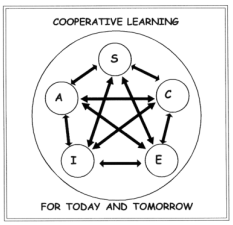

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

http://www.iasce.net

Newsletter - Volume 24 – Number 1 – January 2005

January 2005

Dear Colleagues:

IASCE is pleased to bring you the first Newsletter for 2005.

In this issue of our newsletter, we hear from several voices who joined us for our recent conference in Singapore. Thanks to Robyn Gilles and Yael Sharan, we have an interesting description of cooperative learning in Australia; we also have a report on the first JASCE conference. Richard Schmuck and Larry Sherman give us an account of their recent journey to a conference commemorating the work of Kurt Lewin. In Singapore, Dick told us how critical Lewin's thinking was to the development of cooperation in education; the Poland conference--and Larry, Dick and Pat's participation--are testimony to the importance of Lewin's work. Their homage to Lewin--coupled with Robyn Gilles' reminder that it is important for teachers to understand the theoretical perspectives and research that have informed cooperative learning--remind us that the work we do has history and tradition, it has research and theory, and it has diverse voices from which we can all learn.

As I was reading this newsletter, I noticed repeated references to the importance of well-developed teacher skills and careful teacher planning. It is good to be reminded that there is much more to cooperative learning than just selecting a strategy, putting students into groups, and having them shake hands at the end of the day, and say "good job." Gilles reminds us that teachers need specifically to teach interpersonal skills to young children; Desbiens and Royer's work suggests that direct teaching of social skills is also beneficial to students with emotional and behavioral difficulties. Meisinger's research suggests that teachers need to be very deliberate in the procedural and thinking processes they teach students to use during cooperation. Chiu's research indicates that teacher interventions do, indeed, have an effect on students during problem-solving; and Xun and Land discuss the role of the teacher in scaffolding problem-solving processes. Thompson and Chapman conclude that, in higher education, the successful implementation of cooperative learning relies upon effective teacher-management skills.

Viewed together, the articles and journal abstracts in this issue remind us that teaching is complex and that the potential influence of teachers is both wide and deep. Recently, I've been thinking about teachers and teachings that have positively influenced my own life and work. One important influence for me has been the IASCE and the researchers and educators who founded the organization and supported it during its early years. My hope is that you too find the work of IASCE valuable.

Please remember to contact George Jacobs about writing for future issues of the Newsletter and please to check the IASCE website for updates, information about conferences, and links to valuable resources and contacts around the world.

Cooperatively yours,

Lynda Baloche
Co-president IASCE

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IASCE Executive Board of Directors

First JASCE Conference Draws More than 200 Participants

The 1st annual conference of the Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (JASCE) was held in Kurume, Kyushu, in the southern part of Japan, on November 19, 2004. More than 200 people attended. The theme was "Join together in the spirit of cooperation to forge a new frontier in education reform in Japan: Overcome uncertainty by taking research-based, practically-proven steps toward changing educational institutions."

The conference consisted of a plenary session followed by a keynote speech, workshops, and presentations. The keynote speaker was Kazuma HARAOKA of Kurume University whose talk was entitled "Variations in individual motivation and actions in light of group dynamics."

Four workshops were conducted. The workshop topics show the diversity that thrives among JASCE members:

a. Philosophy of JASCE and its relevance to CL
b. Nursing and CL
c. Language learning and teaching with CL
d. A case study of the implementation of CL in the Inuyama City school reform movement.

Later, roundtable presentations provided good opportunities for active participation and contributions from all the conference participants.

Teachers, graduate students, and undergraduate students all worked for the success of the conference, and it was surely a good example of cooperation in education. The 2nd national conference will be held in 2005 in the Tokyo area. For details, watch the JASCE website (http://jasce.jp/indexe.html) or the IASCE website (www.iasce.net).

