

COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

ABSTRACTS

STRAND 1. BUILDING COOPERATION AND RESOLVING CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS

Prof. Raj Bahadur Singh Verma

University of Lucknow, India

Diversity and Nature of Conflicts Witnessed at Higher Secondary Level in an Indian City: A Case Study

Generation of conflicts among students of different educational institutions depends upon a large number of variables and their resolution also requires diversified package depending upon the socio-cultural – economic background of their parents, and the educational structure as well as processes including the state apparatus and regulatory systems. This is an outcome of a pilot study conducted in the city of Lucknow through participant observation and focused group discussions with the students, teachers, and parents of students of High School and Intermediate levels drawn from four types of educational institutions: the government and private aided, private unaided convents and private unaided non-convent educational institutions. Conflicts faced by students of Government and private aided educational institutions were related to pedagogy (particularly the subjects of Mathematics, English and Science), mentoring by teachers, extra-curricular activities and peer group interactions. In private unaided convent educational institutions, students are drawn from the upper social strata having a lot of freedom which can be misused. Some among them stray into drugs and misadventures and runs the risk of getting criminal and mafiaso activities. These students are overloaded with the curriculum and take help of Internet and their parents/tutors to complete the numerous assignments; specially Mathematics and Science force them to take tuitions resulting into pressure of taking tuition for every subject and adjusting daily routine accordingly. In private unaided non-convent educational institutions, the workload of the students is quite heavy but the students are enabled by the teachers to handle the same competently. These students generally belonged to middle class families having diversified socio-economic cultural backgrounds resulting into diversity on the campus. But, these students, however, do not enjoy their childhood as cheerfully as one would expect them at their age since these students remain conscious of doing well in classes as well as in different entrance tests like medical and engineering streams. These conclusions put forth that the possibilities of cooperative learning in these institutions are not up to the mark since cooperative movement in this country, except few success stories, generally failed to yield considerable results.

Prof. Krystyna M. Bleszynska

School of Education, Warsaw University

Cooperative Learning and Processes Of Individuation

The proposed papers applies the concepts of cooperative and transformative learning as well as individuation processes to design a model of programs for conflict resolving, building cooperation and developing inter-group social capital in the

context of school and local communities conflicted on the base of their historical, religious and/or cultural backgrounds. Within the framework of theories of Turner, Tajfel and Jarymowicz there will be discussed selected determinants of group conflicts in multicultural settings, relations between individual/social dimensions and ethnic/civic contents of identities as well as possibilities to employ processes of individuation to develop the attributive WE-concept aiming to build bridges across nationalities, races and ethnicities. Psychological processes of individuation will be bounded to the experience of cooperative and transformative learning initiated by both formal and un-formal institutions of education. Finally, there will be suggested reconstructing the concept of a knowledge-based society in favor to support social change and transition from nation-states to pluralistic, multicultural civic societies.

Linda Lee

Proactive Information Services Inc., Winnipeg, CA

From Standards to Social Justice: Aligning School Improvement with Practice

It is not uncommon for school reform initiatives to appropriate school improvement language and purpose. The issue of school improvement is high on the agenda of most countries' educational policies. A review of the literature combined with an international environmental scan of school improvement initiatives has revealed a sharp divide between the competing paradigms of 'school reform/effectiveness research' and 'school improvement'. These paradigms differ in their orientation, focus and methodology, although it is of the pervasive educational reform movement which promotes 'high standards' often solely measured through an increase in test scores, many school improvement initiatives are attempting to promote educational equity and social justice, which are promoted at the classroom level through the use of cooperative learning techniques, among other practices. This paper intends to explore how varying conceptualizations of school improvement can and should be aligned with modes of educational practice which seek to support positive educational change, particularly in settings with diverse and marginalized populations. The Manitoba School Improvement Program Inc. (MSIP) will be used as the case against which the literature will be examined. MSIP supports schools in their renewal initiatives which often focus on giving students voice, in their classrooms through techniques such as cooperative learning and in their school communities through processes such as action research. Finally, the paper will address the implications for implementing and evaluating the process of educational change as more school improvement initiatives aim to promote critical learning, encourage processes of ethical deliberation and increase civic engagement.

Prof. Agostino Portera

Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy

Intercultural Education, Cooperative Learning and Conflict Management

In Europe intercultural education constitutes a real Copernican revolution: identity and culture are considered dynamically and in constant evolution. Otherness, emigration, life in a complex and multicultural society, are not regarded as risk factors or harmful features but opportunities of personal and mutual enrichment. A person from a different ethnic group and with a different culture poses a positive challenge, a chance for discussion and study of values, norms and ways of behaviour. Cooperative Learning – with the main principles of positive interdependence, face to face interaction, personal and social responsibility – can be considered a main didactic strategy for promoting intercultural educational goals. On the basis of many experiences and research studies by the Centre for Intercultural Studies at the

University of Verona (Italy), the paper will stress the thesis that Cooperative Learning, with the theoretical underground of intercultural pedagogy, can be an excellent approach to cope with conflict in education, especially in schools. Empirical research in many schools in Italy shows that in classrooms with teachers with competence in cooperative learning, there were better learning results in the cognitive area, a better social and relational ambience in classrooms and a improving in positive handling with conflicts .

Dr. Stefania Lamberti

Centro Studi Interculturali Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy

Cooperative Learning: A Method for the Effective Management of Conflict

The paper presents action research carried out in 2003-2004, 2004-2005 in seven primary classes in Verona. The explicit goal of the project was to complete a cognitive investigation aimed to verify if the C.L. is effective to qualify learning (construction of knowledge) and to reduce individual and competitive behaviours, promoting interpersonal competences concerning mainly the effective management of the conflicts .

The study had three objectives:

1. To evaluate if the constant use of the Cooperative Learning improves learning (cognitive - understanding aspects).
2. To evaluate if the integration of children excluded by class is favoured by the direct teaching of social skills and if the establishment of a positive social climate (social – relating aspect) is improved
3. To evaluate if the ability to effectively manage conflicts (social – relating aspect) is improved by the direct teaching of specific social skills .

The first two goals have been pursued during the two years of the study; the third one has been specific to the second scholastic year. The whole project was developed on two levels: the training of the teachers and the action in class. I will introduce results and some didactic materials we used and some examples of tests and charts for the survey of meaningful data .

A fundamental reflection that has accompanied every phase of the research attempts to understand if Cooperative Learning can be an effective method to promote intercultural education to a theoretical level (investigating the literature) and to a didactic level (acting with the students) alike .

I will introduce the theses according to which the use of the C.L. can facilitate education in increasingly multiethnic and multicultural societies.

Dr. Leena Adonov

Helsinki Department of Education, Finland

Partnership between Home and School to Benefit Students' Performance

The aim is to describe the consultation discussions between the teacher, parents and students. The emphasis is on the structure and interaction of the conversation.

The presentation explicates the organisation of the interaction and orientation of the participants in the conversation and approaches conversation as a dynamic activity. Assessment is one of the themes involved in the teacher-parent-student consultation discussions. And assessment as a duty of the school adds an institutional aspect to the conversation. The ways assessment is discussed and expressed vary in the conversational situations .

The framework of the presentation is based on the ethno methodological approach in which a social situation and its meaning is negotiated by the participants. The purpose is to describe how the participants implement mutual understanding and

how this can be observed in their interaction. The interaction of the participants can also be described in the framework of the quantitative interaction analysis and linked to the socio-emotional and rational aspects of the interaction. Examples of interactions illustrate differences in participation. The interaction between the participants includes different interests, especially when the sensitive themes, success and failure of the student are discussed.

OBJECTIVES: To analyze parents', teachers' and students' interaction in consultation discussions and to relate the key features of the analysis to the framework of the study.

SETTING: Consultation discussions in multicultural primary schools in Helsinki region

DESIGN: Qualitative data analysis was used. The data consists of videotapes and questionnaires. Micro analyses of the nature of interaction are used and analysis of the impact of the interaction on mutual co-operation .

Prof. Takeshi Yoshitani

Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan

Intercultural Collaboration of a Diverse Population in a Local Community: A Case Study of "Yorutomo Japanese Language Class" in Fukuoka City

The purpose of our presentation is to present a study of a local area in Japan, which shows a methodological approach to making a community in an increasing multicultural neighborhood, and to discuss the possibility of accepting diversity in the area. Since the 1990's, the multicultural situation has been making rapid and visible progress in Japan, which had until then been mono-cultural, not only in big cities, but also nationwide, including "Fukuoka City" in Kyushu. In our presentation we would like to discuss the problems in Fukuoka through a case study of "Yorutomo Japanese Language Class" for the diverse population in the community. First, we will analyse the multicultural situation in the city from the viewpoint of the community, school and administration. Second, we will describe the "Yorutomo Japanese Language Class" in detail and analyse some factors that have made this class successful. From the analysis, we would like to point out that it is important to collaborate with human resources including community residents and academic researchers. In particular, academic researchers take on different rolls such as an organiser, member, supporter and researcher. In this case, there are theoretical findings about Legitimate Peripheral Participation and "Field generative research".

Prof. Concetta Sirna

Universita' Di Messina, Italy

Prof. Angela Lenzo

Istituto comprensivo "Ettore Castronovo" di Messina, Italy

**Operatività, ludicità e cooperazione nella risoluzione dei conflitti a scuola
Activity, game climate and cooperation in conflict solution at school**

Nel mondo della scuola, sfidato dalle rapide e profonde trasformazioni della "modernità liquida" (Bauman), i docenti spesso si sentono inermi soprattutto perché non riescono a contenere le manifestazioni di narcisismo e di aggressività dei soggetti con i quali si trovano a dover interagire (alunni, genitori, colleghi, dirigenti, responsabili di enti pubblici, ecc.). L'adozione di una logica cooperativa e di servizio (Tapia), se accompagnata da un clima ludico e da forme di concreta e significativa operatività e creatività, consente di canalizzare le energie di tutti in forme di protagonismo positivo. Quando docenti e studenti collaborano nella costruzione e invenzione di giochi e strumenti didattici si offre agli studenti l'occasione per sperimentare competenza, senso di appartenenza e successo formativo e, allo stesso tempo, si fornisce ai docenti l'impagabile sostegno di un clima emotivo-

relazionale positivo che facilita l'intervento educativo e didattico, con riverberi positivi anche sulla progettualità complessiva dell'intera scuola .

