International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education
IASCE

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Dear Colleagues,

IASCE is pleased to bring you the final member newsletter of 2011.

I enjoyed previewing this issue of the IASCE newsletter and want to end the year by thanking those board members who have contributed to ensuring that the newsletter remains a valuable resource for our field. I'll begin by thanking Rich Cangro and Lalita Agashe, for their interviews of fellow board members Kumiko Fushino and George Jacobs in previous issues, and Yael Sharan for crafting an interesting interview with Pasi Sahlberg for this issue. Given the recent press about Finland's education system, this view of cooperative learning in Finland is particularly timely. It was also heartening to read Pasi's recollections of his initial connections with IASCE at the 2004 Portland conference and how he has sustained his interest since then. I think many of our readers can remember their first IASCE conference. They tend to be both intense (my way of saying they are stimulating and exhausting) and fun.

Speaking of conferences, I would like to thank board members Maureen Breeze, Kumiko Fushino, Don Plumb, and Yael Sharan, plus our good friend Pam Flood, for sharing a variety of interesting and varied conferences reflections during the past year. We also wish our friends at the International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE) well and call your attention to their upcoming conference in Mexico. And finally, we expect to have some announcements of our own, about upcoming conferences, in our next newsletter.

As always, at the heart of our newsletter is a collection of abstracts about recent work in cooperative learning. We owe thanks to our newsletter editor Lalita Agashe and additional contributors Celeste

How to Subscribe to the CL List

Want to dialogue with others about your use of CL? Then, you might wish to join the CL List, an internet discussion group about cooperative learning.

Well-known CL experts as well as "just folks" belong. Currently, the CL List isn't a busy group, but when discussions do take place, they are often enlightening.

Furthermore, you can receive updates on CL related events.

To subscribe, send an email to CL_Listsubscribe@yahoogroups.com. You should very quickly receive an email reply with simple instructions.
If that fails, just send an email to george@vegetariansociety.org, and he'll do the necessary.

Talk to you soon!

Brody, George Jacobs, and Yael Sharan for keeping this feature vibrant. In this edition, we have the opportunity to learn about new research conducted by the Johnsons in collaboration with their colleagues and students. This work reminds us that cooperative learning can both sustain a long research career and inspire young scholars. Other abstracts provide us with research about the use of cooperative learning in distance education and with computer-based instruction—topics about which early researchers could not even have dreamed. Further abstracts suggest that aspects of teaching and learning—such as feedback, review, and curriculum planning, once the domain of instructors, can be productively reconceptualized to emphasize student voices and collaboration, rather than a teacher-centered approach. As I read the abstracts, I was thinking about my own teaching, and I marked several abstracts for follow up. No matter what your interests, I think you too will find an abstract or two to support your practice and further your thinking.

It is a rich history and a rich research literature that has moved cooperative learning into the mainstream. It is this same richness that can support us as we respond to challenges, reach out to colleagues, and help to shape the future. Your work and your voice are important and, as the year draws to a close, I want to thank each of you for your support of IASCE.

Cooperatively yours,

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, Lalita Agashe, at lalitaagashe@gmail.com. Put "IASCE Newsletter" on the Subject line of the email, please.

Thank you for your submissions.

MEET THE BOARD

Pasi Sahlberg

Interviewed by Yael Sharan

Pasi and I first met in 1994 at the IASCE conference in Portland, Oregon. Pasi has taught, researched and promoted CL at home, in Finland, and all over the world in different capacities, and has developed a strong viewpoint about CL's role in today's world.

Pasi, do you recall the IASCE conference in Portland? How did you learn of it and of CL in general?

I certainly remember that conference well. It was my first IASCE conference and one of the first international conferences I attended as a young researcher. Cooperative learning came to Finland a few years earlier through the work of the Johnsons and Elizabeth Cohen. I learned about IASCE and these conferences from publications and journals (the Internet was not in public use then). Cooperative learning had unbelievable support in Finland that time. I was working with teachers around the country who were interested to learn more about CL and its methods. Portland was a chance to meet all the CL stars and have a first hand experience of how professional conferences could be arranged in cooperative ways.

