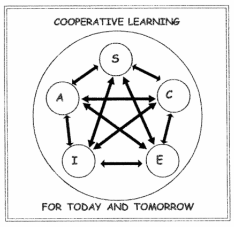


INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

http://www.iasce.net

Newsletter – Volume 28 – Number 2 – September 2009

September 2009

Dear Colleagues,

IASCE is pleased to bring you the second member newsletter of 2009.

The compilation of articles, reviews, and abstracts for this issue includes names and voices that have long been associated with cooperative learning. Neil Davidson, former IASCE President, reviews Spencer Kagan's newest work that focuses on his structural approach. Celeste Brody, IASCE Co-president, offers a set of practical ideas about cooperative learning implementation—ideas that could only be formulated by a seasoned teacher and scholar. Abstracts include: a best-evidence analysis focused on learning mathematics from Robert Slavin, another former IASCE President; a personal reflection by Barbara Millis whose work has focused on cooperative learning in higher education; the results of a careful study about cooperative learning and questioning by IASCE board member Robyn Gillies; two works by David and Roger Johnson—one detailing results of a meta analysis of their constructive controversy approach and another focusing on an investigation of social interdependence theory and cooperative learning. Johnson's et. al. 1981 meta analysis on the effects of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goals was a critically important work in the evolution of cooperative learning. Their work, plus Slavin's use of best-evidence analysis, have continued to focus and further thinking about cooperative learning.

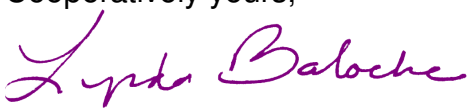
In this issue, board member and IASCE founding member Yael Sharan describes recent conferences in Greece and Latvia. Her description of the IAIE conference in Athens is complemented by one of our newest board member's, Lalita Agashe, conference reflections on voices and works in Athens that were new to her. Yael's description of the Latvian conference, scheduled to mark the 10th anniversary of LAPSA, reminds us that cooperative learning implementation requires long-term commitment and is, ideally, supported by a committed group of well-intentioned colleagues. Through our newsletter and conferences, we have opportunities to hear from well-known voices and new voices and to learn about cooperative learning research and implementation in a variety of fields and contexts. One relatively "new" voice in this newsletter is Rashmi Kumar, whom, like Indra Odina and Ilze Mikelsone of LAPSA, we first met at our 2002 Manchester conference. Her description of work with "gifted parents" links well with the abstract by Shapiro *et. al.*, that focuses on the goal orientations and friendships of gifted students.

The next IASCE conference opportunity will be in Brisbane, Australia in November, 2010. We are excited about the early plans for this conference and look forward to sharing more information soon. Check our website at www.IASCE.net or look for details in the next newsletter. For those of you who might want to engage in eye-to-eye

conversation in Europe, consider the September 2010 conference in Belgium. For those of you who might want to engage in conversation, but can forgo the eye-to-eye connection, consider joining the cooperative learning list serve.

We hope you find the IASCE newsletter helpful. Our conferences, newsletters, and website are supported by your membership dues. As always, we encourage you to share the IASCE newsletter and to network with colleagues. If you send me your networking stories and strategies, or news about future conferences, (lbaloche@wcupa.edu), we will share them in a future issue of the newsletter or through our website. Thank you for your support.

Cooperatively yours,



Lynda Baloche
Co-president IASCE

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A Tale of Two Conferences: Latvia and Greece

Yael Sharan

Enthusiasm for cooperative learning among teacher educators is familiar to readers of this newsletter, but rarely do we have the opportunity to spend three days in a forest near Riga, Latvia, with thirty people who are wholeheartedly devoted to training teachers for CL, or a few days in Athens with new and old colleagues who are finding ways to use CL to improve education and promote social justice.

Latvia

An educational reform project in Latvia was initiated in 1997, with the help of a team from Teachers College, Columbia University, to develop skills in experiential and cooperative learning in Latvian preservice teacher education. The project brought together faculty and students from Teachers College and six higher education institutions in Latvia for workshops and meetings, from 1997-1999. After the project ended, participants established the Latvian Association for Cooperation in Education (LAPSA) and continued to work together to develop collaborative approaches to educational reform. LAPSA members work across various academic disciplines and even geographic borders to promote cooperative learning in teacher education. (Indra Odina, a founding member, wrote a detailed description of the founding of LAPSA, its aims and activities, for the Forum series in this newsletter, March 2003, vol. 22, no.1.)

To celebrate their 10th anniversary, LAPSA held a small conference in April, during which thirty people lived, ate, danced, played, and presented research studies in a most enjoyably cooperative atmosphere. We heard reports of studies on aspects of cooperation in teacher training in various content areas in Latvia, as well as in Italy and Scotland. We were led in cooperative games in the forest by a teacher from a Latvian sports college and a teacher from a police academy. Indra Odina and her colleague, Ilze Mikelsone, (who together presented a study at the 2002 IASCE conference in Manchester), talked about the development of CL in Latvia and the fundamental principles of traditional, cooperative, collaborative, and transformative group work.