Come dimostrano documentate esperienze condotte in scuole dell'area messinese, per costruire una scuola equa e di qualità, che eviti il circuito vizioso del conflitto e l'attivazione di dinamiche di alienazione/ competizione/ marginalizzazione, è utile il ricorso al contributo di molteplici tecniche didattiche e di originali strumenti operativi, purché riconosciuti e accettati da tutto il corpo docente, adeguatamente supportato sia sul piano formativo che su quello istituzionale e politico.

In the world of school, challenged by the deep transformations of "liquid modernity" (Bauman), teachers often feel helpless because they cannot contain manifestations of narcissism and aggressiveness by the people with whom they have to interact (pupils, parents, colleagues, school managers, representatives of public bodies, etc.). The adoption of a cooperative and service logic (Tapia), if accompanied by a game climate and by forms of concrete and significant operative activity and creativity, allows channeling everybody's energy in ways which lead the subjects to be positive protagonists. When teachers and students cooperate in building and inventing games and educational tools, it offers students the opportunity to experience competence, sense of belonging and formative success. At the same time, it gives teachers the priceless support of an emotional-relational positive climate, which facilitates educational intervention, with positive effects on the complete planning of the entire school also .

As documented experiences conducted in the Messinean area demonstrate, to build an equal and quality school, able to avoid the vicious circle of conflict and the activation of alienation/competition/marginalization dynamics, it is useful to resort to the contribution of many educational techniques and original operative tools, on condition that they are acknowledged and accepted by the entire teacher body, properly supported both on formative and institutional and political level .

Mrs. Mariela Chyrikins

Anne Frank House, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Confronting Injustice – An Example of Cooperating Learning and ICT in the Classroom

The paper will deal with an example of cooperative learning using ICT in the classroom. The project implemented by the Anne Frank House deals with cross-cultural understanding of injustices that youth perpetrate upon their peers (such as bullying), focusing on experiences at school and within their local communities. The project also encourages students to look carefully at coping mechanisms and prevention programs that are used to confront those injustices. Students from different countries must work cooperatively and implement brainstorming procedures, research and interviews both within and outside the classroom in order to gain an understanding of various injustices experienced by their peers as well as to find ways of preventing and overcoming such situations .

The paper will present the results and learning experiences of the first pilot of Confronting Injustice programme and introduce an example of using cooperative learning to deal with social justice -by applying innovative methods in the classroom.

Prof. Johanna Lasonen, Dr. Marianne Teras

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Cooperative Learning Needs for Intercultural Competence among Professionals and Immigrant Students

Collaborative learning has been approached from two main traditions: the socio-constructivist view and socio-cultural theory. The socio-cultural approach to learning is traced from the Vygotskian framework (1978) that emphasizes the meaning of social interaction and activity in knowledge construction as well as the mediating role of tools. The theoretical and methodological framework of our project leaned to cultural-historical activity theory and developmental work research (Vygotsky 1978, Leontev 1978; Engeström 1987; 2005). The method of the Culture Laboratory in an intercultural learning setting was applied (Teräs 2004). Collaborative learning here refers to the activity where teachers and students are engaged in construction of shared understanding concerning the multicultural issues that help them integrate into the workforce together. Mutual learning occurs in historical and cultural settings, and any culture is not the one for all nations. Interculturality is a multifarious phenomenon in a society and functions as a construct (Mall 2000). 'Inter-' refers to an experiential core of existence and subjective involvement in activities such as in teaching and learning. Interculturality connects human beings and groups to multicultural societies (Lasonen 2003). First we explain a summary of the training needs surveyed among advisors and trainers of immigrant work in five countries. Secondly we present an intervention study conducted in a large vocational college specialising in social welfare and health services in Helsinki. The emphasis was to empower immigrant students by participatory practices and multi-voiced orientation in a collaborative learning context. The paper explains how the students and teachers in co-operation learned and developed the training, and how the students' opinions and views were listened to by focusing on the suggestions they made. The findings showed that the participants made numerous suggestions, which challenged both teaching and learning practices as well as collaboration between students and teachers.

Prof. Carl Grant

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, USA

Multicultural and Intercultural Education as Theory and Practice for Cooperative Grouping and Classroom Community Learning

What is the significance of multicultural and intercultural education in cooperative grouping? Is constructive pluralism informed by these two theoretical frameworks and if so is it useful in multiethnic classrooms. This paper will review the four models of cooperative learning often used in U. S. classrooms. Critiques of these four models from a multicultural and intercultural perspective will be presented. The paper will argue that the concepts of multicultural and intercultural education are important to cooperative groups and learning communities fostering constructive pluralism.

STRAND 2. COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN TEACHER TRAINING

Dr. Robyn Gillies

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

The Effects of Training Teachers in Cognitive and Metacognitive Questioning Strategies on Students Discourse and Learning During Cooperative Learning

The study sought to determine if teachers who are taught specific communication skills designed to challenge students' cognitive and metacognitive thinking during cooperative learning use more challenging and scaffolding behaviours to mediate students' learning than teachers who implement cooperative learning or small-group work only who have not been taught these skills. The study involved 49 teachers in three conditions (cooperative + communication; cooperative condition, small-group only) and two groups of students from each of the above teachers' classes. The

results show that the teachers in the cooperative + communication condition used significantly more challenging and scaffolding behaviours than teachers in the small-group only condition but not more than the teachers in the cooperative condition. The study also showed that the children in the cooperative + communication condition provided significantly more elaborative and help-giving behaviours to group members than peers in the other two conditions. The theoretical and practical implications for learning are discussed .

Assoc. Prof. Mirja Talib

University of Helsinki, Finland

Assoc. Prof. Sari Hosoya

Kanto Gakuin University, Japan

**Pre-service Teachers' Intercultural Competence in Japan and Finland
(preliminary study)**

This is a comparative study of pre-service teachers' intercultural competence in Japan and Finland .

Intercultural competence can be understood as an enlarged understanding of oneself, a critical approach to work, a comprehension of different realities and an empowerment of students. The aim of the study was to find out the pre-service teachers' preparedness to face the increasing diversity in the previously homogeneous societies of Japan and Finland .

We are referring theories from three different areas: 1) Theory models from intercultural sensitivity and experience of difference; 2) the theory models from teacher identities; 3) theory models from critical pedagogy which focus on knowledge, reflection, and action as the basis for social change .

We made our original questionnaire based on intercultural education theories. We will show the preliminary results of the study. The information will be used to improve teacher education in both countries and to provide information about how different cultural contexts will affect teacher thinking.

Mrs. Wendy Jolliffe

University of Hull, UK

Implementing Cooperative Learning: Developing a Network of Support

This paper will discuss the implications for effective implementation of cooperative learning in primary and secondary schools. Whilst there is a wealth of existing research into both the benefits and the types of cooperative learning, studies into effective implementation are less extensive .

The impact of recent Government policy on continuing professional development for teachers in the UK will provide a wider context for the study. Research into the implementation of cooperative learning over a period of five years in a network of primary and secondary schools will be discussed. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, the study assesses the extent of use, and suggests the most effective professional development for staff implementing such a teaching strategy .

The research shows that teachers were overwhelmingly positive about the benefits of cooperative learning and all staff reported the widespread use of paired work with formal group work developing. Critical analysis of key factors into effective implementation will be presented. These include the allocation of a dedicated member of staff, as facilitator, to support and monitor the use of cooperative learning, together with establishing a support group across schools aided by a member of staff from a Higher Education Institution, to develop and share good practice.

Dr. Miguel Anxo Santos Rego, Dr. Mar Lorenzo Moledo

University of Santiago De Compostela, Spain

The Effects of Cooperative Learning on Teaching Staff in Culturally Heterogeneous Classrooms

A common agreement in the literature on intercultural education is the need to understand its operative development in both primary and secondary education in terms of the use of cooperative learning techniques. This consensus has brought to light another well known necessity today; that is, the teaching staff must receive training based on both the theoretic and practical knowledge of cooperative learning strategies that demonstrate an increased effectiveness in the pedagogical management of educational contexts. So, taking into account the abundance of contributions focused on the examination of the results that cooperative learning has provoked in students, the core of this study is situated in the effects that Aaronson's Jigsaw technique has produced in a group of teachers working in heterogeneous ethno-cultural classrooms. Concretely, we taught teachers the use of the technique in such a way that it was possible to observe, through the evaluation process, the effects of technique development on their students. What our results show is the need of their systematic incorporation in the initial and continuous training of teachers, taking into account the advantages and benefits gathered in the course of the experience.

Dr. Kam Wing Chan

The Hong Kong Institute of Education, HK, China

School-based Staff Development in Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is only a small component of a core module in the pre-service programmes, and an elective module in the in-service programmes of the biggest teacher education institute in Hong Kong. Schools attempting to implement cooperative learning have to rely mainly on the help of external staff developers. Most of the school-based staff development programmes provided by the staff developers start with some introductory talks and workshops, followed by lesson planning, lesson observation and post-lesson sharing by the teachers, and end with a concluding session by the staff developers. Many of these school-based staff development programmes are not effective in attempting to add cooperative learning to the repertoire of the teachers largely because of the weakness of these programmes and the overlooking of the diversified aspects of cooperative learning. Based on grounded theory, this paper suggests a six-phase model of school-based staff development in cooperative learning to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes. These phases are described as setting objectives, participation in workshops, collaborative lesson preparation, peer observation, post-lesson conference and reflection. The model is effective in that it gives ownership to teachers in working in collaboration with their peers as well as staff developers in planning and implementing an innovation.

