. According to Joyce and Showers, models of teaching represent sets of instructional strategies designed to meet certain academic and non-academic learning goals. See Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun (2004) and Bennett and Rolheiser (2001).

References

- Bennett, B., & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The artful science of instructional integration*. Toronto: Bookstation, Inc.
- Clarke, J., Wideman, R., & Eadie, S. (1990). *Together we learn*, Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice Hall.

- Joyce, B., Weil, M., & Calhoun, E. (2004). *Models of teaching* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Myers, J. (1986) Co-operative learning techniques and mainstreaming: A Toronto example joining teachers and students. *Council for Exceptional Children Ontario Provincial Federation Newsletter*, 24(1), 1,4.
- Myers, J., & Taylor, M. (1983). Cooperative techniques in the classroom. *Multiculturalism*, 6(3), 7-10.
- Ziegler, S. (1981). The effectiveness of cooperative learning teams for increasing cross-ethnic friendships. *Human Organization*, 40(3), 1-11.

John Myers is a curriculum instructor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and was the first chair of GLACIE.

Lynda Baloche, IASCE Co-President, Receives Award for Work in Cooperation

Dr. Lynda Baloche, IASCE Co-President, was named the 2008 recipient of the Council of Trustees Achievement Award at the university where she teaches, West Chester University of Pennsylvania (USA), for her recent professional work and unique contributions to the area of cooperation in education.

Professor Baloche has distinguished herself in the discipline of cooperative learning in several respects. She is recognized for her long-time leadership in the IASCE and in CL generally. This leadership has been displayed through international conferences on CL - Singapore, Cyprus, Torino, Italy and Nagoya, Japan – to name just a few. Her well recognized book, *The Cooperative Classroom: Empowering Learning*, has recently been translated into Chinese.

Lynda is known for her ability to bridge the theory and practice of cooperative learning in original and creative ways that speak to teachers at all levels of education. As one of her colleague’s at WCU writes, “She is certainly a respected national and international researcher, author and presenter in the area of cooperative learning.” The University review committee noted her extensive commitment to cooperation in her collegial role at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. They described Lynda as a “facilitator” who “encourages cooperation among fellow faculty members, administrators and support staff to achieve a common goal.”

Congratulations, Lynda!



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 Journals



Felder, R. M., & Prince, M. J. (2007). The case for inductive teaching. *ASEE Prism*, 17(2), 55. Retrieved June 26, 2008 from [http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Induction\(PRISM\).pdf](http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Induction(PRISM).pdf)

Note: the editor apologizes for a poorly written abstract of this article in the previous issue of *IASCE Newsletter*. Here is a better one.

* This brief article explains what inductive teaching is, with examples of methods that utilize inductive teaching, such as problem-based learning. The article goes on to situate inductive teaching as flowing from a constructivist view of learning and links inductive teaching with active learning, as well as with collaborative and cooperative learning. The authors state that research supports the use of inductive teaching but caution educators that students may be resistant to methods that place upon students more of the burden for their own learning. Finally, the authors recommend that educators familiarize themselves with best practice in inductive instruction.

* Indicates that this abstract was written specially and did not appear with the article

Related articles by the same authors include:

a. Prince, M. J., & Felder, R. M. (2006). Inductive teaching and learning methods: Definitions, comparisons, and research bases, *Journal of Engineering Education*, 95(2), 123–138. Retrieved June 26, 2008 from <http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Papers/InductiveTeaching.pdf>

b. Prince, M. J., & Felder, R. M. (2007). The many faces of inductive teaching and learning, *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 36(5), 14–20. Retrieved June 26, 2008 from [http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Papers/Inductive\(JCST\).pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Papers/Inductive(JCST).pdf)

Tan, I., G. C. [ivy.tan@nie.edu.sg], Sharan, S., & Lee, C. K. E. (2007). Group Investigation effects on achievement, motivation, and perceptions of students in Singapore. *Journal of Educational Research*, 100(3), 142-154.

In an experiment conducted in 7 eighth-grade (Ages 13-14) classes in Singapore, the authors evaluated the effects of the group investigation method of cooperative learning versus the effects of the traditional whole-class method of instruction on students' academic achievement and on their motivation to learn. The authors also investigated students' perceptions of group investigation. Students in group investigation and in whole-class instruction advanced to the same extent over the course of the experiment. Neither method was more effective academically than the other method. As expected, the high-achieving students had significantly

higher academic achievement than did the low-achieving students. The group investigation method did not have differential effects on the 2 groups of high and low achievers. Group investigation affected high achievers' motivation to learn on the Criteria subscale only.