Iveta Silova, of the College of Education at Lehigh University, a member of the original project team, has continued to evaluate the LAPSA educators by examining factors which have contributed to the longevity of the group. Among the personality characteristics that she found contributed to the success of the group were emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness (to people and to ideas), and extraversion. These characteristics were on full display during those three days in the forest!

Among the project experiences and processes that contributed to the success and longevity of the group were continuous group development, networking among various interdisciplinary programs in various higher education institutions in Latvia, distributed leadership, and collegiality and congeniality.

As you can imagine, it was heartening to spend time with people who are truly cooperative, both on a personal and on a professional level.

Athens

The International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE) continues to hold conferences that offer an international platform for the airing of problems, challenges and progress in the field of intercultural education and diversity. IASCE's collaboration with IAIE also continues, although not in the same way as in our joint conference held in Turin, Italy in January, 2008. This past June, at the IAIE conference in Athens, IASCE board members conducted workshops and IASCE sponsored a strand, expertly organized and chaired by board member Laurel Stevahn. To read more in detail about preconference workshops and presentations check the IAIE website, iaie.org/Athens. We can also look forward to a special issue of the IAIE journal, in preparation, that will feature selected presentations from the conference in Turin.

The conference in Athens was preceded by two days of workshops, and Laurel and I gave two each. It was interesting to learn that some people in our workshops came out of curiosity, not having any knowledge or experience with CL. They were pleasantly surprised to discover that CL was very relevant to their field of work or interest, such as children's rights or science education, and even the teaching of "rhetoric," a subject in Greek schools.

The IASCE conference strand consisted of four sessions, with three presenters in each, which left a lot of time after each presentation for listeners to discuss what they found new or helpful, or even problematic. The strand was well attended and the presentations were thought provoking and expertly presented. They related to topics such as: Effects of CL on academic achievement, collaborative attitudes, and social skill development in intercultural classrooms; CL in math and science toward the promotion of inquiry and problem solving; CL in teacher training and school reform; and enhancing intercultural communication and understanding through CL. Board member Robyn Gillies presented her study on "Promoting problem-solving and reasoning among cooperating groups during inquiry-based science." (You will have a chance to hear more about that at our next conference, to be held at Robyn's university in Brisbane, Australia, in November 2010.)

Presenters came from many different countries: Japan (Kumiko Fushino, who some may remember from the 2008 IASCE conference in Nagoya), Australia (Robyn), New Zealand (Trish Baker and Jill Clark), Greece, Italy, the UK, the US, and others. An intriguing topic was Jim King's (UK), "Silence as a threat to CL in a Japanese intercultural education context." One of the most moving presentations was by Sanja Spanja, an educator from Croatia, who used CL to bring together teachers, students and parents who had become enemies during wartime. Of her experience at the conference, Sanja wrote these words to me, which say it all in a nutshell:

"I found the conference very stimulating and refreshing, meeting people that I already knew and also new colleagues. I really enjoyed being on the cooperative learning strand. For me, feeling that participants from all over the world share similar vision, goals, and beliefs and that I am not alone motivates me to continue with my own work."

Papers from Athens on Using CL to Improve Intercultural Understanding

Lalita Agashe

I am very happy to tell our readers about two presentations at the Athens IAIE conference that are directly helpful in successful implementation of CL in multicultural and multiethnic classrooms. From Yael's initial report (please see previous article) on the conference, both papers indicated the researchers' tenacity to explore and put to use some neglected aspects, crucial in implementing CL. It made me go through the entire papers. I found the contents very interesting and helpful. I am sure our readers will find them so too.

One is by Sanja Spanja (sspanja@ffos.hr) from Croatia, an amazing story of what cooperation in education can do for hundreds of war affected teachers, parents, and children. The other is by Jim King (*jim.king@nottingham.ac.uk*) from the UK, who explores the reasons for the tendency toward noticeable silences on the part of Japanese students in second language classrooms and makes constructive suggestions to improve their oral participation in CL.

Sanja tells about cooperative learning principles and tasks implemented effectively to create intercultural dialogue and sustain it, for five years, under the program *Zajedno jači* (Stronger Together). The program was created to support and educate teachers working with children in turbulent post-war regions of Croatia, using cooperative learning as a tool for addressing problems, such as intolerance, nationalism, and discrimination, which flared up as a result of a devastating civil war. The paper focuses on methodologies of communication and conflict resolution, based on the principles of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism, as well as human rights and children's rights to education.

In the paper, Sanja recalls, "I was a school teacher in 1998 sitting in room no. 8217, thinking how to connect people divided by invisible walls after a devastating war. For me, it is amazing how one idea of a few enthusiasts could make important changes in society, and how small efforts could change the relationships and reconcile teachers in divided communities, using cooperative learning as a tool."