IASCE Forum - Cooperative Learning in Australia

At the international IASCE conference in Singapore in June 2004, we had the pleasure of meeting Robyn Gillies, from the University of Brisbane, and Pamela Wells from the Australasian Association for Co-operative Education, and several of their colleagues. They reminded us that since the 1980s, teachers and teacher educators in Australia have been actively pursuing the challenge of studying and disseminating CL.

Some of us have been to Australia and learned first-hand about the country's specific educational issues. In 1997, IASCE co-president Celeste Brody delivered a paper at the Australian College of Education national conference. For many years, Carole Cooper, a former board member of IASCE, was the director of Global Learning Communities, in Tasmania, as a base for consulting and working with teachers.

Here, Robyn Gillies writes about her research with teachers. This is a welcome opportunity to renew our acquaintance with co-operative learning in Australia and an invitation to reinvigorate the dialogue with its educators. -Yael Sharan, IASCE Forum Coordinator

Cooperative Learning: One Australian Perspective
by Robyn Gillies

While reading the articles in the June 2004 IASCE Newsletter on Cooperative Learning (CL) in Hong Kong, I could not help noticing the similarities to many of my experiences in Australia. Like Hong Kong, all education departments in Australia endorse CL as a pedagogical practice that promotes learning. (Australia has a decentralised administrative system with each of the states and territories having their own education department.) This endorsement, however, is often buried deep in some policy documents on strategies to promote effective learning and teaching, or it is included in some general statement on small group learning which usually includes other strategies such as peer tutoring, peer mediation, and small group work. CL is never clearly defined, and it is left to the reader to disentangle it from other strategies that are used in small group learning situations.

Other similarities to Hong Kong that I noticed included the difficulties teachers often express with embedding CL into an already crowded curriculum and the problems of ensuring that pre-service teachers are aware of CL and the benefits that students derive from this approach to learning. These are some of the many issues I've encountered in my attempts over the last decade to help teachers implement CL in their classrooms.

Some early cooperative learning pedagogues in Australia
There have been a number of individuals who have actively promoted cooperative learning in Australia over the last 20 years. Some of these early pedagogues included Joan Dalton with her 1985 book on "Adventures in thinking: creative thinking & co-operative talk in small groups." Jo-Anne Reid, Peter Forrestal, and Jonathan Cook followed in 1989 with "Small group learning in the classroom" - a guide for teachers who wanted to implement small group learning activities in their English curriculum. Susan Hill and Tim Hill published "The collaborative classroom: A guide to cooperative learning" in 1990 for the elementary classroom, and Julie Boyd followed with "Active learning and co-operation: A compendium of generic teaching and learning strategies for K-12" in 2000. In 1991, there was a National Symposium on Co-operation in Learning and Teaching held in Melbourne.

These activities and publications provide some background information on the development of cooperative learning in Australia and also include some excellent strategies for introducing CL into the classroom. Many teachers have used these publications to help guide their own pedagogical practices on implementing CL. However, while these publications are replete with some excellent practical strategies that teachers can use, I found there was a paucity of research in the Australian context on the effects of CL on students' learning. It was a desire to "test out" some of the benefits that I'd read about that provided the impetus for my own research on CL.

My current research in Australia
Implementing CL in classrooms is not easy, as we all know, and there are many ways of going about it. I'm particularly interested in the effects of CL on students' learning and have learned a great deal from the outcomes of a number of studies that I conducted in both primary and secondary classrooms (Gillies, 2003a, 2003b; Gillies & Ashman 1998; 2003). Grants from the Australian Research Council enabled me to conduct some large-scale research, often involving hundreds of

children and their teachers from many different schools across the state of Queensland. To date, these are the only large scale studies on CL that have been conducted in Australia, and I believe they provide valuable insights into how this pedagogical practice can be introduced into classrooms to foster students' interest in and engagement with learning.

This research, though, has not developed in a vacuum. It has been informed by the work of David and Roger Johnson on the conditions needed to establish successful CL and the contributions of Shlomo Sharan and his colleagues on the importance of ensuring that students are exposed to cognitively challenging group tasks. The work of Noreen Webb on small group processes helped me understand the conditions for effective helping, while others who have provided additional insights include Angela O'Donnell, Alison King, Robert Slavin, and Elizabeth Cohen, to name a few.