I had two important projects underway during the time of the Portland conference. The first was the fieldwork for my PhD research with 35 schools and about 150 teachers in Finland. CL was one central theme in that research. I tried to understand better how teachers learn to use CL and other student-centered pedagogies in schools. The second was the completion with a colleague of the first Finnish book on CL for teachers. In brief, my first IASCE conference came at just about the right time for me.

For a long time your involvement in CL ran parallel to the development of CL in Finland. Tell us how CL caught on in Finland and its contribution to the Finnish educational system.

As I said earlier, I have been following the birth and growth of CL in Finland since the beginning in the late 1980s. In the early 1990s the Finnish education system was very receptive to great innovations like CL. Teachers were eagerly looking for new ideas to make teaching more exciting and interesting for children. Finland had not been very active in research and development of its own solutions for classroom teaching and we had to look at what was being done outside of Finland. The United States, England and also Israel were natural places, due to their well-known researchers and the active production of teaching and learning materials that time. Finnish teachers simply found CL a good fit to their needs to move teaching from the traditional presentation-recitation mode to focus more on active learning and social interaction.

The 1994 curriculum reform in Finland was an important catalyst of CL in our schools. This reform let schools design their own curricula and choose those methods of teaching they thought would give the best outcomes. Many school curricula began to emphasize social dimensions of education, such as developing diverse social skills, mutual understanding and problem-solving. Teachers had very few obstacles in their way when adopting CL as part of their teaching repertoire. I often argue that at least part of Finland's current educational success is because teachers have had freedom to use CL and other powerful teaching methods in their work without fear of failure.

What was your specific involvement with CL during that time?

I joined the group of initiators of CL in Finland in late 1980s and led a national effort to diversify teaching methods in our schools. CL was one of the new ideas that we included in the collection of good international practices. We worked closely with some university researchers and teacher trainers who tested how CL works in Finnish schools.

My main involvement with CL that time was in-service teacher training in Finland, through workshops, lectures, longer-term school development projects and writing reading materials in Finnish for teachers. I traveled around this vast country several times and met teachers and schools in every possible town and region. Our first book on CL in Finnish was published in 1994, which increased the demand to work with teachers.

Perhaps I could say that my doctoral dissertation that was accepted in 1996 was the first one to study CL in Finnish schools, and my research on CL in Finland never stopped.

You've lead CL projects in many countries in the former Soviet Union. What did you learn about the role of CL in these various educational systems?

It is good that you ask this. Soviet education has sometimes carried a label of being 'cooperative' or 'collective'. It contains a lot of collaborative work and activities that made many believe that it was cooperative learning in a way. My first observation was that although some authorities mentioned in the theories of CL (e.g. Lev Vygotsky) were Soviets, there was practically no understanding of CL in schools in the former Soviet Union. Teaching was actually based on tough competition and rewards for individual effort and success.

In many parts of the FSU, where I have had a chance to work with teachers and schools, CL has been received very warmly. Many teachers there understood that competition and bold individualization were not the way to make learning meaningful and productive. I think the power of CL in these systems is that it is so clearly an alternative to their traditional way of working. And even more, CL – in my experience – very quickly changes the ways children experience school. For example, some of the best professional experiences that I have had as a trainer were in Armenia. There was no workshop where teachers didn't praise the impact of their experiments of using CL in their classrooms. The problems I have had in many places are (1) too short interventions that often limit the sustained effect of training, and (2) national education policies, especially assessment and testing of pupils, which prevent teachers from doing away with their old ways of teaching through fear of failure.

What is your current involvement with CL?

Unfortunately my current work keeps me away from training and research. I try to promote CL in every turn to policy-makers, ministers and education authorities who are trying to transform their education systems. In my own writing I try to stress the potential of CL in changing educational practices. For example, in my new book called "Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change?" (Teachers College Press, 2011) I explain how the Finnish educational success is based on teachers' freedom to find the best ways to teach their pupils. CL plays an important part in this story.

The world has changed a great deal in the past decade. Tell us how you see CL's role in today's world.

The way I see this is that the more the world changes, the more relevant CL is, not only for school education but for everything we do. Young people spend much more time alone today than they did two decades ago. CL is therefore an essential element in our schools today as the social aspect of education gains importance. Increasing numbers of young people find school learning boring and of little interest to their lives. CL can change young learners' experiences in school and provide them with more inspiring environments to learn and grow. Finally, as we only now begin to understand the importance of creativity in schools, CL is one of the most promising educational principles that can truly enhance experimentation, risk-taking and use of imagination in learning.