Sanja conceived the program, and under the supervision of Ministry of Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia, it was implemented, involving 40 primary schools and 15 regional schools with students of different nationalities. The program generated two manuals for intercultural and multicultural education for teachers, parents, and schools that are still in use.

The paper highlights some important factors that might explain the success of the program: enthusiastic participation of all the stakeholders, attempts to help the children know themselves, integrated use of multiple cooperative and collaborative educational strategies and practices, and sustained efforts.

In his paper, Jim King explores the issue of silence of second language students. This issue poses a big challenge for teachers who are implementing CL. Jim is concerned about the silence of Japanese students and wants to improve their oral participation in the learning process. Not only language teachers, but all teachers whose students are taught in a language other than their mother tongue face this problem. Differences in ethnicity and culture among students and between students and teachers multiply the problems of teaching-learning. In the paper, Jim traces the potential causes of the students' silence to cultural traditions and beliefs citing a detailed literature search. Jim finds that silence, especially on the part of students, is an essential quality, a way of expressing respect and a willingness to listen to the teacher and maintaining self esteem in the eyes of peers and self. He also explores other probable reasons for silence, such as greater cognitive processing time and provides many suggestions for instructors so as to understand the students and improve their oral interactions to facilitate CL implementation. It is this inclusive, empathetic attitude of teachers of multilingual, multiethnic, multicultural classrooms that will help bring the world together through CL.

Both these papers highlight an important truth: teachers possess the will and feel the heartfelt need to break the barriers created by lack of mutual understanding of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, in order to bring people together through the educational process. Sanja has tapped these powerful through the "Stronger Together" program. Jim provides insights into how to improve the overt participation of silent students by being open to and understanding of the cultural and many more different needs of students.

Next IASCE Conference – November 25-27, 2010 in Brisbane, Australia

IASCE (International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education) is happy to announce that we will be holding our next conference at The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, from 25-27 November, 2010. The theme for the conference is: Cooperative Learning: Pedagogy, Policy, and Practice. A call for paper presentations and workshops will be made early next year. Registrations will open in March, 2010. The

conference email is: iasceconference@ uq.edu.au Please stay tuned to this Newsletter and the IASCE website – www.iasce.net – for updates.

Review of the book "Kagan Cooperative Learning" by Spencer Kagan and Miguel Kagan (2009)

by Neil Davidson

I am pleased to review a new edition by Spencer Kagan and Miguel Kagan. To give a sense of the wide-ranging scope of this book, let's begin with the chapter titles, which are as follows:

Frequent questions
Why do we need cooperative learning?
What does the research say?
Why does cooperative learning work?
Seven keys for success
Structures
Teams
Management
Classbuilding
Teambuilding
Social skills
Basic principles (PIES)
Cooperative projects and presentations
Planning cooperative lessons
Assessment and grading
Motivation without rewards and competition
Classic cooperative learning

Each chapter contains a variety of information. This may take the form of research syntheses, major concepts and principles, or practical applications. The book provides numerous practical techniques based on a solid foundation of theory and research. There is an extensive collection of cooperative structures, plus many techniques for classbuilding, teambuilding, and social skills development.

Three of the chapters in this edition are new. These include explanations of: how cooperative learning aligns with theory and research in motivation; classical and social learning theories; theories of brain-based learning, individual differences, and expectations; and the power of situations designed with cooperative or competitive goals.

The chapter on the need for cooperative learning is an original synthesis. It demonstrates how cooperative learning addresses four major crises in American education: academic achievement, the achievement gap, race relations, and social

skills issues. The chapter on research is tied in to these four crises. In addition, it provides five powerful case studies showing the effects of the structural approach to CL in different schools or districts.

The text is clean, polished, and carefully organized, which makes it easy to locate desired information. There is both a subject index and an author index, which includes references to most of the major contributors to cooperative learning. As in an earlier edition, there is a table which provides recommended uses for selected structures featured in the book. These uses are identified in the interpersonal arena (e.g. teambuilding and social skills) and the academic arena (e.g. procedural learning and thinking skills).

For educators who have attended CL workshops presented by Kagan trainers, this book will be a valuable reference and source of ideas. It puts together, in one volume, "everything you ever wanted to know" about the structural approach to cooperative learning. (Incidentally, I wish that the term "structural approach" had been included in the title.)

In conclusion, this work is a solid synthesis, revision, and update of Kagan's fundamental book on the structural approach to cooperative learning. Those who liked the earlier edition will love this one. Anyone interested in cooperative learning can benefit from reading this volume, irrespective of their preferred school of thought about cooperative learning.

Issues in Cooperative Learning Implementation – Students Who Refuse to Participate in Cooperative Groupwork

By Celeste Brody

IASCE Co-President Celeste Brody shared these ideas with teachers during a workshop earlier this year in Singapore.