Conditions for effective CL

There has been a plethora of worldwide studies over the last three decades focussing on CL. Many of them highlight the importance of a number of pre-conditions for successful implementation. From my perspective, reinforced by the results of my research, these conditions include:

- Ensuring that teachers understand the theoretical perspectives and the research that has informed CL. This gives them a greater appreciation of why they need to implement it in a systematic and well-structured way if the benefits of this approach to learning are to be fully realised.
- Teachers need to have the opportunity of discussing the key tenets of CL with their peers as they work on embedding it into their curricula. Teachers can be wonderfully supportive of each other, and many of the ideas that I've used in my research have emanated from discussions with classroom teachers.
- The importance of establishing task interdependence is something that I've found cannot be underestimated. When children realise that all group members need to work together to complete the group task, they become more committed and willing to help each other than students who work in small groups where task interdependence is not clearly established. In these latter groups, students will often continue to work and help each other, but their potential to achieve more is often not realised.
- The task the children are asked to work on in their groups needs to be cognitively challenging as well as one that will enable group members to engage in open discussion with each other. Establishing these types of tasks is often very demanding for the classroom teacher, but the outcomes achieved are well worth the initial planning.
- Students need to be taught the interpersonal and small group skills required to help them manage their CL experiences. While I've found that teachers need to teach these skills very explicitly through role plays and modelling with primary-aged children, an open discussion format where 'group behaviours' are negotiated is often more appropriate with adolescents. Conflict is inevitable in any group situation but if students are provided with the skills to manage discord, the group is more likely to settle down and work productively together.

- CL needs to be embedded in work that is meaningful to what the children are learning so that they see it as the way they learn and not something they do in small groups once a

week.

- Teachers need to set clear expectations for the quality of children's work. I've found from my own research that children like to produce a good quality product that will be acknowledged by both their teachers and peers because they derive a sense of achievement and success from their efforts which enhances their self-efficacy as learners.

Teachers play a key role in creating the conditions for successful CL. They do this not only by ensuring that many of the conditions listed above are in place, but also by modelling many of the behaviours they expect children to use in their groups. This includes modelling how to give and receive help as well as those behaviours that acknowledge and validate the efforts of others. I'd also like to suggest that teachers shouldn't be too hesitant in probing and confronting anomalies in children's thinking or understanding as well as offering tentative suggestions when children are unable to find a solution to a problem at hand. I know that teachers have traditionally been inclined to operate more as the guide on the side, but these behaviours (i.e., probing, confronting, suggesting) are designed to help mediate or scaffold learning so children have a better chance of resolving the difficulties they are confronting. Moreover, children respond well to the challenge these types of verbal behaviours impose.

Finally, I've found that CL is more likely to be successful when it is implemented in schools that embrace this approach to teaching and learning. That's not to say that teachers shouldn't contemplate using it if their school doesn't actively endorse it. There are many teachers who have used CL in their classrooms without the support of the school. However, the benefits that accrue are more likely to be sustained and generalised to other school settings when the school (i.e., the principal and the administrative staff) have policies and practices that actively support its use.

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Conference on Kurt Lewin's Influence on Contemporary Psychology

Larry Sherman (Treasurer of the IASCE) was invited to convene a symposium for the ***International Conference on Kurt Lewin: Contribution to Contemporary Psychology***, which was held in Bydgoszcz and Mogilno, Poland, 10-12 September, 2004. Along with Richard Schmuck (the first President of the IASCE) and his wife Patricia Schmuck, the trio of IASCE members presented a symposium that focused on Lewin's influence on contemporary American education, especially the roots of cooperative learning in Lewinian theory and the role of "action research." Cooperative Learning as a pedagogical "action" which one can use to ameliorate more positive human relations in diverse groups was a primary focus of our symposium. We also discussed IASCE's 25th Anniversary Singapore conference where we participated in a panel devoted to the history of the IASCE.