It is important that we keep on returning to already developed and researched models of CL, such as group investigation, jigsaw, and creative problem-solving, rather than try to reinvent the wheel. I belong to those who believe that we already know enough about how to make teaching and learning cooperative. What we need to do is to have more time and better conditions in our schools to use all we have created.

What do you think IASCE can contribute?

IASCE can serve as a network for those who want to move toward the direction mentioned earlier. My own story shows how one conference and people there can change the course forever. IASCE can help people meet and move ahead together. What we need to do better is to use the possibilities offered by technology today. I think we can improve the way we communicate what we do, share experiences and invite more new people to join the movement.

To learn more about CL in Finland read Pasi's description in the IASCE Forum in the newsletter, 23, 1, February 2004.

IAIE International Conference—Tapalewilis for Intercultural Education: Sharing Experiences, Building Alternatives

Veracruz, Mexico, February 15 through 17, 2012

Co-organized by International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE) and Universidad Veracruzana

Pre-conference workshops: February 13-14, 2012, Universidad Veracruzana, School of Education and Central Library (USBI), Boca del Río, Veracruz, Mexico

Conference strands

1) Intercultural Education - Multicultural Education - Diversity Education: Theoretical and Reflective Perspectives

2) Intercultural and Multicultural Education in its Relationship to Globalization, Citizenship, Human Rights and Social Justice Issues

3) Intercultural Teaching and Learning in Multicultural Contexts: Dynamic Approaches, Innovative Methodologies and Practical Applications

4) Intercultural Learning and Intercultural Communication

5) Cooperative Learning: Theory and Practice for Educational Equity

6) Classifications, Constructions of Difference, and Intersectionality: Considering Various Diversity Dimensions (ethnicity, social class, gender, disability, religion, language etc.) in Cross-cultural and Intercultural Research

7) Intercultural Education in Dialogue with Critical Pedagogy, Liberation Theology and Other Sister Movements (bilingual strand) / *Educación Intercultural en Diálogo con la Pedagogía Crítica, la Teología de la Liberación y Otros Movimientos Sociales (sección temática bilingüe)*

8) Inequality, Exclusion and Class Divisions as Challenges for Intercultural Education (bilingual strand) / *Desigualdad, Exclusión y Divisiones de Clase como Desafíos para la Educación Intercultural (sección temática bilingüe)*

9) Decolonial and Indigenous Approaches to Intercultural Education Within the Context of Language (bilingual strand) / *Enfoques Descoloniales e Indígenas a la Educación Intercultural dentro del contexto lingüístico (sección temática bilingüe)*

For details see iaie.org

Report on JASCE Conference

Kumiko Fushino

Japan Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (JASCE) held its 8th annual conference at Chiba University in Chiba City, Japan, on October 1st and 2nd. The theme of the conference was "Expanding Learning to Society and Future". Approximately 160 people attended the conference from all over Japan, and it was a great success thanks to the presenters, the steering committee, and volunteer students.

There was a keynote speech, a plenary, a paper presentation by twelve researchers, 12 reports on classroom practice of CL, five workshops, and three roundtables on various topics. The keynote speech (by Kenji Uesugi, Professor at Chiba University) was on ownership of learning brought about by project-based learning. Following his speech, ten students of Chiba Junior High School presented posters based on their projects. Chiba Junior High Schools has three educational goals: cooperation in learning, cooperation with society, and cooperation with students' families. The school employs project-based learning in class periods of "General Learning". In paper sessions and classroom practice report sessions, session leaders used CL techniques to facilitate discussions and every participant actively learned the contents of presentations in a friendly atmosphere. The conference finished with the plenary by Michiko Miyamoto, Professor at The Open University of Japan. She talked about "Learning Society, Learning in Society: Expectations for Educational Reform from the Perspectives of Real State of Youth." She explained problems that Japanese young people are facing and emphasized the importance of empowerment of them by comparing Japan with the European countries.