Dr. Heini Paavola, Assoc. Prof. Mirja Talib

University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Mono- and Multicultural Pre-Service Teachers in Integrated Study-Groups

We are studying how the pre-service teachers will react, integrate and possibly become intercultural in integrated study-group. The study is conducted during their first study year in the class teacher education in the University of Helsinki. The theory models are from Nieto, Bennett & Bennett and Talib. Nieto describes the process of acquiring intercultural competence through four different levels: tolerating, accepting,

respecting and finally reflecting critically diversity. Bennett & Bennett define the similar process starting from an ethnocentric worldview to an ethno-relative approach. In addition Talib emphasizes the continuous reflective process in building teacher identity. The data includes students' essays in the beginning, middle and at the end of the process. Personal interviews are collected as well.

Dr. Lalita Agashe

University Of Pune, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Cooperative Learning For Women Empowerment in Pre-Service Primary Women Teachers of India

Indian society is multilingual, multicultural society subdivided by remarkable caste, creed and gender differences. Lower female literacy rates, a trend of lowering female ratio and social-economic-political backwardness of women in India are some glaring reasons pointing to the urgency of women empowerment. Women teachers' sensitization for women empowerment has intrinsic value and educational value. A very large number of women primary teachers are important change agents who can assist in women empowerment. To carry out this role effectively, women teachers need to have a fair concept of woman empowerment in case of themselves and their students.

This is a qualitative study. The programme will be carried out in case of about fifty to eighty pre-service primary teachers from three to five teacher education institutes. Main aspects of woman empowerment concept included in the study are, awareness of guarding self- interest and power to have choice, take decisions and implement them for self (in specific areas) and its implementation in classroom .

Discussions in small groups based on these aspects will be conducted as part of the sensitization programme. Care will be taken to create a balanced view about gender sensitization. Three to five educators of pre-service primary teacher education course will conduct sensitization programme in own colleges. These educators will be trained to guide the discussions and to use data collection tools. Self-reports by participants, a questionnaire and observation schedule will form the data collection tools.

The effectiveness of the programme will be checked in terms of the increase in depth and intensity of awareness about woman empowerment in relation to the specific aspects.

Mr. Philippe Paelman

University of Ghent, Belgium

Preparing Co-operative Learning in Kindergarten

Experience with implementation of co-operative learning in multicultural groups (CLIM) in primary school confronted us with two problems. First of all was the question: should kindergarten teachers receive similar material as the primary school. The second problem was that a lot of teachers and pupils in primary school had no experience with working in group and co-operative learning. Their first confrontation with this way of learning was because of the lack of experience and preparation not really a success and they stopped using it.

Our answer on these two questions was a combination. We worked out a lot of exemplary models on how to prepare your classroom on co-operative learning either for kindergarten as for primary school; how to work with attitudes, group roles, multiple abilities and classroom-agreements.

In the interactive presentation we will give an overview of these activities.

**Dr. José Manuel Serrano, Dr. Maria Teresa Calvo LLena,
Dr. Rosa Maria Pons Parra**

Universidad de Murcia, Spain

Dr. Tiburcio Moreno Olivo, Dr. Rosamary Selene Lara Villanueva

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, México

Training Teachers in Cooperative Learning Methods

In the field of teacher training for cooperative learning the instructional design is a basic topic for organizing the cooperative classroom. Our research starts from a systemic view of the instructional process, where several issues have to be considered: academic objectives, social objectives, face to face interaction, positive interdependence that determines interpersonal relationships, individual responsibility, the task structure, the reward structure, the end product presentation, the group process and assessment. Our main aim is to determine which formative subjects have to be included in a teachers' training program on instructional design .

The experimental program consists of two parts. The first one: formative process with three phases, theoretical formation, practice formation and evaluation of learning; and the second one: Empirical work, consisting in the application of the instructional design elaborated in the practice formation phase to their own classrooms .

Results from both parts, are analysed by a randomized blocks factorial design, and results show that the learning of teachers was statistically significant all along the formative process, but not always they learned in the same way. This is to say, not every issue of the process had the same effects on the accurate elaboration of a cooperative learning instructional design.

Dr. Indira Odina

University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

Dr. Ilze Mikelsone

Liepaja Pedagogical Academy, Riga, Latvia

In-service Courses as a Means for Regenerating Teachers' Community

The presentation will deal with a case study of teacher in-service education issues in Latvia, concerning the variety of offered in-service courses, teachers' motivation to participate in these courses, their expectations from the courses and their preferences.

The Latvian Association of University Lecturers for Cooperation in Education has been offering the in-service courses for teachers to help them implement new teaching models, mostly interactive, like cooperative learning, critical thinking, interactive learning, intercultural learning, in their every day work in consensus with the guidelines of the Standard of Education in Latvia. The teachers who have obtained their professional qualification in different periods of time experience different hardships .

Nevertheless, through the application of various course organization models, there are can be drawn common components that should be observed to improve the in-service education courses. The combination of the following conditions should be taken into account: personal importance based on motivation or necessity; natural and professionally homogeneous environment; experience based acquisition of new skills; gradualness; a chance to try out, make mistakes, evaluate, analyze and get experience; reflection, comprehension and understanding of the meaning of the acquired skills.

Isabella Pescarmona

University of Turin, Italy

Complex Instruction: Managing Professional Development and School Culture

Complex Instruction (CI) is a comprehensive program of curriculum and instruction which meets many of the criteria of Intercultural Education by equalizing rates of participation through multiple ability tasks and status interventions.

In 2004, the Intercultural Centre of Bologna (CD/Lei) in collaboration with the University of Turin started a teacher training course in order to implement and disseminate Complex Instruction in Italian schools. During this project a smaller group of primary school teachers decided to develop and experiment with original CI teaching units in their classrooms.

I am developing a qualitative research project using ethnographic methodology (participant observation and interviews) to investigate and understand how this instructional innovation is proceeding and how it is being implemented by the Bologna teacher group. The paper aims at problematizing the introduction of an alternative approach in an Italian context by examining how teachers reach the new educational goals coping with their school structural conditions (such as schedules, curriculum demands) as well as cultural factors (such as professional values). I will discuss how CI strategy is debated and interpreted by the teachers involved.

Prof. Kumiko Takano, Prof. Masayo Sonoda

Faculty of Education, Soka University, Tokyo, Japan

Two Ways to Introduce "Cooperative Learning" for Inclusive Education in Japan

In Japanese schools, inclusive education is one of the most critical issues now. Two years ago, Japanese educational policy changed to enforce further inclusion. Since then many children with special educational needs such as LD, ADHD, and mild mental retardation began to study with students without disabilities in regular classrooms. Most of the regular classroom teachers in Japan have never received training for special education, and thus they often fail to provide efficient support for students with special needs for developing their desired socialization with children without disabilities.

In Western countries CL is a common instructional approach for children with diverse needs. In Japan, however, CL is not well known as a powerful learning strategy for special education teachers.

In this interview research, we report two cases in which CL was implemented in classrooms where children with and without special educational needs study together: One case is lead by a school principal and another is initiated by resource room teachers. We believe that our report could reveal some unique characteristics of schools in Japan to help western educators understand the Japanese educational systems.

Dr. Carla Chamberlain-Quinlisk

Pennsylvania State University, Abington, PA, USA

Cooperative Learning as Method and Model in Second Language Teacher Education

This paper describes a cooperative learning project that was developed for a graduate level teacher education course (Collaborative Teaching in ESL) for in-service English as a Second Language (ESL) in one of the largest urban school districts in the United States. Because some of the challenges identified by the ESL teachers center on status and relationship issues with other teachers in their schools, this course in collaborative teaching had to address relational dynamics such as trust, vulnerability, and approachability as central to successful implementation of collaborative methodology. Therefore, as the ESL teachers learn about collaborative

models for integrating ESL into diverse content courses (math, science, history, etc.), they must also learn how to work cooperatively with their non-ESL colleagues. For this class, a cooperative learning project was designed to bring the ESL teachers together in groups to explore their own values and expectations for learning as well as their own communication styles that would encourage collegiality. The project involves discussions of teaching philosophies, identification of instructional challenges and strategies, and cooperative classroom-based research in which the teachers help each other to gather and analyze classroom data. As the teachers help each other to assess students' linguistic and intercultural learning, they also learn how to cultivate equitable professional relationships, establish and maintain trust, and fully integrate a sense of cooperation into their collaborative ESL teaching practice. This presentation will highlight the stages of the classroom project and discuss how dimensions of cooperative learning can be used not only as methodology in second language teacher education but also as a model for developing collaborative relationships between ESL and content area teachers .

Mr. Aleksan Hovhannisyan,

World Bank, Yerevan, Armenia

Dr. Pasi Sahlberg

European Training Foundation, Turin, Italy

Cooperative Learning in Armenia: Issues and Challenges in Improving Quality of Teaching

Research questions:

-What is quality education in general secondary schools achieved in Armenian schools?

-How do Armenian teachers accept the concepts and methods of cooperative learning in Armenia?

-How is cooperative learning implemented in Armenian schools?

-What new policies/strategies are to be designed and put into action to address the issues and challenges of CL in Armenia?

As part of the Education Quality and Relevance Project in Armenia "Teacher Professional Development" is a key component. The success of educational reform in Armenia depends on the willingness and capability of teachers to understand, learn and use student-centred approaches, especially cooperative learning, in their work. The main objective of this study is to understand what teachers think about cooperative learning and how education policies and reform efforts should address teachers' willingness to accept cooperative learning .