The role of Lewinian theory as it came down to us through Morton Deutsch, one of Lewin's last students, was mentioned as a primary influence for David Johnson who studied with him. All three of us were students of students of Kurt Lewin as well: Sherman was a student of Jacob Kounin who studied with Lewin at the University of Iowa in the late 1930's; Richard and Patricia Schmuck were students of Ronald Lippitt who also studied with Lewin at Iowa during the late 1930's. In a sense we are the "grandchildren" of Kurt Lewin. Additional ideas brought out during our symposium included the notions of democratic/autocratic/laissez-faire leadership, classroom management, and ecological psychology issues developed by Kounin, and the role of other Lewin colleagues, especially Kenneth B. Clark and Stuart Cook who gave highly influential testimony to the 1954 ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*** United States Supreme Court resulting in the decision to desegregate American public schools (this year marks the 50th Anniversary of that momentous Supreme Court decision which changed the landscape of American education). Our Powerpoint slides for this symposium are available at: http://www.users.muohio.edu/shermalw/Lewin_symposium.htm.

One entire day of the conference took place in Mogilno, Poland, where we dedicated a large bronze plaque that was affixed to Lewin's childhood home in Mogilno. We also visited the local historical museum where an entire room was dedicated to various artifacts and displays celebrating the life of Kurt Lewin. The three of us were quite proud to have been part of this celebration of the life of Kurt Lewin, "The Practical Theorist."

Check out the IASCE website at www.iasce.net. If you have content or links to add, please sent them to IASCE co-president Lynda Baloche at LBALOCHE@wcupa.edu.

Larry Sherman (left), Richard Schmuck (center) and Patricia Schmuck (right) standing before the Kurt Lewin Plaque in Mogilno, Poland September 11, 2004

Cooperative Learning Conference 2005 - Call for Papers

The third annual Mid-American Conference on Cooperative Learning will be held July 21 – 22, 2005 in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri at the Inn at the Grand Glaize.

The conference will be organized by strands so participants can be assured that the sessions are geared to their area of teaching.

Strands will be:

Lower elementary - grades K- 3
Upper elementary - grades 4 – 6
Communication Arts and Social Studies - Grades 6 -12
Science and Math - Grades 6 -12

Administrators and college teachers/professors are encouraged to attend the strand for their area of work, however some special sessions specifically geared to these individuals will also be offered.

Proposals for presentations are being accepted until January 31, 2005. One free registration is provided for each presentation. Go to http://www.successlink.org/colearn/maccl_call2005.pdf to download the Call for Presentation form.

For more info on the hotel: http://www.innatgrandglaize.com/home.htm

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From the Conferences

To increase participation, lower expenses for participants, and avoid jet lag, more conferences are providing ways for people to take part even though they may be thousands of kilometers away. Taking this one step further, some conferences are entirely online. Here are two CL-related papers from one such conference.

1. Hanson-Smith, E. [ehansonsmi@yahoo.com], & Buthaina Al Othman (2004, September). *Tools for online collaboration*. Paper presented at the First International Online Conference on Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Research, September 25-26, 2004.

Abstract
The Webheads in Action are an online community of practice that actively seeks out and experiments together with new, free, and educationally valuable tools on the Internet. The group holds regular live voice, text, and video chat sessions, and members bring students together for joint sessions using various technologies in real time, as well as participating in collaborative presentations, workshops, and other activities. Sister groups, Real Video Online and Academic Writing, explore narrower elements of online teaching and learning, and profit from the experimentation of the larger community. Using the recently taught English for Sciences (Kuwait University) as an example, the co-presenters will help participants visualize the tools that make global collaboration possible and discuss the benefits for students learning to read and write in an electronic environment.

2. Jacobs, G. M. [george@vegetarian-society.org] (2004, September). *Cooperative learning: Theory, principles, and techniques*. . Paper presented at the First International Online Conference on Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Research, September 25-26, 2004.