The conference was very well-organized, and volunteer students worked hard to help participants feel comfortable. There was a lot of interaction among the participants. It was an enjoyable, learning-rich conference.

Upcoming Publications

IASCE is pleased to announce two upcoming publications that demonstrate the continuing vitality of our board members in their work “around the world.” We anticipate reviewing both of these publications in future issues of the IASCE newsletter.

The Journal of Co-operative Studies will publish the special edition “Co-operation in Education” in December 2011 in the UK. This special edition will include 26 articles from academics and educators expressing the breadth of meanings of “co-operation in education” in the UK. Articles will cover both formal and informal learning and applications will range from early years to higher education. Styles and approaches will include auto-ethnography, case studies, reflections, and empirical research. The issue is guest edited by Maureen Breeze.

The journal *Experiments in Education* will publish a special issue on cooperative learning in December 2011 in India. Contributors from different countries discuss how they apply various cooperative learning methods, models, and procedures to teacher education and to classroom teaching. The articles include both well-known and “tailor-made” procedures to address unique problems and conditions in specific contexts. All contributors are IASCE members and, in collaboration with Lalita Agashe, the issue is guest edited by Yael Sharan and Robyn Gillies.

Contributors: George Jacobs, Lalita Agashe and Yael Sharan

Abrami, P. C., Bernard, R. M., Bures, E. M., Borokhovski, E., & Tamim, R. M. (2011). Interaction in distance education and online learning: Using evidence and theory to improve practice. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 23*(2-3), 82-103. DOI: 10.1007/s12528-011-9043-x

In a recent meta-analysis of distance and online learning, Bernard et al. (2009) quantitatively verified the importance of three types of interaction: among students, between the instructor and students, and between students and course content. In this paper we explore these findings further, discuss methodological issues in research and suggest how these results may foster instructional improvement. We highlight several evidence-based approaches that may be useful in the next generation of distance and online learning. These include principles and applications stemming from the theories of self-regulation and multimedia learning, research-based motivational principles and collaborative learning principles. We also discuss the pedagogical challenges inherent in distance and online learning that need to be considered in instructional design and software development.

Alexakos, K., Jones, J. K., & Rodriguez, V. H. (2011). Fictive kinship as it mediates learning, resiliency, perseverance, and social learning of inner-city high school students of color in a college physics class. *Cultural Studies of Science Education, 6*(4), 847-870. DOI: 10.1007/s11422-011-9317-7

In this hermeneutic study we explore how fictive kinship (kin-like close personal friendship) amongst high school students of color mediated their resiliency, perseverance, and success in a college physics class. These freely chosen, processual friendships were based on emotional and material support, motivation, and caring for each other, as well as trust, common interests, and goals. Such close bonds contributed in creating a safe and supportive emotional space and allowed for friendly, cooperative competition within the physics classroom. Friends became the role models, source of support, and motivation for the fictive kinship group as well as for each other, as the group became the role model, source of support, and motivation for the individuals in it. Because of their friendships with one another, physics talk was extended and made part of their personal interactions outside the classroom. These social relationships and safe spaces helped the students cope and persevere despite their initial conflicting expectations of their success in physics. Our research thus expands on the concept of social learning by exploring student friendships and how they frame and mediate such a process.

Bertucci, A., Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Conte, S. (2011). The effects of task and resource interdependence on achievement and social support: An exploratory study of Italian children. *Journal of Psychology, 145*(4), 343-360.

The relative efficacy of positive task interdependence, positive resource interdependence, and individualistic learning were compared with achievement and academic and personal social support. The authors randomly assigned to conditions 66 7th-grade Italian students with no previous experience in cooperative learning. They participated in 6 90-min instructional sessions dealing with the dangers of smoking, alcohol, and drugs. The results indicated that students assigned to the task-interdependence and resource-interdependence conditions achieved higher and perceived greater peer academic support than did students working individually. Students in the resource-interdependence condition showed a higher perception of peer personal support than students assigned to the other conditions.