Teachers frequently ask the question: *How do we engage students who refuse to participate in small groupwork? They may be anti-social, or chronically negative or passive in their refusal to participate.*

There are no clear-cut solutions for "problem" students who refuse to participate in cooperative learning, or who sabotage their groups through passive refusal, chronic absenteeism, or poor emotional/social control. Here are 10 questions to reflect on in your quest to engage all of your students and meeting their diverse needs and capabilities.

1. ***Do you know the reasons for student resistance to engage in cooperative learning?***

Do the students have negative prior experiences with cooperative learning or groupwork in general? Do they have unrealistic expectations about their own abilities to work alone? For instance, can they tell you why they refuse to take part? Do they have special needs, such as autism, that require adaptations using helping peers or shorter time periods for peer interactions? Can you set simple goals with these students to work with peers for brief periods of time?

2. ***Have you worked to build the classroom as a learning community?***

What are your class agreements and norms for pro-social behavior? Do students understand how these will contribute to a safe and productive learning environment? Do you review these frequently? Do you use these to assess how well the class and individual students are moving towards more positive and productive interactions?

3. ***Have you created frequent informal group exercises using pairs where the emphasis is on cooperative learning success and working with as many different students as possible?***

Can students work together in short, informal group exercises? Do you remind them that they will have the opportunity to evaluate how well the process went? "Try this. Let's see how it works." Then, have the students assessed how well the pairs worked or did not work? Three simple questions adapt well to informal groupwork:

- What did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- What could we do differently (better) next time?

4. ***Have you created tasks that cannot be done alone?***

Do students use consensus, brainstorming, best thinking, and projects with no answers but with requirements for everyone to bring their best thinking and skills to the task?

5. ***Have you done activities that demonstrate the power of group decision making over the performance of individuals working alone?***

A good exercise for most students who are in upper primary grades through college is "Lost on the Moon." This can be found in E.G. Cohen (1994). *Designing Groupwork*. NY: Teachers' College Press. A similar exercise is called,

"Survival in the Desert," in S. Kagan's (1994) *Resources for Teachers*. CA: Kagan Publishing.

6. ***What real-world examples do you share with students for why teamwork is a necessary learning context for everyone in which to demonstrate competency?***

Students need to understand how the classroom prepares them for the real world. Share stories frequently about how teamwork is central to all work settings. Remind students with actual examples that there are few professionals who work alone any longer—even computer "geeks." For current examples, see two books by Daniel Goleman: *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998). NY: Bantam Books; and *Social Intelligence*, also available from Bantam.

7. ***Do you have a balance between individual and small groupwork?***

Typically your week will have about 25% of the time spent engaged in cooperative learning processes unless your students are involved in project learning. By the time students are working cooperatively in project investigation, you should have devised strategies to deal with the difficult students. But if most of your students are still resisting cooperative groupwork, in my opinion, the class is not ready for project work.

8. ***Do you reward the learning of social skills?***

For example, do you recognize students who add value to groupwork? If you use a points-based system, do you use these as an opportunity for students to add value to their final product score? More importantly do students know the criteria for engaging in cooperative groupwork? If they refuse to participate, do they understand, for example, that they cannot earn highest marks? Teachers need to be sure that the process of working together is assessed and that students understand that if they choose to complete an assignment alone (or are asked to work alone) that there is a consequence.

9. ***Have you considered using cooperative learning processes for preparatory work towards individual assignments?***

Students may do better, particularly when they are beginning to learn how to cooperate, to engage processes that focus on the early stages of projects or assignments. Processes such as brainstorming, reviewing first drafts of writing, as well as other peer editing phases, can contribute positively to a final individual product such as a paper or project.

10. ***Does a particular student need individual counseling in working with and getting along with peers?***

Recognize that a few students need more assistance than a teacher can give to the child's development. Students with autism need additional guidance. Other students can benefit from specific coaching to develop their abilities to recognize social cues. There are students who have particular difficulty recognizing that they need help and asking for it when they need it.

The processes associated with cooperative groupwork do provide teachers with tools for creating learning environments where most of the students are engaged. But we need to remember the advice of Bill Kreidler, a conflict resolution specialist: *whatever strategy we apply to a situation will not work with all of the students all of the time*. If 80% of our students and their groups function smoothly, rest assured that you are doing very well with your students. This allows you to put creative problem solving to the other 20% of the students or groups that need more assistance, direction and guidance from you.

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!

Belgium Conference – September, 2010

The Centre for Diversity and Learning at the University of Ghent, Belgium is planning an international conference on Learning for Diversity: Creating Powerful Cooperative Learning Environments. It is planned for September 16-17, 2010. More information will be available soon on their website: www.diversiteitenleren.be.

The Centre is very familiar with Complex Instruction and is interested in expanding its CL repertoire, with an eye towards CL and intercultural education.

From the Journals

Bertucci, A., Meloni, C., Conte, S., & Cardellini, L. (2005). The role of personality, gender and interaction in a cooperative and in a computer supported collaborative learning task. *Journal of Science Education, 6*, 32-36.