The purpose of the study is to stimulate professional dialogue and provide more evidence to understand the main restrictions and respective challenges Armenian teachers face when introducing cooperative learning in the classroom teaching. This research has direct links to ongoing policy development in Armenia .

There is very little research on concrete educational issues in Armenia. This study can contribute to the gradually emerging field of social sciences, especially those related to school pedagogy. It will promote discussion and support creation of new policies and strategies for sustainable positive changes in classroom teaching in the future.

This study views cooperative learning as a pedagogical framework that includes a set of different methods, principles, concepts and practices. Cooperative learning as a generic approach to teaching is analysed within the cultural and practical tradition in Armenia. Data for this study was collected from teachers who participated in specific in-service training on cooperative learning, used what they learned in their schools and in many cases also trained other teachers on cooperative learning .

The study combines analytical methods with survey and interview methods to provide reliable answers to research questions.

Mrs. Ioanna Todor

University of Alba Iulia, Romania

**Critical Aspects in the Implementation of Cooperative Learning –
Results of a Follow-Up Study**

In order to promote collaborative learning in schools we developed a teacher training programme. 500 teachers from our district have been involved in this programme during the academic year 2006-2007. The aim of this paper is to present this programme and the results of a follow-up study. We included in the study 60 teachers and 100 students and we investigated five main dimensions of cooperative learning: positive interdependence, face to face interaction, individual and group accountability, interpersonal and small-group skills and group processing.

Mrs. Edi Bruna

Centro Servizi Didattici Ass. Istruzione Provincia di Torino, Italy

Dalla comunità di pratica e di apprendimento al “Progetto per l’innovazione della scuola”

La storia di un progetto che iniziato in sordina, a poco a poco coinvolge migliaia di insegnanti di scuole di ogni ordine e grado.

Il formarsi di una rete territoriale di cooperative learning, che divide il territorio provinciale in zone e un team dei facilitatori (insegnanti “esperti” nella conoscenza e applicazione del Cooperative Learning., ma anche formati al ruolo) che si fa carico del coordinamento sul proprio territorio e della diffusione del metodo. Ma soprattutto si declina all’interno dell’attività di supporto alle zone con attenzione al principio di “intelligenza distribuita”: ogni facilitatore, all’interno del proprio gruppo di lavoro, mette a disposizione competenze differenti, favorendo la potenzialità di crescita del gruppo con risorse differenti .

La costituzione di una vera e propria comunità di pratica e di apprendimento, in cui gli insegnanti si confrontano, si trasmettono informazioni ed esperienze .

Le reti di scuole che dimostrano la capacità del territorio di divenire protagonista della formazione dei docenti e in grado di assumersi il ruolo di propagandista delle nuove metodologie

Il portale nato per dare visibilità alle azioni, ma soprattutto per permettere le sinergie delle risorse umane e non solo.

Facilitatori, zone, reti e portale: strumenti diretti al sostegno e all’incentivazione ad una pratica progettuale di un insegnamento più attuale e significativo che propone esempi di progettazione, piani di lavoro, modelli di valutazione autentica, riflessione didattica.

Tutto ciò nella direzione di una trasformazione della scuola da veicolo di conoscenze, a laboratorio per la costruzione di competenze, così come indicato dalle più recenti psico-pedagogiche.

Il percorso realizzato negli anni – come sinteticamente presentato - ha sviluppato, la consapevolezza di una nuova prospettiva: il sostegno alle pratiche dell’autonomia della scuola, espressa soprattutto nell’idea di autonomia didattica e di ricerca .

Il team diventa Gruppo per l’innovazione della scuola GIS, supporto reale all’innovazione nella scuola.

This paper deals with the following issues.

- The history of a project which involves thousands of teachers in every type of school.
- The growth of a cooperative learning network which covers all the territory of the Province of Turin, and of a team of “helping teachers”, in charge of

coordinating the activities in their own area and of giving their colleagues methodological support.

- The birth of a learning and working community where teachers share their experiences and discuss opinions.
- The website which makes actions visible and allows for human synergies.

The goal is a transformation of the school from a vehicle of knowledge into a lab for the building of competences, as the most recent educational research has shown. A new perspective of practices in support of school autonomy, considering teaching and research methods is developed. The team is to become a group for the innovation of the school.

STRAND 3. USING COOPERATIVE LEARNING FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Prof. Rachel Hertz Lazarowitz, Dr. Faisal Azaiza

University of Haifa, Israel

Cooperative Participative Action Research (CPAR): Promoting Social Justice and Equality in an Intercultural University in Israel

Universities in Israel, as universities elsewhere, are the first educational contexts within society to integrate national, religious and ethnic groups. This reality poses a challenge for intercultural life on university campuses. The goal of the long-term CPAR seminars was to develop a method of teaching, learning and investigation that relates to the core issues of students' experiences and development in intercultural contexts of Israeli universities, based on the University of Haifa (UH) as a laboratory case.

During the six CPAR seminars (2001-2007) conducted at HU, students practiced experiential and academic Group Investigation (GI) methods. The students defined their own research-interest topics, surveyed related theory and research literature. Subsequently they developed qualitative and quantitative methods, and carried out the investigation. In addition, students participated in writing reports that were distributed and presented on campus to influence UH's becoming a responsible context for social justice and equality .

The students that participated in the six CPAR seminars focused on campus life. They collected data from about 2000 students by conducting interviews and administering questionnaires. Some of the topics in the long-term research included: Surveillance and injustice vs. Privileges and justice; Integration vs. Discrimination; Friendships vs. Separation; Legitimization vs. de-legitimization of the others' identity; Respect vs. Contempt; Empowerment vs. helplessness; Coexistence vs. Conflict . The paper will present the structure of CPAR using the G-I method and its potential for dialogue and action.

Dr. Terri Bucci

Ohio State University, Ohio, USA

Cooperative Learning as a Tool for Empowerment: Experiences in Rural Haiti

Introducing Cooperative Learning in a Developing Country- Haiti

Research question: How does one introduce cooperative learning as an instructional method into classrooms that have traditionally been directive, authoritarian, and focused on rote learning?

Participants of this session will learn about an educational program, which seeks to help transform a "banking" pedagogical structure to "problem based" pedagogy in rural Haiti. Session attendees will see photos and hear stories of application of

cooperative learning in rural Haitian classrooms, the struggles and successes of this practice, and initial effects of this practice on the culture of the classroom. The purpose of this session is to learn about how the practice of cooperative learning is received and implemented in a developing country. We will show how cooperative learning, as an instructional strategy, varies in its implementation, reception, and effect dependent upon the culture and realities of the classroom and school environment. This presentation and accompanying paper will use Freire's work on pedagogy of the oppressed as a foundational structure for learning and teacher education.

Dr. Yolanda Medina

Borough of Manhattan Community College/ CUNY, NY, USA

Critical Aesthetic Pedagogy

This paper will attempt to describe a form of education that the presenter calls Critical Aesthetic Pedagogy. The object of this pedagogical method is to infuse aesthetic experience into teacher education classrooms in order to enhance capacities in teacher education students that are indispensable for social empowerment. By exposing education students to participatory encounters with artworks that possess certain qualities that encourage the sharing of experiences and the recognition of common sources of oppression, educators can create a sense of empowerment that will prepare them to enable social justice .

The tool used to measure the ultimate success of this critical process is a narrative paper in which a teacher and students are asked to reflect in writing on the entire semester's assigned readings and related class discussions in the light of their own personal experiences and using the chosen work of art as a backdrop. A narrative analysis of students' reflective papers was conducted looking for recurring themes that indicated an enhanced critical awareness and empowerment to pursue social change .

This analysis showed that the infusion of aesthetic experiences into teacher education classrooms can indeed enhance the development of social consciousness, and thus promote the adoption of educational methods that advance social change. Students' responses depended on the power of their aesthetic experience and this in turn was influenced by the life experiences they bring to their encounter with the work of art included in the curriculum.

Prof. Michele Kahn

University of Houston-Clear Lake, Texas, USA

Junctures of Cooperation: Finding Common Ground in the Multicultural Education Classroom

Drawing from the results of a study which used students' autobiographies in order to determine life changing beliefs, this paper discusses what events in students' lives have triggered new reflective patterns which in turn serve as spaces in which their social beliefs and/or networks have changed. Presented are 59 cultural autobiographies collected over one year in a graduate multicultural education course. Documents were coded for analysis guided by the following two questions; (1) what types of experiences are mentioned as life and/or belief altering? And (2) what, if any, are background commonalities among students who profess to have had a life and/or belief altering experience? Emerging themes presented from the data were as follows: (1) Solitude, (2) Membership of or close association with members of non-privileged cultural categories, and (3) Perseverance. Discussion of the themes as well as suggestions as to how to recreate these conditions in the classroom to simulate thought provoking experiences as well as develop common ground among different groups will be addressed.

Prof. Khosrow Bagheri Noaparast

University of Tehran, Iran

A Dynamic Conception of Human Identity, Intercultural Relation, and Cooperative Learning

It is becoming more urgent in our intercommunicating world to provide relevant conceptions of identity, relation and learning. The main question of this paper concerns the conceptualizations of human identity and intercultural relation needed for a cooperative learning to occur. There have been theoretical endeavours at the both extremes of ethnocentric and universalistic views that need to be criticized in the first step. At one extreme, it is argued that the relation between different cultures should be conceptualized in terms of incommensurability. Inspired by Wittgenstein, Peter Winch argued for an inner understanding of other cultures and the impossibility of outer understanding. This view presupposes either the negation of a common conception of humanity or the affirmation of a fragmentary one. At the other extreme, a standardization and unification along with the trend of globalization is supported at the peril of leaving pluralism aside. In this paper, we have argued that neither of the two extreme views can provide a satisfactory theoretical basis for cooperative learning at the intercultural level. It seems that such a theoretical basis should be sought in trying to compromise between Donald Davidson's principle of charity and Gadamer's view of understanding in terms of fusion of horizons. While Davidson's principle provides a common ground for humanity, it does not take the importance of conceptual schemes serious. On the other hand, Gadamer's view takes them serious but ignores the importance of a common ground for connecting them. Consequently, understanding is neither an inner nor an outer endeavour, rather it involves both. Cooperative learning in this context means that learning material is neither in the hands of the learner, nor at those of the so called 'teacher'. In fact, this material develops in the intercultural relation by means of both poles of the relationship. Cooperative learning involves reciprocal support as well as reciprocal critique.