Hanson-Smith, E. [ehansonsmi@gmail.com](2008). Trends in digital media, 2007. *TESL-EJ*, 11(4). Retrieved April 8, 2008 from <http://tesl-ej.org/ej44/a2.html>

The world of CALL is changing rapidly, but there are three major trends that can be perceived as significant to language teaching and learning and likely to remain so over the next several years. This paper will discuss these trends--convergence, searchability, and collaboration--and offer examples of interesting websites that illustrate them.

Broussard, S. R., La Lopa, J. M., & Ross-Davis, A. (2007). Synergistic knowledge development in interdisciplinary teams. *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education*, 36, 129-133.

Problem solving, interpersonal skills, information literacy, and critical and independent thinking are essential qualities that employers seek, yet many undergraduates lack. We structured an interdisciplinary classroom and experiential learning environment where students from three undergraduate courses (Hospitality and Tourism Management, Landscape Architecture, and Forestry and Natural Resources) designed a sustainable community master plan by investigating the economic, social, and environmental components of a U.S. highway relocation project. Interdisciplinary teams of students were charged with a "problem" that was articulated in the form of a Request for Proposals (RFP). This RFP served as the basis for the group work, which required an interdisciplinary approach. The ability of students to work together to complete the project was analyzed using the construct of synergistic knowledge development (SKD), a process by which a group constructively integrates diverse perspectives of individual group members. We posited that SKD would increase over the semester and that SKD would be influenced by various team dynamics such as task conflict, psychological safety, social interaction, attitudes toward problem-based learning (PBL) in a team setting, and behavioral styles of team members. Assessment of SKD and the variables hypothesized to influence it were assessed via a survey administered after the initial phase of the project and a post-project survey. Results confirmed how social interaction, psychological safety, and attitudes toward PBL in a team setting influence SKD.

Leinonen, P., & Bluemink, J. (2008). The distributed team members' explanations of knowledge they assume to share. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 20(1), 38-53.

Purpose - Evaluation of the knowledge that is shared among team members has been found to be a prerequisite for successful collaborative teamwork. In previous research on collaborative learning and work, shared knowledge has mainly been evaluated by researchers, and an individual's own perspective has been omitted. In this study the aim was to investigate how members of a distributed team explain knowledge that they assume to be shared and how an assessment tendency is related to these explanations.

Design/methodology/approach - Two distributed teams worked for two months to solve project tasks that demanded discussions and generating new ideas. Subjective explanations of their shared knowledge were studied by means of stimulated recall interviews. The concept of assessment tendency was employed to understand the differences in these explanations. Team members' assessment tendencies were examined with the assessment scale questionnaire.

Findings - Qualitative content analyses of interviews showed that explanations of shared knowledge did not focus only on contents or the outcomes of the project tasks. Instead, the distributed team members presumed their shared knowledge in terms of common goals and collaborative working processes. These evaluations were related to the outcomes of the teams. In addition, the results showed those who were proficient at assessment strategies stressed collaborative working as a shared construction process and they aimed for creation of new knowledge.

Practical implications - Interpersonal evaluation of shared knowledge is especially needed to support distributed collaborative work. However, instead of focusing on sharing and managing documents, more attention should be paid to sharing of social processes, such as setting a common goal. Originality/value - In this paper shared knowledge is conceptualised as knowledge which is developed through situated interrelations between individuals.

Sweeney, A., Weaven, S., & Herington, C. (2008). Multicultural influences on group learning: A qualitative higher education study. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(2), 119-132.

Although the literature examining the usefulness of group projects is extensive, the link between cooperative learning, group performance and skills transfer in multicultural contexts remains unclear. Focus groups were conducted with a sample of 107 international and domestic postgraduate and undergraduate marketing students to investigate this link. Results confirm that group work facilitates the development of interpersonal skills, cross-cultural collaboration and higher-level learning. While there is the promise of transfer of learning to other situations, group learning effectiveness appears conditional on instructors preparing, coaching and debriefing students as to the expected benefits associated with participation in group projects throughout the semester. In addition, limited differences were observed between how international and domestic students responded to group activities, although this may (in part) be due to subtle differences in preconceived attitudes to group learning activities from the outset.

Pratt, D. (2008). Lina's Letters: A 9-year-old's perspective on what matters most in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89(7), 515-518.

* The author compiles and comments on the advice to educators of a 9-year-old who had transferred from a traditional public school that emphasized tests, worksheets, and strict discipline. Lina shifted to a charter schools that used ideas from the Tribes Learning Community philosophy - <http://www.tribes.com/index.html> - including cooperative learning.

* Indicates that this abstract was written specially and did not appear with the article

Mynard, J. [mynardjo@hotmail.com], & Almarzouqi, I. [Iman.Almarzouqi@fgb.ae] (2006). Investigating peer tutoring. *ELT Journal*, 60(1), 13-22.