Boville C., Cook-Sather A. and Felten P. (2011). Students as co-creators of teaching approaches, course design and curricula: Implications for academic developers. *International Journal for Academic Development, 16*(2), 133-145. DOI:10.1080/1360144X.2011.568690

Within higher education, students' voices are frequently overlooked in the design of teaching approaches, courses and curricula. In this paper we outline the theoretical background to arguments for including students as partners in pedagogical planning processes. We present examples where students have worked collaboratively in

design processes, along with the beneficial outcomes of these examples. Finally, we focus on some of the implications and opportunities for academic developers of proposing collaborative approaches to pedagogical planning.

Chen, H.Y., & Goswami, J. S. (2011). Structuring cooperative learning in teaching English pronunciation. *English Language Teaching, 4*(3), 26-32.

Classrooms incorporating Cooperative Learning (CL) structures facilitate a supportive learning environment for English Language Learners (ELLs). Accurate pronunciation by ELLs is important for communication, and also benefits academic achievement. The known benefits of CL for ELLs make it a desirable learning environment to teach pronunciation skills. Thus, sufficient consideration must be given to its incorporation in curricula and delivery format. However, in implementing CL structures in ELL classrooms, attention must be paid to incubation time for CL elements, social and cultural factors. This quasi-experiment, with a pre-post test two-treatment, formed by expanding across program design investigated the impact of a CL environment in the pronunciation skills of ELLs. Results showed that the difference between the improvement of the CL (experimental) group and the control group was not significant enough to claim that CL was a major differential factor. Factors affecting the implementation of CL in ELL classrooms are discussed.

Choi J., Johnson D.W. and Johnson R. (2011). Relationships among cooperative learning experiences, social interdependence, children's aggression, victimization, and prosocial behaviors. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 41*(4), 976-1003.

This study examined the relationships among cooperative experiences, social interdependence predispositions, harm-intended aggression, victimization, and prosocial behaviors with 217 elementary school children from 3rd to 5th grade. Path analysis using LISREL indicates that cooperative experiences predicted cooperative predispositions, the absence of individualistic predispositions, and prosocial behaviors. Cooperative predisposition predicted prosocial behaviors and the absence of harm-intended aggression. Competitive predisposition predicted harm-intended aggression. These findings validate social interdependence theory and partially support theories related to social dominance. Providing frequent cooperative learning experiences may be an important tool to increase students' cooperativeness and thereby reduce the frequency of harm-intended aggression, increase the frequency of prosocial behaviors, and reduce students' individualistic predispositions.

Du, J., Yu, C., & Olinzock, A. A. (2011). Enhancing collaborative learning: Impact of question prompts design for online discussion. *Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, 53*(1), 28-41.

Objective: The purpose of study was to investigate the impact of question prompts designed to guide students' focus on context-related issues as they solve problems in a web-based environment. Background: Online discussions integrated with collaborative learning were used to examine student interactions and behaviors in an online discussion. Method: Twenty graduate students were randomly assigned to either the treatment (ten participants) or the control group (ten participants); one group received question prompts while working in the web-based learning environment while the other did not. At the end, they were asked to fill out an online questionnaire rating their confidence and competence levels in the problem solving process. Analyses were conducted to determine the impact of question prompts. Results: Statistical results showed that students who received question prompts from the instructor received significantly higher evaluations than students who did not receive question prompts when analyzed overall and when each rubric was analyzed individually. In addition, the study also suggested that online discussion had significant positive impact in developing students' deeper teaming. Conclusion: Question prompts designed by the instructor helped to enhance students' self-efficacy about their ability to solve complex problems. Application: The outcome indicated the importance of teachers' guidance and assistance to lead students into deeper learning. Although online learning provides flexibility and potential for deeper learning, the online discussion needs to be structured and moderated throughout the process.

Favero, T. G. (2011). Active review sessions can advance student learning. *Advances in Physiology Education, 35*(3), 247-248.

Traditional review sessions are intended to help students learn and prepare for upcoming exams. Most sessions are passive question and answer sessions that look backward at content deficits rather than advancing student learning. By incorporating active and cooperative learning approaches during a review session, students are able to recognize critical concepts and better prepare for physiological problem solving. Active review sessions help students prioritize the knowledge and develop the thinking skills will be required of them on the exam.

Felder, R. M. (2011). Hang in there! Dealing with student resistance to learner-centered teaching. *Chemical Engineering Education, 45*(2), 131-132.