Mr. Fokion Georgiadis

University Of London, England

Mr. Apostolos Zisimos

University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Mrs. Anna Koutsouri

University Of Thrace, Greece

Educational Interventions on 'Other-Ness': Co-operative Learning in the Teaching of Intercultural Children's Literature in the Muslim Minority Schools in 'Western Thrace' (Greece)

Cultural diversity has always been characteristic of most educational systems, in Greece as well. In the Greek educational context the presence of minority school populations was purposely kept out of the official curriculum and superseded. The charged arena of minority education in Greece poses a challenge for pedagogy which demands rethinking the agency of the pupil and deconstructive practices of representation and collaboration. While there has never been an orthodoxy or consistency in tackling questions of cultural diversity and representation, post-structuralist theorisations of identity and diversity have been clearly influential in this arena. In this line of thoughts, everyday school life continuously offers chances for scrutiny often more unconventional than the traditional 'subjects' of the official

curriculum. Children's literature might be part of this process when approached through collaborative modes .

This presentation focuses on the contemporary critical multicultural praxis of children's literature within the framework of principles of co-operative education as it is articulated in primary schools of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace (Greek Thrace). Differentiated collaborative pedagogies and particular instructive strategies regarding children's literature are highly recommended in those specific school contexts. Taking those pupils' cultural background into deeper consideration and using collaborative schemes of work creates more intrinsic motives to pupils while enhances representation, tolerance and empathy.

Prof. José Luis Lalueza, Dr. Isabel Crespo, Dr. Sònia Sánchez Busques

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Collaborative Learning Communities ICT Supported in Multicultural Education and Social Inclusion

This is an action-research project grounded in the work started by Michael Cole and the Laboratory of Compared Human Cognition, called "Fifth Dimension". This line is composed by the development of activity environments mediated by ICT use and the analysis of the educative interactions generated in its core. This project it's developed on a net, through the collaboration between three American and four European universities. The common goal is the research of the educative change process, related to the mediation artifacts within the activity context. Concrete goal in our research is the study of the inclusive function of those contexts in minority groups with a high index of school failure (Hispanic population in San Diego, African Americans in Denver and gypsy and immigrant populations in Barcelona.)

This paper refers to the local project of the Spanish group that, within the action-research model, studied six communities (inner and after-school programs) that follow the model "Fifth Dimension" in the Barcelona area, at six public schools, all with ethnical minority groups at risk of social exclusion. Virtual tools are used to allow network collaboration as well as digital mediums for diverse curricular elements and guidelines for development in schools. Following the historic-cultural paradigm we adopt as analysis unit the activity, as follows:

- The activity contexts and the institutional change process, related with the introduction of collaborative task computer supported.
- Interactive processes between expert and learner, and between peers, across the use of new technologies in collaborative tasks.
- Pupils and educators' appropriation process of digital tools and virtual environments.

Prof. Donna Jean McInnis

Soka University, Tokyo, Japan

Overcoming Bully Mentality through Cooperative Learning: Training Teachers, Transforming Schools, Building Healthy, Peaceful Communities

Lack of respect for the dignity and integrity of others is at the very heart of intolerance and what can be termed "bully mentality". Bully mentality is pervasive and manifests on many levels from international relations (marginalization and injustice, economic sanctions, "pre-emptive" war, terror), to national relations (moral exclusion, persecution, torture, ethnic violence, environmental destruction), to interpersonal relations (verbal, physical, and psychological violence in school and in the home), to intrapersonal (self-destructive behaviors; the impact of bullying causes harm to both perpetrators and victims and is responsible for behavioral and emotional difficulties, long-term negative outcomes, and violence). Urgent action is called for to relieve the suffering and set those involved on a path to reconciliation and peace. Education has a vital role to play and teachers must be intentionally trained to teach and ACT for

tolerance, caring, cooperation, and justice and to “be the change they hope to see in the world .”

This paper will outline and explore teacher training initiatives, curricula, and materials which intentionally aim to overcome “bully mentality,” intolerance, and all forms of social injustice:

- recognize that cooperative learning increases the likelihood for caring, empathy, and other prosocial behaviors and that teachers need to experience before they can teach
- nurture the attributes of authentic and effective teachers of peace, tolerance, and social justice
- recognize that it is the teacher’s personal and professional capacities, values, attitudes, knowledge and skills that determine the climate and the results of what happens in the classroom
- focus on the personal development and personal transformation of both young and seasoned professionals urging reflection on their teaching practice, language (words, tone etc.) and communication skills, behavior, ideas and attitudes, feelings, needs, etc ...
- recognize the need to educate for holism, connection, and cooperation
- return the teacher to the very heart of the educational process as facilitator and guide
- recognize the role that the teacher plays as agent for social change and educator for socially constructive purposes
- recognize the realities of global interdependence, common human needs, and common responsibility for nonviolent and socially just futures.

Mrs. Khaled Hossain

Institute of Hazrat Mohammad(SAW), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Using Cooperative Learning for Social Justice

Cooperative learning is working together to accomplish a shared goal. Within cooperative learning individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all others. In this way, cooperative learning increases social consciousness, and augments direct knowledge and skills with fairness and responsibility. In developing countries full of diversity, the use of cooperative learning can help strengthen the base of social justice .

Bangladesh is a densely populated country with almost 140 million people, the majority living below the poverty line with severe resource constraints. It has been a challenge for the Bangladesh education system to include people belonging to varying religious, economic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The differences in gender, physical and mental abilities also add to the diversity of the learners’ groups. Bangladesh could do well to adopt the concept of cooperative learning, which leads to stronger bonding and raises the groups’ social competence and self-esteem in addition to promoting higher levels of achievement. Cooperative learning through formal education can help reduce the problems associated with social disparities and establish norms of equality. This mechanism enables children from affluent households to mingle with children from resource-challenged communities, thereby helping each other in maximizing their own and other's learning. These children will all benefit from an appreciation of the humane values of caring and sharing and are expected to grow up as adults with strong social commitments. Sharing of resources between poor and rich is an important aspect of social justice. It calls for cultivating the right mindset through cooperative learning in one's formative years. This paper will discuss the mechanism of cooperative learning in the context of Bangladesh and

describe how such initiatives can promote resource mobilization and lead towards social justice.

Dr. Evie Zambeta

University of Athens, Greece

Religion, Modernity and Social Rights

This paper examines the ambivalent role of education as an institution of modernity and as a mode of social control. Educational institutions have acted both as rationalising forces and as institutions for maintaining tradition, nationalism and monoculturalism. The persistence of religion in the context of institutions of modernity, such as the educational systems, represents this ambivalent role of education and of the modernity project as such .

The aim of this paper is to examine the epistemological, political and social implications of the persistence of religious teaching, indoctrination and catechism within schools. It will be argued that religions, perceived either as systems of beliefs exercising spiritual power over people, or as hierocratic organizations developing political territorialities, are epistemologically antithetical constructs with 'cooperative learning and intercultural dialogue', concepts on which this conference is focusing. While religions are systems of absolutism and exclusive access to perceived truths, interculturalism essentially presupposes cultural relativism and rational reasoning. To the extent that this is the case, religious teaching and interculturalism should be perceived as conflicting processes in contemporary education systems.

Prof. Paola Dusi

University of Verona, Italy

La partecipazione per l'appartenenza. Abilità sociali, Cooperative Learning ed educazione nella società contemporanea

The text is meant to be a theoretical starting point regarding the pedagogical grounds which justify the choice of Cooperative Learning in education. For the child to grow and achieve independence in relationships, his/her basic needs must be satisfied. Researchers (J.D. Dunn, D.W. Winnicott, E. Wertheim, Erikson,G.H.W. Hegel, A. Honneth, H. Arendt, P. Ricoeur, F. Heritier, G . Simmel) have identified among the basic needs recognition, self-esteem, affiliation, care, achievement and power. Each is legitimate and may be satisfied when we acknowledge human nature as ontologically relational. This text highlights the correlation between the methodological/educational principles at the basis of Cooperative Learning in its different approaches and the aforementioned needs of the child.

Cooperative Learning allows adults to shape relational and learning contexts that stimulate the testing of one's self and skills within horizontal and vertical self-recognition relationships (Aristotle, Putnam, F. Fukuyama). Besides, the text highlights the way Cooperative Learning promotes a better path to Affiliation. In assimilationist societies, it is Affiliation which ensures social interaction. Is it through Cooperative Learning experiences that individuals are triggered to build up Affiliation by means of creative participation, that is crucial for an intercultural society.