A total of 62 subjects of an Italian school, from the 4th and the 5th elementary school level (about 9, 10 and 11 years old), participated in a study investigating the effects of personality, gender and two cooperative learning tasks in children's interactive behaviours.

In our study we have considered two particular forms of cooperative learning: collaborative peer learning and computer supported collaborative peer learning. In the first task, children, working in pairs, had access to one computer. The independent variables were the personality (extrovert, introvert and mediovert), the gender of the couples (male, female and mixed couples), and the type of the task (hypertext and questionnaire), a repeated measure's factor. The dependent variables were the percentage of the time of the different interactive behaviours. Results have shown that personality clearly influence the way in which students interact when they work in pairs.

Bowles, T. J., McCoy, A. C., & Bates, S. (2008). The effect of Supplemental Instruction on timely graduation. *College Student Journal, 42*(3), 853-859.

[Note: Abstract includes parts of the article]

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a widely implemented academic-support program designed to provide optional, informal, peer-mentored learning support to students in large, survey, or general education courses. SI sessions include (but are not limited to): reviewing material covered in lectures or in the course-text, hands-on exercises that are unlikely to be utilized in large lecture-classes, discussion based learning that is more difficult to accomplish in large lecture halls, question-and-answer periods that are difficult to accomplish in large lecture halls, and study skills training (e.g., note-taking, textbook use, and exam-taking strategies).

Many researchers have noted that analysis of the impact of the SI program on student achievement is problematic as a result of the inherent self-selection bias. We apply a sufficiently sophisticated statistical technique that controls for the self-selection problem

and test the effect of student SI attendance in freshmen level courses on graduation success. Our analysis suggests that SI attendance in freshmen level courses has a statistically significant influence on graduation success. Indeed, SI attendance, everything else held constant, increases the probability of timely graduation by approximately 11%.

Bowman-Perrott, L. (2009). ClassWide Peer Tutoring: An effective strategy for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *44*(5), 259-267.

This article describes part of a 1-year pilot study and discusses how ClassWide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) was implemented in two U.S. high school biology classrooms during the 2003-2004 school year in an alternative school setting. Students' academic gains and on-task behaviors were measured during CWPT and teacher-led instruction. Results supported continued inclusion of CWPT as a significant instructional strategy.

Christie, D. [donald.christie@strath.ac.uk], Tolmie, A., Thurston, A., Howe, C., & Topping, K. (2009). Supporting group work in Scottish primary classrooms: Improving the quality of collaborative dialogue. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *39*(1), 141-156.

A large body of research has demonstrated the value of fostering peer interaction in the context of collaborative group work as an effective strategy to facilitate learning. The present study attempted to enable teachers in a varied sample of 24 Scottish primary classrooms to improve the quality of collaborative group work interaction among their pupils. Observations were carried out at three time points during the year of the intervention, both during whole class teaching and planned group work activity. A global rating instrument was also used to evaluate the overall quality of classroom environment created by participating class teachers to support group work sessions. The results showed significant increases both in the observed frequencies of children's collaborative dialogue and in the rated quality of classroom learning environments over the course of the study. The implications of these results are discussed in the context of current curricular reform.

Eaton, T. T. (2009). Engaging students and evaluating learning progress using collaborative exams in introductory courses. *Journal of Geoscience Education, 57*(2), 113-120.

Collaborative exams, with subsections in which students have an opportunity to work with each other, are not yet widely used in introductory geoscience courses. This type of exam structure, with other participatory teaching strategies, was employed in two different courses, and results were found to provide a sensitive and revealing tool for analyzing the progress of students' individual and collaborative learning throughout the semester. A somewhat different implementation of the collaborative exams in each course showed that overall student performance was significantly improved compared to performance in the individual part, even for middle and highest-achieving thirds of the student population, and progressive improvements in performance were followed

through the semester. The implementation of collaborative exams in the first course involved an aspect of exam grading that provided an incentive for collaboration: the "jackpot effect", which provided insight into the dynamics of peer interaction. The simpler implementation in the second course used a different approach in which the collaborative tests were less important to the total class grade, but also showed improvement in students' individual performance. Wider application of these methods could make a critical difference in reversing student apathy toward science in colleges and universities.

Esmonde, I. (2009). Ideas and identities: Supporting equity in cooperative mathematics learning. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(2), 1008-1043.

This review considers research related to mathematics education and cooperative learning, and it discusses how teachers might assist students in cooperative groups to provide equitable opportunities to learn. In this context, equity is defined as the fair distribution of opportunities to learn, and the argument is that identity-related processes are just as central to mathematical development as content learning. The link is thus considered between classroom social ecologies, the interactions and positional identities that these social ecologies make available, and student learning. The article closes by considering unresolved questions in the field and proposing directions for future research.

Esmonde, I. (2009). Mathematics learning in groups: Analyzing equity in two cooperative activity structures. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *18*(2), 247-284.