The article's author, a long-time advocate of cooperative learning and other elements of learner centered pedagogy - http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public - responds to the following frequently heard question.

Dear Dr. Felder,
What can I do about low teaching evaluations from students I teach actively when what they clearly want is much more traditional (passive ride, smooth highway please)? I'm about ready to give up and return to just lecturing, as I am sure students will evaluate my courses higher if I do. Thank you for your time and consideration.

French, L. R., Walker, C. L., & Shore, B. M. (2011). Do gifted students really prefer to work alone? *Roeper Review, 33*, 145-159.

The long-held notion that gifted students prefer to work alone is reported in several general textbooks on gifted children. However, studies addressing this issue are mixed and certainly not conclusive. Earlier studies disagree on whether those gifted children who claim a preference for working alone do so as a function of grade and maturational stage, sex, or personality characteristics commensurate with increasingly higher IQs. The study reexamined this notion through the lens of motivation and social-constructivist theory. Two hundred and forty-seven American school-identified gifted, high-achieving, and nonidentified (i.e., nongifted, regular education) students in grades 4 through 12 participated. The measure used in this study was a survey comprising items used in past learning style-related research, items adapted from a personality index and an interest profile, as well as locally developed open-ended questions regarding preferred learning conditions, learning-related personality characteristics, and perceptions of support in their learning. Participants also had the opportunity to offer ideas about ideal learning situations and their beliefs on why some children versus others might prefer to work alone. This study attempted to confirm the hypothesis that those gifted students who feel adequately supported by those in their environment will be less likely to indicate a preference for working alone compared to those who do not feel supported. Although some indication of a preference of gifted students to work alone was present, this preference was not strong because it varied based on how the question was posed. Moreover, sex- and grade-related differences were noted. Perhaps most interestingly, in support of the hypothesis of the study, those participants who reported feeling least supported by others reported the strongest preference to work alone. Implications of these findings on classroom curriculum, future career functioning, and mental health are discussed.

Jurado, J. A. (2011). Group projects in Interior Design studio classes: Peer feedback benefits. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 103*(1), 34-39.

Group projects have been shown to be effective for providing peer feedback in classrooms. While students in regular enrollment classes benefit from peer feedback, low-enrollment classes face many challenges. This study compares peer feedback effectiveness between two interior design studio classes with different design projects. In one class, students worked individually and had joint intervention meetings; in the other class, students worked and met in groups of two. The intervention meetings were as effective as the control group meetings for providing peer feedback. Level of work pressure and dedication were seen as comparable by both classes but evident in different phases of the project.

Krause, U. M., & Stark, R. (2010). Reflection in example- and problem-based learning**:** Effects of reflection prompts**,** feedback and cooperative learning. *Evaluation & Research in Education, 23*(4), 255-272.

To examine the effects of reflection prompts, elaborated feedback and cooperation on learning and reflection, two experimental studies were conducted. For both studies, an example- and problem-based e-learning environment on correlation was used. In Study 1, 57 university students were randomly assigned to two conditions: with reflection prompts that asked students to give reasons for their decisions and without reflection prompts. The intervention promoted learning, and the students' reasons indicated substantial reflective processes. In Study 2, 137 university students were randomly assigned to four conditions: individual learning with or without feedback intervention and dyadic learning with or without feedback intervention. The feedback intervention clearly enhanced learning outcomes, whereas cooperative learning had no significant effect on learning. Perceived reflection was high in all groups, differences were nonsignificant.

Kreijns, K., Kirschner, P., Jochems, W., & Van Buuren, H. (2011). Measuring perceived social presence in distributed learning groups. *Education and Information Technologies, 16*(4), 365-381.

Social presence – the degree to which "the other" in a communication appears to be a "real" person –has captured the attention of those dealing with learning in groups through computer-supported collaborative learning environments. The concept is important because it affects participation and social interaction, both necessary for effective collaboration and knowledge construction. This article reports on the construction and validation of a self-reporting (Dutch-language) Social Presence Scale to determine perceived social presence in distributed learning groups using computer-supported collaborative learning environments. The result is a one dimensional scale consisting of five items with an internal consistency of .81. We used a nomological network of similar constructs for further validation. The findings suggest that the Social Presence Scale has potential to be useful as a measure for social presence.