Prof. Jagdish Gundara , Dr. Namrata Sharma

Institute of Education, University of London, England

Intercultural and Co-operative Learning in Socially Diverse Schools

Complex issues in the important field of Cooperative Learning are hidden behind “the fortified walls that loom over meaning” (using the words of the Polish Jewish writer Bruno Schulz, who was shot by a SS officer in WW II). This paper would like to break ‘the fortified walls’, and thereby engage with the following issues in relation to cooperative learning:

- Discuss the ways in which societal differences are represented in the microcosm of the classroom. Classrooms represent the challenge of how to manage diversity between (a) teacher and students, and (b) negotiate curriculum to make it genuinely inclusive. Hence, intercultural teaching and learning do not have simplistic trajectories and represent complex issues for the classroom, teachers and schools.
- The paper will examine the work of Elizabeth Cohen at Stanford on cooperative learning and build on the first presenter's previous work in the field of curriculum studies. It will be argued that whilst there has been a great deal of emphasis in recent years on training a skilled labour force, the main function of education still ought to be to educate future citizens to work, live and think both individually and collectively in safe democratic communities. The paper will briefly map some of these developments in the past few decades and tackle the way in which co-operative learning strategies are not a sufficient basis for improving educational outcomes of students. These need to be accompanied by appropriate curriculum. If the curriculum remains exclusive and only represents the knowledge of the dominant groups in society it will not be seen to be relevant by those groups which come from subordinated groups. The important question the paper will begin to answer is what can be done about curricular issues in complex communities so that all groups feel that they have a stake in society. Issues of intercultural curriculum which are non-centric have implications for co-operative learning and are one of the issues which this paper will examine.

Prof. Piergiorgio Reggio, Dr. Elisabetta Dodi

Catholic University, Milan, Italy

Cooperative Learning in Intercultural Training

The paper will present the main results of cooperative learning experiences in intercultural training activities: a university course on “Intercultural Training” (five editions) for teachers, educators and social workers and training activities for the “Local Police” in Regione Lombardia. Cooperative learning activities, role of the trainers and of the participants, outcomes and difficulties will be described.

Specifically we will consider:

- workshop technique, such a way to develop intercultural competences through an active method of learning
- cooperative learning strategies focused on social and educational problems, whose solution needs to increase intercultural competences
- (auto)biographical approach such as a method to develop personal and group processes of reflection

Dr. Maria-Liisa Jarvela

University of Oulu, Finland

Developing Intercultural Teacher Education through a Collaborative Action Research Process

The presentation will discuss an action research process begun in the 1990s in the Teacher Education Department at Oulu University, Finland. The primary goal was to develop courses on teachers’ professional ethics for teacher education. When researching the ethical dilemmas that teachers encounter in their work, it was found

out that many of them concern not only children's rights and teachers' responsibilities, but also difference and diversity - on both macro and micro levels of society. The new teacher education programme (M.Ed. International Programme) was started in 1994 and focuses on issues linked with global ethics, such as critical knowledge construction, sustainable development and global social and political challenges. This contents and value base for teacher education is seen as a necessity in the multicultural, globalised world where all parts of the globe are increasingly interdependent. The programme aims at educating teachers with heightened cultural sensitivity and increased intercultural competencies. The curricula, contents and methods have been developed together by a team of colleagues and with the help of students' experiences and feedback. Research data were collected through questionnaires, observation, discussions, interviews, essays and follow-up studies. The data were utilised in numerous articles and theses written by the teachers and students in the programme focusing on various issues linking theory and praxis of global education. This presentation will focus on the collaborative process of developing teacher education with examples of collaborative approaches, methods, contents and programmes.

STRAND 4. HIGH QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Mrs. Annavaleria Guazzieri

TESOL-Italy, Veneto Branch; University of Venice, Italy

Cooperative Learning in CLIL

(Content and Language Integrated Learning)

As a member of the Regional Institute for Educational Research of the Veneto region in Italy for the past two years, I was able to work with and observe many classes involved in the two-year project 'Participation in CLIL', carried out with the collaboration of the University of Venice. CLIL [Content and (foreign) Language Integrated Learning] is a new methodology for Italian mainstream education carried out mostly by adventurous and informed teachers, who are aware of the possible positive outcomes this teaching may foster in students' linguistic and subject competences.. During the first year of the project the researcher in CLIL classes observed that the amount of cooperative/collaborative activities was very limited, especially in high secondary classes, that teachers knew little or nothing about CL and that they mainly used just a few unstructured pair or group work activities in their CLIL classes, favouring a teacher-centred approach instead. This was little or no surprise to the researcher since teacher training course in CLIL do not generally include a CL component. It was also perceived that the quality of students' oral interaction in the foreign language between themselves and with the teacher was rather unsatisfactory .

The first part of the second year was therefore devoted to reflective meetings and workshops where teachers and researchers looked more closely at TBL (Task Based Learning) methodology and CL and tried to foresee how they could integrate into a customary CLIL lesson plan. Recent evidence-based research in CL in the field of foreign and second language learning was also discussed and examples of activities were presented emphasizing three main principles of CL (positive interdependence, individual accountability and simultaneous interaction). These experiences established how CL can reflect on language learning by emphasizing autonomous oral interaction and production. In the second year of the project CL activities were gradually introduced by the teachers in the CLIL classes.

The presentation aims at presenting evidence of how CL may work in a CLIL context, and how CL tasks have a positive effect on the mastery of both content concept learning and foreign language development. This will be done by means of

comparing CLIL CL-based lessons with CLIL non-CL-based lessons, which were video and audio recorded by the researcher.

Mrs. Harumi Kimura

Nanzan University, Kuwana-shi, Mie, Japan

Group Flow and Cooperative Learning

This paper presents an experience of “group flow” (Csikszentmihalyi and Seligman) in the language learning context. Cooperative principles and dynamics of cooperation characterize the optimal learning experiences in a small-group-based learning environment (Jacobs, Power, & Loh; Johnson & Johnson).

Cooperative learning research is closely related to classroom practice and research (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith). On the other hand Flow Theory, which has its conceptual foundation in positive psychology, has not yet established the solid relationships between the positive emotions and the learning outcomes at the group level. In the area of second language acquisition, past research has demonstrated the existence of flow at the individual level (Egbert; Schmidt & Savage), but not in collaborative settings.

The interview data of the two learners in a voluntary comprehensive listening program suggest that we can achieve a higher quality of learning when we are happily engaged in learning both alone and together.

Mrs. Georgia Douvli

Aristotle University Of Thessaloniki, Greece

**Collaborative Learning in Mathematics for Language
Minority Pupils in Greece**

Today Greece faces big changes in its demography and social structure and has been transformed from a supposedly homogeneous and monolingual country into a multicoloured and multicultural one. This socio-cultural ‘salad bowl’ is very obviously reflected on and challenges educational system with large populations of language minority pupils. Greek school classrooms are crowded with children of different linguistic and cultural characteristics, different educational needs, different interests and personal objectives. All those issues make the traditional frontal teaching model being exclusively addressed to a small and homogeneous group of indigenous pupils and being unsuitable for a multicultural educational context .

Cultural diversity within Greek classrooms demands new methodology, new didactics, new approaches and teaching strategies. Recently cooperative learning appears highly recommended as a new approach to teaching and learning, due to its dual dimensional and simultaneously interlinked cognitive and social effects. Many research studies worldwide in primary school classrooms have revealed that pupils working with cooperative learning tasks tend to achieve better, comprehend content and skills better (cognitive), acquire more empathy and tolerance while they develop less stereotypes towards ‘other’ groups (ethnic, linguistic, social). This presentation endeavours to elaborate on achievement in mathematics regarding three year-6-minority pupils in a multicultural primary school in Greece. Within this framework, the effects of a co-operative intervention programme in mathematics are analysed and measured. Changes are observed and recorded while quantitative and qualitative data are analytically presented through the three-phase-implemented tests (pre-, post-, delay test) and pupils’ assignments and interviews within a three months period.

Mrs. Chiu-Fang Li

Pingtung CHONG-LAN Primary School, Taiwan

Successful Experience on Cooperative Learning: An Action Research in a Primary School in Taiwan

This study presents a successful experience of applying cooperative learning to a fifth and sixth grades pupils' social studies class, which was a one-year long action research by authors at a primary school in Taiwan. The purposes of the research are to understand the influence on teachers and pupils, as applying cooperative learning methods to social studies curricula. There are two research questions. One is that "How social studies teachers use cooperative learning to improve pupils' learning abilities and performance?" The other research question is that "What influence will be on teachers' professional knowledge when they use cooperative learning methods?"

The subjects were 37 pupils who were in one of the author's teaching classes chosen in their fifth grade and then shifted to the sixth grade. Two kinds of teaching models of cooperative learning were used. One was "Learning Together" (D. W. Johnson and R.T. Johnson). The other model was "Group Investigation" (S. Sharan and Y. Sharan). Authors used quality and quantity methods to collect research data, such as observation, tape recordings, film recordings, teaching diaries, interviews, questionnaires, and some related documents. A triangulation method and a constant comparison method have been used to analyze the results from different resources. The study presents findings and proposes suggestions for improving cooperative learning in social studies.

Dr. David Duran Gisbert, Mrs. Blanch Gelabert Silvia

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Llegim En Parella, A Peer Tutoring Program with Pupils and Families, for the Improvement of Reading

The paper describes Llegim en parella, a program developed by the Research Group of Peer Learning of the Institute of Sciences of Education of the Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona (Catalonia). The program's aim is to improve the reading comprehension through peer tutoring, a cooperative learning method based on the creation of pairs, in which a more expert student – tutor- learns through teaching his pair - tutee-, who also learns thanks to the personalized help received from his tutor. The program combines peer tutoring between students in the school and their families at home. Families have been trained so they can act as reading tutors for their children at home .

The paper will describe the aims of the program, the children and family's previous training, the forming of pairs, the session's structure, the didactical materials used and the evaluation instruments .

During the course 2006-07 the program has been implemented in different primary and secondary schools. In the communication the results obtained from four primary schools will be explained, showing how the schools - working in a network - have mutually helped each other to introduce an educational innovation, allowing them to introduce practices of cooperative learning to the schools, using the differences between the students as an opportunity of learning.