Abstract
This paper discusses the use of cooperative learning (CL) in second language (L2) instruction. After two brief definitions of CL, key areas discussed in the paper are: a) how CL relates to theories of L2 acquisition, b) CL principles, and c) some CL techniques and lesson plan considerations when using CL in L2 instruction. An appendix provides a list of websites on CL.

From the Journals

As happens every time we go to the library or (more often these days) to an online database to compile journal articles related to CL, for this issue we were spoiled for choice. Indeed, CL continues to resonate through the hallowed halls of the journals of academia. Here's just a taste. Please note that in most cases, authors' email address have been included. Why not contact them?

1. Leeser, M. J. [lesser@uiuc.edu] (2004). Learner proficiency and focus on form during collaborative dialogue. *Language Teaching Research, 8*(1), 55-81.

   One of the challenges in content-based instruction in second language classrooms is how to focus on form in a way that is both effective and appropriate. The use of collaborative tasks that push learners to consciously reflect on their own language use (i.e., produce 'language-related episodes') while conveying meaning has been proposed as one way to accomplish this goal. Studies investigating the use of collaborative tasks that encourage learners to produce language-related episodes (LREs) have been shown to affect positively language development. However, little is known about how the proficiency of each dyad member affects how and how much dyads produce LREs during collaborative tasks. Therefore, the study reported in this article investigated how grouping learners by their relative proficiency (high-high, high-low, or low-low) affected the amount, type (lexical or grammatical) and outcome (correct, unresolved, or incorrect) of LREs produced during a passage reconstruction task, completed by twenty-one pairs of adult L2 Spanish learners from a content-based course. The findings revealed that the proficiency of the dyad members affected how much the dyads focused on form, the types of forms they focused on as well as how successful they were at resolving the language problems they encountered.

2. Saito, H., [saitoh@hokusei.ac.jp] & Fujita, T. (2004). Characteristics and user acceptance of peer rating in EFL writing classrooms. *Language Teaching Research, 8*(1), 31-54.

   Lack of research on the characteristics of peer assessment in EFL writing may inhibit teachers from appreciating the utility of this innovative assessment. This study addressed the following research questions: (1) How similar are peer, self- and teacher ratings of EFL writing?: (2) Do students favour peer ratings?; and (3) Does peer feedback influence students' attitudes about peer rating? Forty-seven college students studying English writing in a Japanese college were assigned to write two essays. Each essay was commented on and rated by two teachers, three peers and the writers themselves. Students also completed a five-item questionnaire about their attitudes regarding peer rating. Peer and teacher ratings were found to correlate significantly. The results of the questionnaire indicated that students had favourable attitudes towards peer rating. A regression analysis suggested that peer feedback did not influence students' favourable attitudes about feedback.

3. *Teachers College Record*, January 2004, Vol 106, No. 1.

   Cooperative learning can be seen as one element in a larger paradigm shift toward student-centered instruction. Applications of Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory also fit within this paradigm shift and often involve CL. This entire issue of *Teachers College Record* is devoted to MI and includes a concluding paper by Howard Gardner, the person most closely associated with MI.

4. Antonio, A. L. [aantonio@stanford.edu], Chang, M. J., Hakuta, K., Kenny, D. A., Levin, S., & Milem, J. F. (2004). Effects of racial diversity on complex thinking in college students. *Psychological Science, 15*, 507-510.

An experiment varying the racial (Black, White) and opinion composition in small-group discussions was conducted with college students (N=357) at three universities to test for effects on the perceived novelty of group members' contributions to discussion and on participants' integrative complexity. Results showed that racial and opinion minorities were both perceived as contributing to novelty. Generally positive effects on integrative complexity were found when the groups had racial- and opinion-minority members and when members reported having racially diverse friends and classmates. The findings are discussed in the context of social psychological theories of minority influence and social policy implications for affirmative action. The research supports claims about the educational significance of race in higher education, as well as the complexity of the interaction of racial diversity with contextual and individual factors.