Maiden, B., & Perry, B. (2011). Dealing with free-riders in assessed group work: Results from a study at a UK university. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 36*(4), 451-464. DOI: 10.1080/02602930903429302

Potential employers require graduates to be able to demonstrate competent teamwork skills in initiating ideas and solving problems cooperatively. Teamwork is prevalent in educational institutions and often included as a way of enriching learning and assessment. Whilst group working can provide a rich opportunity for cooperative learning, its assessment can be the cause of much anxiety amongst students. This paper examines the phenomenon of 'free-riding' and explores methods of managing potential abuse. Six approaches were trialled in a UK university business school on modules of study involving assessed group work and the views of students and tutors analysed. Findings from the study indicate that students (like academics) value teamwork even when it is assessed. Any method to moderate 'free-riding' is appreciated by students.

Malone, D. (2011). Empirical evidence of the fairness and quality of peer evaluations. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 15*(2), 129-140.

This paper critically examines the use of peer evaluations in two semesters of a graduate level accounting class. While numerous authors have written on the use of peer evaluations, few have put to the test the issues of fairness and quality of those evaluations. Two primary research questions are asked: 1) Are there groups of students who systematically act in their own self interest in evaluating their peers? 2) Are there characteristics in student peer evaluations that would suggest qualitative shortcomings to those evaluations? Preliminary evidence suggests that, with some qualification, these questions can be answered in the negative.

Mullins, D., Rummel, N., & Spada, H. (2011). Are two heads always better than one? Differential effects of collaboration on students' computer-supported learning in mathematics. *International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning, 6*(2), 1-23.

While some studies found positive effects of collaboration on student learning in mathematics, others found none or even negative effects. This study evaluates whether the varying impact of collaboration can be explained by differences in the type of knowledge that is promoted by the instruction. If the instructional material requires students to reason with mathematical concepts, collaboration may increase students learning outcome as it promotes mutual elaboration. If, however, the instructional material is focused on practicing procedures, collaboration may result in task distribution and thus reduce practice opportunities necessary for procedural skill fluency. To evaluate differential influences of collaboration, we compared four conditions: individual vs. collaborative learning with conceptual instructional material, and individual vs. collaborative learning with procedural instructional material. The instruction was computer-supported and provided adaptive feedback. We analyzed the effect of the conditions on several levels: Logfiles of students problem-solving actions and video-recordings enabled a detailed analysis of performance and learning processes during instruction. In addition, a post-test assessed individual knowledge acquisition. We found that collaboration improved performance during the learning phase in both the conceptual and the procedural condition; however, conceptual and procedural material had a differential effect on the quality of student collaboration: Conceptual material promoted mutual elaboration; procedural material promoted task distribution and ineffective learning behaviors. Consequently, collaboration positively influenced conceptual knowledge acquisition, while no positive effect on procedural knowledge acquisition was found. We discuss limitations of our study, address methodological implications, and suggest practical implications for the school context.

Ning, H. (2011). Adapting cooperative learning in tertiary ELT. *ELT Journal, 65*(1), 60-70

An updated guideline for tertiary ELT in China has shifted the emphasis to the development of learners' ability to communicate in English. Using group work and getting learners actively involved in the actual use of English are highlighted more than before. This article focuses on adapting cooperative learning methods for ELT with tertiary learners. The adaptation mainly involved three aspects: group formation, technique adaptation and course evaluation.

Parveen, Q., Mahmood, S. T., Mahmood, A., & Arif, M. (2011). Effect of cooperative learning on academic achievement of 8th grade students in the subject of social studies. *International Journal of Academic Research, 3*(1), 950-954.

The study was designed to explore the effect of cooperative learning on academic achievement of 8th grade students in the subject of social studies. It was hypothesized that there is significant difference between mean posttest achievement score of the experimental group and mean achievement score of the control group. The pretest posttest control group design was chosen for the experiment. The study sample consisted of 35 students who were distributed among experimental group (N=18) and control group (N=17), by matching them on the basis of their annual examination at social studies scores. The dependent variable of social studies achievement was measured through self constructed, 25-item achievement test used both as a pretest as well as a posttest. The experimental group was exposed to the treatment of cooperative learning while the control group was provided with routine teaching. The material used for teaching the experimental group consisted of lesson plans, worksheets and Quizzes designed to implement cooperative learning strategy. The data were analyzed through t test. The result of the study did not confirm the research hypothesis. Cooperative learning was not found to be a better instructional strategy than routine method of instruction.