Dr. Alina Reznitskaya

Montclair State University, New Jersey, USA

**Philosophical Discussions in Elementary School Classrooms:
Theory, Pedagogy, Research**

In this paper I will discuss new approaches to investigating increasingly influential, yet under-researched, theoretical assumptions regarding the role dialogic interaction plays in cognitive development. I will present a psychological theory that refines social learning models by integrating them with schema-theoretic perspectives. I will then review Philosophy for Children pedagogy, demonstrating how it can provide a useful context for conducting empirical studies of learning theories that emphasize the use of dialogue in collective settings to promote individual argumentation development. Next, I will describe a research design and data-analytic tools used to examine the educational potential of engagement in group philosophical discussions for the development of argumentation. Finally, I will present preliminary results of a study evaluating the connections between 1) specific features of group interactions experienced by elementary school students and 2) individual student performance on multiple measures of argumentation.

Dr. Sonia Casal

Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Spain

Cooperative Learning in CLIL Contexts: Ways to Improve Students' Competence in the Foreign Language Classroom

CLIL (Content and language integrated learning) is a pedagogical project implemented in foreign (or second) language learning and which has been subject of global approval. Among the reasons to implement CLIL in the language classroom are these: a) information that is based on content rather than on grammar is easier to remember and thus leads to a better understanding and learning; b) opportunities for L2 use are more frequent and more meaningful, increasing interest and motivation and c) speaking and reasoning in a language different from their own, students have the chance to improve their communicative competence as well as their cognitive skills.

However, research has shown that while comprehension skills (reading, listening) are really boosted in a CLIL environment, this may not be the case with productive skills (speaking, writing). Authors such as Genesee point out that in contexts where an L2 is learnt through content, students are not offered enough chances to speak or initiate a conversation, hindering their speaking and writing outcomes.

Cooperative learning, with its focus on structured group work, may help to enhance CLIL contexts, catering not only for the development of comprehension skills and better reasoning, but also for interaction and communication. Students are given chances both for input reception and output production. This paper will address how teachers can improve their students' competence in the foreign language classroom by implementing cooperative learning structures in content-based environments.

Robert White

Queen Mary University of London, England

Constructing Effective Peer Collaboration: Investigating the Influences of Mediated Learning Experiences on Peer Cooperative Communication

This study investigates how structured Mediated Learning Experiences may improve peer cooperative communication within problem-solving task exercises. Three groups (n = 22) of year eight students (mean age 13 +/- 5 months) were randomly selected to participate in this study. Following the pilot the main study began with two separate one hour sessions of activity based problem solving tasks for the control and experimental groups. These sessions were coded for 'on' and 'off' task communication. The experimental group then participated in a Mediated Learning

Experience (MLE) focusing on building trust, effective communication and pro-social behaviour. Following the MLE a one hour problem-solving exercise for the collection of data related to on and off task communication was conducted for both the control and experimental groups. Results demonstrate that cooperative group on task communication can be effectively influenced, both intragroup and intergroup arguing that the success associated with cooperative learning may be enhance by first teaching students how to cooperate.

Dr. Indra Odina

University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

Developing Teachers' Social Skills for Using Cooperative Learning in the Classroom and in Life

This paper deals with the data of the participatory action research consisting of four cycles. Three needs assessments and four projects for the improvement of teachers' social skills have been carried out over five years. We tried to answer the following research questions: what social skills teachers have, what their command is, how their social skills can improve and consolidate, what possibilities of improving their social skills teachers have in in-service education.

The research explored, defined and grouped teachers' social skills according to developmental stages, the sphere of application, self-expression mode and the point of view of attitudes .

We worked out the levels to define the social skills mastery and coding system to diagnose the level of skills, a six point system and descriptors to evaluate the frequency of skills demonstration, theoretically grounded skill improvement stages and stated favourable conditions for the improvement of teachers' social skills during in-service courses .

The pilot studied methodology for social skills development, improvement and consolidation in teacher in-service courses applying cooperative, collaborative and transformative learning .

Laura Luna

University of Manchester, Manchester, England

Taking on Cooperative Learning: Critical Issues from an Ethnographic Account

The paper analyses the introduction of cooperative practices in literacy lessons in a Manchester primary school through the implementation of the Success For All program. Based on an ethnographic research on learning in a multicultural environment carried out between 2006 and 2007, it aims to contribute to the discussion about the connection between cooperative learning, teaching models and the educational system. The analysis focuses on the main difficulties experienced by teachers and children both in the process of learning this new teaching/learning strategy. Teachers' perceptions as well as class observations highlight some critical aspects related not only to teachers' practice and children's interactions but also to the embracement of both a different conception of the teachers' role and an alternative perspective on learning and attainment. Neither an evidence based system of assessing both children and teachers' performance nor the emphasis on the product rather than on the process favours the effectiveness of cooperative practices .

Egle Pranckuniene

Centre for School Improvement, Vilnius, Lithuania

Valdona Verseckiene

Kursenai Gymnazium, Vilnius, Lithuania

The Evaluation of a School Improvement Program in Lithuania Based on Cooperative Learning

The paper will present the experience implementing and evaluating long-term and large scale national school improvement program, which was based on cooperative learning and the improvement of students' achievement at primary schools of Lithuania. The team of presenters consists of two teacher trainers and one teacher who were involved in the program on 2002-2005. The presenters were responsible for the development of the training contents, training of trainers and school teams. In 2006 the program was evaluated combining internal and external evaluation. The evaluation showed how the principles and strategies of cooperative learning are being used at schools two-three years after the training program, what are the challenges for teachers to sustain the innovation, what is the influence of the school culture, what kind of support structures are needed for teachers and what kind of lessons were learned for the future.

Dr. Sabine Liebig

PH-Karlsruhe University of Education, Karlsruhe, Germany

Local Culture - Social Diversity as an Opportunity in Teaching and Learning

The concept of local culture was created in Madison/Wisconsin/USA. The idea of the local culture project is to get students and teachers acquainted with diversity and to cooperate. Cooperative learning projects are designed for teacher and pupils to explore different cultures together and work in a team. It is based on the question of how students of different cultures can work and live together and learn from each other and how the teachers can learn from the students and both learn from the people around school. How they can discover their own culture as well as other cultures in and around their schools. The objective is to train teachers and pupils to discover cultural aspects that shape their own cultural identity within an intercultural society and to develop a deep respect for people of other cultures. They learn that diversity is not threatening but enriches one's life. They learn to cooperate with each other, with their teachers and with people from the neighbourhood. They learn that cooperation enriches all participants: whereas the students learn from their teachers how to explore and discover and gain a lot of abilities like exact observation, interview strategies, writing essays, drawing pictures, taking photographs, writing field notes, going deep into topics, etc. the teachers learn from their students, too: They learn about their students' cultures, they discover students' abilities they have not seen before during ordinary lessons.

Therefore it is very important for teachers in increasing multicultural societies to learn new ways of cooperation, integration and understanding. This concept promotes cooperation, integration and living together of different social groups in the microcosm of school and town. It is also very enables cooperation between teachers and students and people in the school's community because they learn and discover the different cultures together. It is furthermore adequate for a better integration of schools in their social neighbourhood. Therefore this concept should be integrated in teachers' education .

The conceptual framework is the idea that future teachers practice local culture as well as cooperative learning because teachers tend to teach the way they are taught and not the way they are told to teach .

Dr. Sylvia Fehling

University of Kassel, Kassel, Germany

Cooperative Learning in a Multicultural EFL Classroom

This paper focuses on cooperative learning in the multicultural EFL classroom (English as a Foreign Language) in Germany. Since the percentage of students with different ethnic backgrounds is very high in German classrooms, the question of suitable methods in a multicultural EFL classroom has become very important and will be discussed in this paper: In this context we refer to the Jigsaw model, developed to integrate students from different ethnic backgrounds into the classroom to foster their self-confidence, self-respect and their performance (Aronson et. al., 1978).

Secondly the effectiveness of cooperative learning is discussed, referring to empirical research on cooperative learning in the multicultural EFL classroom.

Finally concepts for further research on cooperative learning in the multicultural EFL classroom will be presented and discussed.

STRAND 5. COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mrs. Trish Baker

Wellington Institute of Technology, Wellington, New Zealand

Mrs. Jill Clark

Whitireia Community Polytechnic, Wellington, New Zealand

Co-operative Learning in Intercultural Groups: A New Zealand Model

Although there has been very little research done in co-operative learning in New Zealand, international research is positive about the educational benefits of working in culturally diverse groups. This paper will present the findings of a research project examining New Zealand experiences with co-operative learning in multicultural groups. The paper presents findings from surveys and focus groups with both domestic and international students and with New Zealand tertiary lecturers who use collaborative learning techniques in their programmes. The findings from this research indicate that there is a strong cultural conflict in the conceptualisation of cooperative learning between international students with little prior experience of cooperative learning and New Zealand lecturers who are often not fully prepared to help international students to bridge the gaps. The majority of international students value lecturers' programme content delivery and the achievement of high marks over the development of interpersonal skills; this is contrary to New Zealand lecturers' belief that the development of team skills is the most important outcome from cooperative learning. This cognitive dissonance reinforces the importance of understanding cultural differences and their impact on student patterns of classroom behaviour. To bridge the gaps, this paper recommends that international students be prepared more effectively to understand the reasons for the use of cooperative learning in New Zealand tertiary classrooms and that lecturers be trained in designing curricula and assessment programmes that are pedagogically sound and culturally accommodating. The paper proposes a model to assist lecturers to achieve this aim.