5. Oakley, B., Felder, R. M. [rmfelder@mindspring.com], Brent, R., & Elhajj, I. (2004). Turning student groups into effective teams. *Journal of Student Centered Learning, 2*(1), 9-34.

   The paper is a guide to the effective design and management of team assignments in a college classroom where little class time is available for instruction on teaming skills. Topics discussed included forming teams, helping them become effective, and using peer ratings to adjust team grades for individual performance. A Frequently Asked Questions section offers suggestions for dealing with several problems that commonly arise with student teams, and forms and handouts are provided to assist in team formation and management.

6. Lam, F. H. [lam_fook_hoe@moe.edu.sg], Low, C. C., Jacobs, G. M. [george@vegetarian-society.org], & Fazilah, M. I. (2004). Letting go: Promoting student-student academic learning outside of class-time. *Journal of Student Centered Learning, 2*(1), 43-52.

   The use of student groups in classroom learning is supported by research and learning theory. This paper focuses on the use of student-student interaction outside of regular curriculum time. A rationale is provided for such OCAC (Out-of-Classtime Academic Cooperation). OCAC is presented as a logical extension of the peer collaboration that takes place in many classrooms. Furthermore students have for centuries been getting together on their own to help each other learn. OCAC is also viewed as a means of helping students develop as people who have the ability to be life-long learners. Types of OCAC are defined and examples are provided. A number of OCAC programs currently being conducted for science and mathematics students at a Singapore secondary school are described These include group study sessions, peer tutoring, cross-age tutoring, interdisciplinary project work, mini-research projects, extended library hours and holiday homework. The main purpose of the article is to describe these programs. Suggestions for improvements and additional programs are offered.

7. Theodore, L. A. [Lea.A.Theodore@hofstra.edu], Bray, M. A., & Kehle, T. J. (2004). A comparative study of group contingencies and randomized reinforcers to reduce disruptive classroom behavior. *School Psychology Quarterly, 19*(3), 253-271.

   The present investigation employed an alternating treatments design to (1) examine the efficacy of group contingencies in the reduction of disruptive behavior, and (2) compare the effects of independent, interdependent, and dependent group contingencies in the

reduction of disruptive behavior in adolescent males identified with serious emotional disturbance. Disruptive classroom behavior has been associated with both decrement in academic performance and increased risk for antisocial behavior. Although research findings have suggested that group contingencies are efficacious in reducing disruptive behavior, the data remain inconclusive regarding which group contingency (interdependent, dependent, and independent) is most effective. Results suggest that a clear superiority among the group contingencies was not evidenced. However, all were dramatically effective in the reduction of classroom disruptive behavior.

8. Klingner, J. K. [janette.klingner@colorado.edu], Vaughn, S., Arguelles, M. E., Hughes, M. T., Leftwich, S. A. (2004). Collaborative strategic reading: "Real-world" lessons from classroom teachers. *Remedial and Special Education, 25*(5), 291-302.

   The present study extends 8 years of previous research using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), a set of comprehension strategies designed to improve understanding of expository text. We examined teachers' yearlong implementation of CSR. Five intervention and five control teachers from five schools participated along with their students. Intervention teachers attended a CSR professional development workshop and were provided with ongoing follow-up support. Students in CSR classrooms improved significantly in reading comprehension when compared with students in control classrooms. Teacher case studies reveal that with the exception of one teacher, students' comprehension gains were associated with the quality of CSR implementation.

9. Chiu, M. M. [mingming@cuhk.edu.bk] (2004). Adapting teacher interventions to student needs during cooperative learning: How to improve student problem solving and time on-task. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(2), 365-399.

   This study tested a model of teacher interventions (TIs) conducted during cooperative learning to examine how they affected students' subsequent time on-task (TOT) and problem solving. TIs involved groups of ninth-grade students working on an algebra problem; videotaped lessons were transcribed and analyzed. Results showed that teachers initiated most TIs and typically did so when students were off-task or showed little progress. After TIs, students' TOT and problem solving often improved. Teacher evaluations of student actions had the largest positive effects, serving as gatekeepers for other teacher actions. Higher levels of teacher help content tended to reduce post-TI TOT, while teacher commands reduced post-TI TOT only when a group grasped the problem situation. In summary, TIs can increase TOT and problem solving, especially if teachers evaluate students' work.