Many mathematics classrooms use cooperative learning to support equitable learning environments for all students. Past research in the field has focused primarily on increasing achievement rather than on contexts that support equitable interactions. This year-long study in 3 secondary mathematics classes compares 2 activity structures—a group quiz and a presentation—by examining group interaction within the 2 activities. The analysis shows that groups constructed a range of work practices, including a practice focused on collaboration, one focused on individual work, and one focused on “helping.” In addition, students adopted a variety of positions, including expert, novice, in-between, and facilitator. In this data corpus, experts tended to dominate interactions during group quizzes, whereas presentation preparations were more equitable, particularly when a student was positioned as a facilitator. Based on the analysis, suggestions are provided for structuring more equitable mathematics group work.

Gillies, R. M. [r.gillies@uq.edu.au], & Khan, A. (2009). Promoting reasoned argumentation, problem-solving and learning during small-group work. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *39*(1), 7-27.

Teaching children to ask and answer questions is critically important if they are to engage in reasoned argumentation, problem-solving and learning. This study describes how teachers can be taught to challenge children's cognitive and metacognitive thinking during cooperative learning and the affect this has on children's discourse and follow-up

performance on classroom-based reasoning and problem-solving tasks. The study involved two cohorts of teachers, the cooperative+questioning condition (*n* = 14) and the cooperative condition (*n* = 11) and two groups of students (3-4 person groups of mixed ability) from each teacher's class. The results show that the teachers in the cooperative+questioning condition used more challenging and scaffolding behaviours than the teachers in the cooperative condition. The study also shows that the children in the cooperative+questioning condition provided more elaborations, reasons, and justifications for their responses than their peers in the cooperative condition. However, results on the follow up reasoning and problem-solving (RP-S) activity indicated that these oral discourse skills did not transfer to the written task, possibly because the children may not have enough time to consolidate their application in another context requiring them to work independently of their peers. Teachers need to be mindful of the apparent delay many students experience in being able to transfer the skills of problem-solving, reasoning, and justifying demonstrated in oral discourse to written text and to provide for more instruction and reflection for these skills to emerge.

Goto, K., & Schneider, J. (2009). Interteaching: An innovative approach to facilitate university student learning in the field of nutrition. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 41*(4), 303-304.

Interteaching is a new pedagogical strategy for classroom instruction that demonstrates greater effective student learning outcomes than the traditional lecture-based method. As developed by behavior analysts, an interteach session is a "mutually probing, mutually informing conversation between two people." It is a 20- to 30-minute, student-to-student discussion addressing the main points in a specified body of reading materials. The elements that interteaching includes--such as reciprocal peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and problem-based learning--have been well theorized, and their effectiveness has been empirically documented. To facilitate the peer discussions during interteach, students complete a preparation guide that focuses and organizes learning the most important themes and concepts. During an interteach session, students form pairs and discuss the questions from the preparation guide, using their answers and supplementary notes while the instructor moves from pair to pair facilitating discussions and answering questions. Here, Goto and Schneider examine the effects of interteaching on student learning outcomes in nutrition courses.

Hornby, G. (2009). The effectiveness of cooperative learning with trainee teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 35*(2), 161-168.

A plethora of research studies has found cooperative learning to be effective in promoting academic achievement with students of all ages. It has been suggested that key elements of cooperative learning are individual accountability and positive interdependence. Forty-four final-year teacher trainees participated in a study which compared the effectiveness of a two-hour workshop on cooperative learning with and without these two key elements. A multi-choice test focusing on what students had learned and a post-workshop questionnaire focusing on the students' experiences of and attitudes towards cooperative learning were used to evaluate the impact of the

workshop. Results indicate that academic learning was greater in the experimental group, in which individual accountability and positive interdependence were structured into the activity. They also indicate that the inclusion of these two elements did not significantly affect students' experiences of the workshop or their attitudes towards cooperative learning. These findings support the suggestion that to achieve optimum effectiveness, individual accountability and positive interdependence should be built into cooperative learning activities.

Johnson, D. W. [johns010@umn.edu], & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An Educational Psychology success story: Social Interdependence Theory and cooperative learning. *Educational Researcher, 38*(5), 365–379. Retrieved July 24, 2009 from http://edr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/full/38/5/365?ijkey=M5Qm91PGIDzvQ&keytype=ref&siteid=spedr

The widespread and increasing use of cooperative learning is one of the great success stories of social and educational psychology. Its success largely rests on the relationships among theory, research, and practice. Social interdependence theory provides a foundation on which cooperative learning is built. More than 1,200 research studies have been conducted in the past 11 decades on cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts. Findings from these studies have validated, modified, refined, and extended the theory. From the theory, procedures for the teacher's role in using formal and informal cooperative learning and cooperative base groups have been operationalized. Those procedures are widely used by educators throughout the world. The applications have resulted in revisions of the theory and the generation of new research.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). Energizing learning: The instructional power of conflict. *Educational Researcher, 38*, 37-51.