Pinho-Lopes, M., Macedo, J., & Bonito, F. (2011). Cooperative learning in a Soil Mechanics course at undergraduate level. *European Journal of Engineering Education,* 36(2), 119-135. DOI: 10.1080/03043797.2011.565115.

The implementation of the Bologna Process enforced a significant change on traditional learning models, which were focused mainly on the transmission of knowledge. The results obtained in a first attempt at

Implementation of a cooperative learning model in the Soil Mechanics I course of the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Aveiro, Portugal, are presented and discussed. The students were confronted with situations recreating a professional atmosphere in Geotechnics. Mandatory project team assignments to be prepared in groups were implemented, where each student had to fulfil specific and rotational roles, namely, laboratory/informatics technician, analyst, reporter and coordinator. To assess the implemented model, several strategies were used: students' feedback; marks monitoring; questionnaires.

Shih, J. L., Shih, B. J., Shih, C. C., Su, H. Y., & Chuang, C. W. (2010). The influence of collaboration styles to children's cognitive performance in digital problem-solving game "William Adventure": A comparative case study. *Computers & Education, 55*(3), 982-993.

Since a large variety of digital games have been used in many fields for educational purposes, their real functions in learning have caught much attention as well. This study first defines learning characteristics of problem-solving digital games and their corresponding cognitive levels, then designs and develops a problem-solving game in accordance to the criteria. Tasks in the game context are inter-related to each other so that players need to critically and creatively think about problem solutions. Learners' task analyses are performed to observe four elementary learners' gaming paths, behaviors and cognitive activities, individually and collaboratively. System documentation, video recording, researcher observation, and interviews are conducted to analyze learners' learning strategies and their cognitive performance during the gaming process. The research results show that different collaboration models, strategies, as well as atmospheres can greatly influence the performances of its members. In collaboration, each individual can have better learning effectiveness. Participants in positive and favorable collaborative relationships, regardless of the members' individual temperaments, can have much better cognitive performances. While group members are inter-dependent and have positive interactions, even slow-achievers have the possibility and opportunity to take the lead.

Shoval, E. (2011). Using mindful movement in cooperative learning while learning about angles. *Instructional Science, 39*(4), 453-466, DOI: 10.1007/s11251-010-9137-2.

Unlike studies on cooperative learning that have focused on the verbal communication aspect of learning, this study focuses on the non-verbal aspect—mindful movement, which is the use of body movement to aid academic learning. Our research examined the link between five learning activities occurring within a cooperative group of children using mindful movement and improvement of their academic achievements in the study of angles in geometry class. The learning activities were: (a) physical contact with the studied environment; (b) using visual and kinesthetic modeling; (c) socio-kinesthetic interaction; (d) sustaining the movement-aided learning activity; (e) non-learning behaviors. 261 learners from eight-second and third grade classes in six different schools participated in the research. The experimental group included 158 learners from five classes. The control group included 103 learners from three classes. It was found that, compared to the conventionally taught control group, the experimental group using mindful movement in cooperative learning reached significantly better results in studying angles. Additionally, a significantly positive correlation was found between each of the five variants of learning activities and improvement in academic achievement.

Tsay, M. & Brady, M. (2010). A case study of cooperative learning and communication pedagogy: Does working in teams make a difference? *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, *10*(2), 78-89.

Cooperative learning has increasingly become a popular form of active pedagogy employed in academic institutions. This case study explores the relationship between cooperative learning and academic performance in higher education, specifically in the field of communication. Findings from a questionnaire administered to undergraduate students in a communication research course indicate that involvement in cooperative learning is a strong predictor of a student's academic performance. A significant positive relationship was found between the degree to which grades are important to a student and his or her active participation in cooperative learning. Further, the importance of grades and sense of achievement are strong predictors of performance on readiness assessment.

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

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

- ☆ Sponsors collaborative conferences and projects that extend the understanding of cooperative learning principles in different settings.

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