10. Wilder, L. K. [lynn_wilder&byu. Edu], Dyches, T. T., Obiakor, F. E., & Algozzine, B. (2004). Multicultural perspectives on teaching students with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 19*(2), 105-113.

    To develop independence and self-responsibility in students with autism, traditional intervention techniques have focused on the acquisition of academic learning and adaptive skills of language and communication and the reduction of behavior problems. The critical question is, Will these traditional foci of intervention work for multicultural students with autism? These students have triple-layered problems-they are culturally different, they

may be linguistically different, and they have an exceptionality that is loaded with behavioral repertoires. Apparently, these challenges make it imperative for general and special education practitioners to look for ways to educate multicultural learners with autism. In this article, the authors present culture-specific strategies for meeting the educational needs of students with autism. In addition, they relate these strategies to current efforts to prepare teachers and other professionals to assist students and their families. [Cooperative learning is one of the recommended strategies.]

11. Meisinger, E. B. [bmeising@uga.edu], Schwanenflugel, P. J., Bradley, B. A., & Stahl, S. A. (2004). Interaction quality during partner reading. *Journal of Literacy Research, 36*(2), 111-140.

    The influence of social relationships, positive interdependence, and teacher structure on the quality of partner reading interactions was examined. Partner reading, a scripted cooperative learning strategy, is often used in classrooms to promote the development of fluent and automatic reading skills. Forty-three pairs of second grade children were observed during partner reading sessions taking place in 12 classrooms. The degree to which the partners displayed social cooperation (instrumental support, emotional support, and conflict management) and on/off task behavior was evaluated. Children who chose their own partners showed greater social cooperation than children whose partners were selected by teachers. However, when the positive interdependence requirements of the task were not met within the pair (neither child had the skills to provide reading support or no one needed support), lower levels of on-task behavior were observed. Providing basic partner reading script instruction at the beginning of the year was associated with better social cooperation during partner reading, but providing elaborated instruction or no instruction was associated with poorer social cooperation. It is recommended that teachers provide basic script instruction and allow children to choose their own partners. Additionally, pairings of low ability children with other low ability children and high ability children with other high ability children should be avoided. Teachers may want to suggest alternate partners for children who inadvertently choose such pairings or adjust the text difficulty to the pair. Overall, partner reading seems to be an enjoyable pedagogical strategy for teaching reading fluency.

12. Xun, G. E. [xge@ou.edu], Land, S. M. (2004). A conceptual framework for scaffolding ill-structured problem-solving processes using question prompts and peer interactions. *Educational Technology, Research and Development, 52*(2), 5-22.

    We present a conceptual framework for scaffolding ill-structured problem-solving processes using question prompts and peer interactions. We first examine the characteristics and processes of ill-structured problem solving, namely, problem representation, generating solutions, making justifications, and monitoring and evaluation. Then, we analyze each of the problem-solving processes with regard to its cognitive and metacognitive requirements, the issues and learning problems that might be encountered by students during each process, and the respective role of question prompts and peer interactions in scaffolding each process. Next, we discuss the role of the teacher in relation to the use of the two scaffolding techniques, and their limitations. Last, we

discuss implications for instructional design by suggesting some specific guidelines, and made recommendations for future research.

13. Skinner, C. H. [cskinne1@utk.edu], Williams, R. L., & Neddenriep, C. E. (2004). Using interdependent group-oriented reinforcement to enhance academic performance in General Education classrooms. *School Psychology Review, 33*(3), 384-397.