Although intellectual conflict may be an important instructional tool (because of its potential constructive outcomes), conflict is rarely structured in instructional situations (because of its potential destructive outcomes). Many educators may be apprehensive about instigating intellectual conflict among students because of the lack of operational procedures to guide them. Ideally, operational procedures should be based on social science theory that is validated by research. *Constructive controversy* is an instructional procedure that is designed to create intellectual conflict among students and that meets these criteria. The authors of this article summarize the theory underlying constructive controversy and review the results of their meta-analysis of the validating research. The positive outcomes indicate that intellectual conflict can have important and positive effects on student learning and well-being.

Kapp, E. (2009). Improving student teamwork in a collaborative project-based course. *College Teaching, 57*(3), 139-143.

While collaborative student projects can be effective in improving student learning, the failure of students to work together effectively remains a widely reported problem in

collaborative learning. This article describes a team-building intervention designed to improve the students' abilities to work together in teams successfully. The intervention consisted of an initial team-building workshop with subsequent evaluation and feedback. The results include positive student perceptions of team performance and the overall value of collaborative learning.

Koh, C., Wang, C. K. J., Tan, O. S., Liu, W. C., & Ee, J. (2009). Bridging the gaps between students' perceptions of group project work and their teachers' expectations. *The Journal of Educational Research, 102*(5), 333-348.

The authors report findings from a study into students' and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of group project work (PW) in promoting students' motivation and learning. The authors gathered students' views on whether PW satisfied their basic psychological needs, affected their motivation, and created opportunities for life skills development. In addition, the authors interviewed 13 of the teachers to assess the extent to which their perceptions matched those of their students. The findings showed that, in general, the students recognized the benefits of PW and perceived themselves as fairly motivated to do PW. However, some of the teachers felt that their students' lack of motivation and competence hindered their performance in PW. Nevertheless, when teachers and students were able to reconcile their differences and reciprocate each other's expectations, PW was carried out effectively, with students and teachers benefiting from the experience.

Kumar, R. (2009). Why is collaboration good for my child? Engaging families in understanding the benefits of cooperative learning. *YC Young Children, 64*(3), 91-95.

In the gifted program, teachers are mandated by the state board of education to define the curricula - content, methodologies, and goals - and share this information with families. During the parent-teacher conferences, several parents express doubt about the effectiveness of cooperative learning techniques with children who have been identified as gifted learners (based on teachers' recommendations, followed by IQ testing). To make the case for collaboration, I realize I must share research on cooperative learning; reiterate the quality of children's work when learning is collaborative versus when children complete assignments on their own, with no input or discussions with other students; give examples of the valuable skills developed by learning and working in cooperative settings; invite parents to see more examples of group work; and share positive feedback from parents who are satisfied with the CL approach and what their children have learned through it.

Martin, A. J., & Dowson, M. (2009). Interpersonal relationships, motivation, engagement, and achievement: Yields for theory, current issues, and educational practice. *Review of Educational Research, 57*(1), 327-365.

In this review, we scope the role of interpersonal relationships in students' academic motivation, engagement, and achievement. We argue that achievement motivation

theory, current issues, and educational practice can be conceptualized in relational terms. Influential theorizing, including attribution theory, expectancy-value theory, goal theory, self-determination theory, self-efficacy theory, and self-worth motivation theory, is reviewed in the context of the role of significant others in young people's academic lives. Implications for educational practice are examined in the light of these theoretical perspectives and their component constructs and mechanisms. A trilevel framework is proposed as an integrative and relationally based response to enhance students' motivation, engagement, and achievement. This framework encompasses student-level action (universal programs and intervention, targeted programs for at-risk populations, extracurricular activity, cooperative learning, and mentoring), teacher- and classroom-level action (connective instruction, professional development, teacher retention, teacher training, and classroom composition), and school-level action (school as community and effective leadership).

Millis, B. J. (2009). Becoming an effective teacher using cooperative learning: A personal odyssey. *Peer Review, 11*(2), 17-21.

[Note: Abstract is the second and third paragraphs of the article.]

For me, my first breakthrough in teaching occurred in the late 1980s when I attended a three-hour workshop by Neil Davidson at the University of Maryland that I had organized because someone told me he was “good with groups.” I had been teaching for roughly twenty years (hard to confess!) using the only models I knew: lecture and whole-class discussion. I rarely used group work, even though I am a literature/composition teacher who had been trained to use peer critiquing methods, because as a student I had only seen the “darker side” of group work. As an undergraduate student in the 1960s at Florida State University, we knew that the only reason a professor told us to “Get into groups and ‘groove’” was due to his lack of preparation. We sat in groups with no direction or purpose, often while the professor wandered out of the room in search of a “cuppa java,” and what occurred can only be described as “yadda, yadda, yadda,” even though that term hadn’t been invented yet.