This article gives an overview of a piece of qualitative research conducted at a women's university in the United Arab Emirates. The aim of the study was to evaluate the English language peer tutoring programme in order to highlight benefits and challenges, and to make informed improvements. The study drew particularly on participant perceptions and observations of the programme. It identified various benefits for tutors such as learning through teaching and becoming more responsible while doing something worthwhile to help others. Benefits for tutees included improved levels of self-confidence and English language aptitude. The study also highlighted several challenges associated with the high dependence and low

metacognitive awareness demonstrated by the tutees. In addition, tutors were not always able to offer appropriate assistance. Improvements to the programme could include increasing faculty involvement, improving tutee awareness of the aims of the programme, and providing additional assistance to tutors.

Kamps, D. M. [dkamps@ku.edu], Greenwood, C., Arreaga-Mayer, C, Veerkamp, M. B., et al. (2008). The efficacy of ClassWide Peer Tutoring in middle schools. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 31(2), 119-152.

The majority of research on the efficacy of ClassWide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) is based on research with urban elementary students (Rohrbeck, Ginsberg-Block, Fantuzzo, & Miller, 2003), with much less research in middle schools. This study investigated CWPT with 975 middle school students in 52 classrooms, grades 6 through 8, over a three-year period. A mixed design combining features of both group (interrupted time-series) and single-subject reversal designs was used to evaluate the effects of traditional teacher-led instruction vs. CWPT. Results favored CWPT with effect sizes, based on weekly quizzes, indicating moderate to large effects overall ($M = 1.11$) but with some range across classrooms and content. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.

Munoz, C. [munoz@fdu.edu], & Huser, A. (2008). Experiential and cooperative learning: Using a situational analysis project in Principles of Marketing. *Journal of Education for Business*, 83(4), 214-219.

In this article, the authors propose a semester-long experiential-learning project for introductory marketing students. The project requires an analysis of a product category, competition, and consumer base to support a new product proposal. The purpose is to (a) put into practice the concepts and definitions taught in an introductory marketing course, (b) create a foundation for doing an undergraduate business plan, (c) improve research, analysis, communication, and teamwork skills, and (d) provide an opportunity for creative thinking. The authors provide a description of the situation analysis project and supplemental preliminary assignments. They also provide an outcomes assessment with current and former college students.

Wade, S. E., Fauske, J. R. [jfauske@sar.usf.edu], & Thompson, A. (2008). Prospective teachers' problem solving in online peer-led dialogues. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(2), 398-442.

In this self-study of a secondary teacher education course, the authors investigated whether there was evidence of critically reflective problem solving on the part of prospective teachers who participated in a peer-led online discussion of a teaching case about English-language learners. They also examined what approaches to multicultural education the peer-led dialogues suggested. Using the tools of discourse analysis to analyze the dialogue, they found some evidence of reflective problem solving. However, few students engaged in critical reflection, which entails examining the sociopolitical consequences of solutions and promoting social change through community action projects. Furthermore, many responses reflected deficit theories, stereotypical thinking, and technical-rational problem solving. Interwoven with the analysis of the students' discussion is a self-study dialogue reflecting on the instructor's curriculum and pedagogy. The self-study addresses what the authors have learned about how teacher educators foster critically reflective problem solving regarding issues of language, culture, and race.

Oliveira, A. W., & Sadler, T. D. (2008). Interactive patterns and conceptual convergence during student collaborations in science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 45(5), 634-658.

This study examines cognitive and social processes in group interactions that shape collaborative learning in science classrooms. Three small groups of students were observed while working collaboratively on explaining the burning of a candle under a jar. The learning environment served as a context for examination of conceptual convergence, a process wherein students construct shared meanings for science concepts through gradual refinement of ambiguous, partial meanings presented in group space. Despite engaging in the same activity with very similar instructional supports, the groups displayed very different patterns of interaction and achieved varied degrees of conceptual convergence. One group collaborated effectively and displayed evidence of individual conceptualizations of science content converging to establish a more well-informed shared conceptualization. The other groups were not as successful, each for unique reasons. Problems demonstrated in one group included lack of self-confidence, poor monitoring of group learning, and active avoidance of potentially fruitful conceptual conflicts. The other group struggled primarily because of a combative social context. The major educational significance of this study was the identification of social context and interactive patterns, group approaches to conceptual conflicts, and instructors' roles in collaborative activities as crucial aspects of productive group learning.

Denessen, E. [e.denessen@pwo.ru.nl], Veenman, S., Dobbelsteen, J., & Van Schilt, J. (2008). Dyad composition effects on cognitive elaboration and student achievement. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 76(4), 363-386.