    In their meta-analysis, Stage and Quiroz (1997) found that group-oriented contingencies yielded the largest effect size of interventions designed to reduce inappropriate behaviors in public schools. However, such procedures may be underutilized for enhancing academic performance and learning. The current article describes how interdependent group-oriented reward procedures with randomly selected, indiscriminable, or unknown contingency components (i.e., target behaviors, rewards, and criteria for earning rewards) can be used to enhance student academic performance. Applied examples are interspersed throughout the article. Analysis focuses on how these procedures address philosophical, managerial, and social-emotional concerns associated with rewarding academic performance in general education classrooms

14. Thompson, J. C., & Chapman, E. S. [elaine.chapman@uwa.edu.au] (2004). Effects of cooperative learning on achievement of adult learners in introductory psychology classes. *Social Behavior and Personality, 32*(2), 139-145.

    A structured eight-week cooperative learning intervention was implemented in two Year 11 Psychology classes. Each class was taught alternately under cooperative learning and traditional instruction. Three different measures of student achievement were used: a pretest, a 10-item quiz, and an overall posttest. In addition, all students completed the Learning Preference Scale - Students (LPSS; Barnes, Owens, & Straton, 1990) at posttest. The results indicated no overall effects on academic achievement. Rather, it was found that the effects of cooperative learning differed across the two classes. Further, significant differences were found in preferred learning styles between the two classes. It was concluded that successful implementation of cooperative learning in adult education classes relies upon effective teacher management skills. Although mature-age students are known to face particular difficulties in coping with the demands of returning to formal education (Penglase, 1993), little research has been conducted into effective adaptations of teaching practices that are tailored to meet these needs. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a cooperative learning approach on the academic performance of adult students studying year 11 Psychology in an Australian college. The approach used was modeled on the procedures used in Group Investigation (Sharan & Sharan, 1976), where students work in small groups using inquiry, group discussion and cooperative planning of projects. After choosing subjects from a unit studied by the entire class, the groups break their subtopics into individual tasks and carry out the activities necessary to prepare group presentations. The approach used here incorporated all of these elements, although teachers did not receive the extensive training typical of Group Investigation interventions. As such, the methods used in this study were tailored to the practical demands of the college in which the study was conducted.

15. Desbiens, N. [nadia.desbiens@umontreal.ca], & Royer, E. (2003). Peer groups and behaviour problems: A study of school-based intervention for children with EBD. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 8*(2), 120-139.

The study evaluated the effect of a programme for elementary school students with behaviour problems integrated into the regular classroom. The programme combined in-class social skills training and specific educational activities with peers, namely cooperative learning and tutoring by a prosocial peer. The innovative aspect is that the social status and affiliations of children with behaviour problems are key components in the matching of children during peer support. The goal is to improve social behaviour and to change peer perception through interventional strategies, therefore improving social reputation. Pre-test/post-test control group design was used. Results from traditional analysis indicated no significant difference between treatment and control groups after the programme. A modest effect size showed a relative improvement for students with behavioural disorders who participated in social skills training. Results are discussed in terms of the role of friends in the intervention programme.

16. Robinson, D. T. (dawn-robinson@uiowa.edu), & Smith-Lovin, L. (2001). Getting a laugh: Gender, status, and humor in task discussions. *Social Forces, 80*(1), 123-158.

Humor is a quintessentially social phenomenon, since every joke requires both a teller and an audience. Here we ask how humor operates in task-oriented group discussions. We use theories about the functions of humor to generate hypotheses about who jokes, when and in what situations. Then we use event history techniques to analyze humor attempts and successes in six-person groups. Our results combine to suggest an image of joking as a status-related activity, with men, high participators, frequent interrupters, and those who are frequently interrupted all showing status-related patterns of humor use. We find substantial time dependence in humor use, in which humor may serve to form a status hierarchy early in a group's development and to dissipate task-related tension later in the discussion. We use these results, in conjunction with core insights on status and emotion from the group processes literature, to develop a new theory of humor use in task-oriented groups. The new theory generates predictions about the content of humor episodes, which we examine with additional data from our group discussions. Consistent with the theory, we find that a higher proportion of men's humor is differentiating, while a higher proportion of women's humor is cohesion-building. We find the same general pattern with our other status variable, participation.

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