What Davidson showed me and others was a different approach to group work called cooperative learning (Cooper, Robinson, and Ball 1993; Kagan 1989; Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 1991; Millis 2002; Millis and Cottell 1998; Slavin 1986). In a nutshell, cooperative learning is a highly structured form of group work that focuses on the problem-solving that Bain and Zimmerman (this issue) suggest can lead students—when directed by a good teacher—to deep learning and genuine paradigm shifts in their thinking. Two “givens” in the cooperative learning literature are positive interdependence and individual accountability. Positive interdependence means that you give students a vested reason to work together on a task, usually through the nature and structure of a task designed to encourage cooperation to face challenges that a single student could not meet. Individual accountability means that students receive the grades they earn. In cooperative learning classrooms, students can be graded on their own homework submissions, papers, and exams. Individual

accountability is especially important with group projects to prevent “free loading” or “social loafing.” Usually this requires peer and self-critiquing.

Sandahl, S. S. [andahl@css.edu] (2009). Collaborative testing as a learning strategy in Nursing education: A review of the literature. *Nursing Education Perspectives, 30*(3), 171-175.

Nurses are important members of a patient's interprofessional health care team. A primary goal of nursing education is to prepare nursing professionals who can work collaboratively with other team members for the benefit of the patient. Collaborative learning strategies provide students with opportunities to learn and practice collaboration. Collaborative testing is a collaborative learning strategy used to foster knowledge development, critical thinking in decision-making, and group processing skills. This article reviews the theoretical basis for collaborative learning and research on collaborative testing in nursing education.

Shapiro, M., Schneider, B. H. [Barry.Schneider@uOttawa.ca], Shore, B. M., Margison, J. A., & Udvari, S. J. (2009). Competitive goal orientations, quality, and stability in gifted and other adolescents' friendships: A test of Sullivan's theory about the harm caused by rivalry. *The Gifted Child Quarterly, 53*(2), 71-88.

Competitive goal orientations were rated by self, peers, and teachers for 38 gifted- and 38 regular-program, same-sex, friendship dyads (19 female and 19 male) from grades 7 and 8 (N = 152). Gifted dyads were reassessed on friendship quality and stability at the end of the school year and after the summer. Gifted students were more task-oriented and comparison students more other-referenced. Task-orientation was related to fewer friendship conflicts, more friendly competition, and, for gifted students, greater friendship stability. Being other-referenced was related to negative friendship qualities and unstable friendships regardless of sex, grade, or program, and instability in gifted female students' friendships. Friends reporting positive friendship qualities at the end of the school year more likely remained friends over the summer. Comparison group friendships had more numerous positive qualities (companionship, help, security, closeness) than those of gifted adolescents. Competitive goal orientation rather than competition itself affects friendship success.

Slavin, R. E., Lake, C., & Groff, C. (2009). Effective programs in middle and high school mathematics. A best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(2), 839-911.

This article reviews research on the achievement outcomes of mathematics programs for middle and high schools. Study inclusion requirements include use of a randomized or matched control group, a study duration of at least 12 weeks, and equality at pretest. There were 100 qualifying studies, 26 of which used random assignment to treatments. Effect sizes were very small for mathematics curricula and for computer-assisted instruction. Positive effects were found for two cooperative learning programs. Outcomes were similar for disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged students and for

students of different ethnicities. Consistent with an earlier review of elementary programs, this article concludes that programs that affect daily teaching practices and student interactions have more promise than those emphasizing textbooks or technology alone.

Wood, B. S. (2009). Learning science while constructing learning teams. *Journal of College Science Teaching, 38*(5), 28-32.

Many science educators are proponents of cooperative learning, but struggle to find equitable and effective ways to build groups. The author describes her method for forming heterogeneous cooperative learning groups that is not only impartial, but also requires students to begin learning science on the first day of class.

Writing for This Newsletter

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

IASCE Executive Board of Directors

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.
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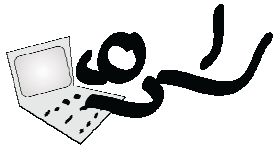

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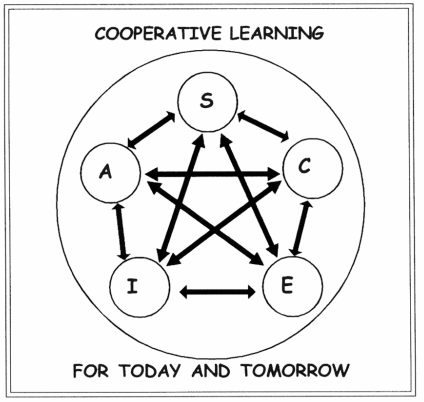

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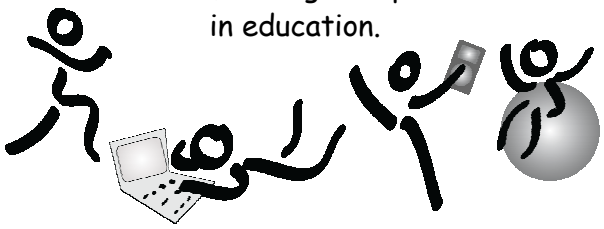

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