The authors addressed the following research question: Does composition of dyads in terms of gender and ability affect student participation, the level of cognitive elaborations during a collaborative activity, and individual student achievement? The study involved 24 6th-grade dyads paired as follows: a low-ability student with a medium-ability student; and a medium-ability student with a high-ability student. Results of a follow-up balance beam test showed students with the highest level of ability in the dyad demonstrated more cognitive elaborations and performed better than did students with the lowest level of ability in the dyad. That is, medium ability students benefited more from the collaboration with low-ability students than from the collaboration with high-ability students.

Hines, J. T. [jhines@selu.edu] (2008). Making collaboration work in inclusive high school classrooms. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 43(5), 277-282.

The growing number of children with disabilities who are served in general education classrooms has made it necessary for general and special education teachers to work together to ensure that all students receive an appropriate education. As the instructional leader, the school principal is presented with the challenge of facilitating and guiding effective collaborative relationships among teachers. This article presents a brief discussion of collaboration in inclusive high school classrooms and describes how administrators can facilitate the effective use of collaboration skills.

Meadan, H. [hmeadan@ilstu.edu], & Monda-Amaya, L. (2008). Collaboration to promote social competence for students with mild disabilities in the general classroom: A structure for providing social support. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 43(3), 158-167.

When students are struggling to be successful in the general classroom, collaborative efforts should include planning for academic and social needs. Students with disabilities may display

significant social difficulties such as establishing friendships or feelings of isolation and loneliness. Because peer relationships in childhood play a significant role in later-life adjustment, teachers need to create environments that support and promote social competence and acceptance. This article discusses issues around social competence for students with mild disabilities and provides a social support structure as a basis for collaborating with general education teachers to create socially inclusive learning environments and build social competence.

Crothers, L. M. [crothersl@duq.edu], & Kolbert, J. B. (2008). Tackling a problematic behavior management issue: Teachers' intervention in childhood bullying problems. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 43*(3), 132-139.

In coping with and addressing a common child behavioral problem, classroom teachers may benefit from viewing bullying as a behavior management issue in the educational setting. The authors offer eight suggestions [one of them is CL] that specifically address childhood bullying problems in the classroom. Teachers can add these to their toolkit of behavior management strategies.

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.

Latvian Association for Cooperation in Education Conference April, 2009



Our friends in the Latvian Association for Cooperation in Education (LACE) are holding their 10th anniversary conference, April 26-29, 2009, in Riga, Latvia. The conference theme is Cooperation in Ensuring Sustainable Education: Management, Research, Practice, Theory. For more information, please contact indra.odina@lu.lv

From the Web

1. YouTube at the 2008 Turin conference

In January 2008, IASCE teamed with the International Association for Intercultural Education, the University of Turin, and the Piedmont Regional Teachers' Center to host a conference. One of the conference's keynote speakers was IASCE's Yael Sharan. You can watch her in a short YouTube video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqL47h28qtk>

Professor Francesca Gobbo, one of the conference's main organizers, is also on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5D_y95sZso&feature=related

And, no one who follows the internet will be surprised to know that there are many other YouTube videos on CL. One of the shortest and most enjoyable of these shows a quartet of teachers chanting about their use of CL:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNvFkv8xC8s&feature=related>

2. Cooperation among Teachers

This web page from Northwest (USA) Regional Educational Laboratory contains a range of ideas on cooperation among teachers:

<http://www.nwrel.org/nwedu/11-01/ranger/cloak/ranger.pdf>

One of the teacher-teacher cooperation ideas mentioned above is Lesson Study. The following URL provides more ideas about this:

<http://www2.edc.org/lessonstudy/lessonstudy>

3. Wikipedia

Cooperative Learning now has its own Wikipedia page:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooperative_learning Wikipedia is the free online encyclopedia that any can edit. At last look, it appears that the CL entry still has room for lots of editing.



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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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- ★ Articles by international experts on topics such as cooperative learning and technology, 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.



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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.

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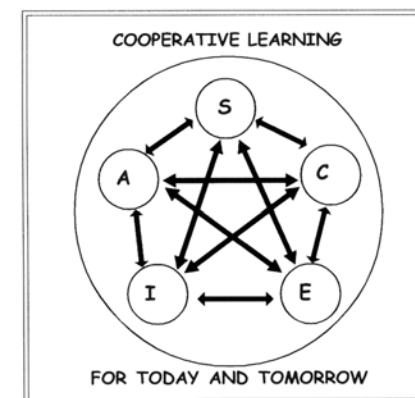
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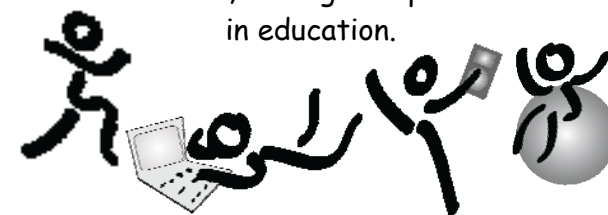
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