Stefan Decuyper

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

Grasping Dynamic Complexity in Team Learning: An Integrative Narrative Review on the Variables Used in Research on Team Learning

This paper presents a narrative and boundary-crossing review of team learning that has three aims: (a) the construction of a systemic model that envisions the main variables used in team learning literature, (b) to resolve linguistic obscurity or pointing out how the same labels are used for different concepts and visa versa, and (c) to

frame the growing gap between research executed from a cognitive paradigm and research executed from a socio-cultural paradigm. During the process we constructed a framework for team learning variables by combining the General System Theory of Von Bertalanffy with two dominant paradigms in social sciences: the cognitive and the socio-cultural paradigm. Our review reveals that the vast body of research envisions a limited number of variables, often in an attempt to measure uncompromised causal and unidirectional effects. However, we found a complex and dynamically structured body of variables that influence each other multi-directionally. At the core of our model we found four variables that are studied within both paradigms, they are highly cited in literature and all have a major influence on learning at the level of the team: Co-construction, Constructive conflict, Boundary crossing communication and Team reflexivity. These four variables create a central field of tension between on the one hand 'pleasant' learning (within the zone of comfort) and 'unpleasant' learning (outside the zone of comfort) and on the other hand 'outer bound' learning (effectiveness by integration with the supra-system) and 'inner bound' learning (effectiveness by integration of subsystem).

Today the field of team learning is characterized by a wealth of empirical evidence on collaborative learning, but most knowledge is dispersed over different disciplines and different contexts. The effort to bring known theories about team learning together is highly important to prevent ourselves from continuously 'reinventing the wheel' Team work leads often to frustrations, brawling, conflicts, free-riding, etc. hence teams aren't always that effective in learning. The first step to improve team learning in practice is to get a complete view on what variables are to be influenced. A sharper observation is the first step to a better intervention ! This study gives account to the complexity in educational practice that is so often overlooked in educational research.

Dr. Celeste Brody

Bend, Oregon, USA

Faculty Development for Cooperative and Collaborative Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Developing Countries

This paper is based on the author's experience doing faculty development work as a Fulbright Scholar in Thailand in 2006-07. In Thailand the national educational reform focuses on "student-centered learning" in higher education. The challenges of reforming education are not unique to Thailand or higher education in non-democratic (or emerging democratic) countries. These educational institutions at all levels are also struggling to improve English language learning, engage students actively in their learning and teach students to "think- critically." Faculty learning often remains an isolated and individualistic effort. Brody makes several general recommendations for higher education institutions based on principles of faculty development and outlines key themes and steps in faculty learning of cooperative/collaborative learning .

Although this is a single case, Brody will engage the audience in the questions, "Are these challenges and themes the same or different in other developing and third world countries? How can higher education institutions develop enough faculty with the skills, attitudes and experience necessary to lead others from within in these reform efforts"?

Mr. Ioannis Efstathiou, Mr. Fokion Georgiadis

University of London, England

Mr. Apostolos Zisimos,

University Of Thessaloniki

Engagement in Collaborative Learning in a Second Chance School

This paper is about a case study which investigates whether a Second Chance School in Greece engages teachers and students in collaborative and consequently in effective learning as well as how this does or does not occur. The initiative for this study was the allegedly innovative character of Second Chance Schools that supposedly offers adult education along the principles of student-centred pedagogy. Within the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism along the conceptual lines developed by Blumer and Goffman, students' and teachers' perspectives that formulate school and classroom culture through negotiated strategies, reveal that the Second Chance School under investigation despite what official school guidelines proclaim does not use collaborative pedagogy and therefore does not engage teachers and students in effective learning. The main reason proves to be the lack of a consistent state policy regarding teacher in-service training as well as the fact that teachers and students share the same cultural scripts regarding schooling which are saturated by the traditional teacher-centred transmission model.

Dr. Absael Antelo

University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, USA

The Value of Learning in a Diverse Context

Topic. Educational practices that promote cultural diversity among doctoral students.

Research question: What is the value of learning in a culturally diverse context?

Objective. Propose strategies to improve educational practices in highly diverse institutional environments and identify the value of learning within these contexts.

Purpose. Identify educational practices that promote cross cultural learning and understanding among diverse student populations.

Value. Increase cross cultural awareness of the value of learning in diverse contexts.

Conceptual or theoretical framework. This study is based on transformative learning theory and cross cultural cooperation.

Dr. Nektaria Palaiologou

University of Western Macedonia, Greece

Educational Programmes for Teaching Greek as a Second or Foreign Language to Immigrants: Needs for Cooperative Learning

Cooperatively directed learning should be a central and essential component in all educational levels and should be particularly emphasized in the adult education of immigrants in an intercultural context.

The aims of this presentation are: a) to describe the goals of certain Greek official organizations addressed to adult immigrants for teaching Greek and professional training, b) to describe the teaching methods that are used in adult education for training and teaching immigrants by using Greek as a foreign or second learning.

Certain educational programmes from Greek national organisations - General Secretary of Adult Education, National Organisation of Employment in co-operation with Prefectorial Committees and Centres of Educational Training- addressed to immigrants are used as case studies.

The presentation highlights the needs for cooperative learning but also the needs for collaboration amongst all the involved organisations addressed to immigrants in order to combat illiteracy as well as exclusion from the labour market.

Dr. José Manuel Serrano, Dr. Rosa María Pons, Dr. Maria Teresa Calvo

Universidad de Murcia, Murcia, Spain

Reward Structure as a Tool to Generate Positive Interdependence in Higher Education

It is especially difficult to develop positive interdependence by means of the task structure in higher education. Usually students don't respond well to this component and the learning process ends up being an individualistic one.

The present study features the use of a cooperative methodology with university students in the last year of their degree. The task structure can be freely chosen and there is no restraint on group decisions about how to deal with classroom work. All the elements of cooperation are based on a reward structure: internal cohesion of the groups can be achieved by means of an intergroup competitive reward system and positive interdependence can be reached with an extreme cooperative reward structure, grounded on the individual assessments of the students .

The results show the importance of a reward structure, based on marks, for the use of a cooperative methodology in the university classroom.

Dr. Leslie Bash

Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Engaging with Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers in Globalised Higher Education: the Case of Research Degree Students

In focusing on the increasingly international market for higher education this paper seeks to highlight some of the problematic aspects of intercultural communication and discusses possible ways in which they might be resolved. In so doing, the paper assumes that there is an increasing globalization of knowledge, a partial consequence of the possibilities established by the new technologies, which tests the compatibility of distinct national higher education cultures and, specifically, the capacity for successful cross-cultural communication. This is exemplified through reference to a doctoral programme delivered in the by a UK based university but established specifically for students resident in a country where the language of academic discourse is not English. Here, the challenges have concerned: cultural and linguistic barriers; the use of distance-based supervision and taken-for-granted knowledge related to learning and academic levels. Anecdotal evidence suggests diverse student experiences during the course of supervision, both in face-to-face and distance learning contexts, reflecting the extent of familiarity with the English language in idiomatic and technical terms and the importance of non-verbal communication. Given the unequal power dimension, where the university defines the academic linguistic and cultural context, improved intercultural communicative competence may be achieved through a mutual construction of a new discursive arena reflecting the dynamics of an increasingly globalised structure of academic intercourse. This may involve a willingness to question assumptions associated with 'national' academic cultures and to adopt a pragmatic quest for a common language. If this is successful it may contribute to the process of cross-national collaboration and co-operation in higher education.

Prof. Laura Bonica, Dr. Viviana Sappa

University of Turin, Italy

Cooperative Learning and Support to the School to Higher Education Transition: An Integrated Research-Intervention Aimed at First Year Psychology Students

In this paper we discuss the potentialities of "cooperative learning" as a form of support to several changes in "learning settings" required from first years students in transition from school to higher education. More specifically, following a theoretical perspective (Bonica 2000; in press) integrating an interactionist and socio-constructivist perspective (Doise, Mugny, 1981; Sinclair e Stambak, 1990; Pontecorvo, Ajello, Zucchermaglio, 1995; Wood, Bruner e Ross, 1976) with

Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach, we formulate the hypothesis that Cooperative Learning can favour an active attitude toward the learning process, a social construction of learning, stimulating at the same time a feeling of belonging to the new learning community.

The experience of Cooperative Learning (inspired by the Jigsaw method) concerned about 192 pages of the examination programme (approximately 1/3), mostly during the course schedule (three meetings lasting 3 hours each, plus 2 external meetings and a plenary session for the presentation of the performed tasks) involved approximately 220 first year students, divided in "home" and "expert" groups (5 to 6 students each), organized in four large groups each monitored by the teacher and three teaching assistants .

The research design (before, during and after the intervention) made use of questionnaires submitted in two different times, some video-recordings and a self compiled monitoring diary. The variables of change considered concern meta-cognitive and socio-relational aspects. Beyond the presentation of the assessed changes, the findings' discussion will further consider the diversified roles these outcomes played in different phases of the envisaged work, that can be distinguished theoretically in relation both to the nature of the assigned tasks and to the more or less formality of the action context .

Dr. Laurel Stevahn

Seattle University, Seattle, WA, USA

Empowering Leaders for a Just and Humane World: The Role of Cooperative Learning in Teaching for Social Justice

This session will present a new signature course: "Social Justice in Professional Practice," recently developed, piloted, and adopted as core in the College of Education at Seattle University. The course utilizes a wide variety of cooperative learning strategies to enable students to achieve three main goals, which include enhancing (a) self-awareness about philosophical orientations and social identities, (b) knowledge of diverse and complex justice issues that impact professional roles, and (c) leadership and intercultural skills for addressing justice issues. First, this session will provide a brief history of the development of the course. Second, the course framework/syllabus will be presented to illustrate major course components and the role of cooperative learning in enacting those components. Third, several cooperative strategies will be demonstrated to illustrate how cooperative learning supports content and skill development for social justice. Fourth, student work samples resulting from cooperative activities will be displayed and students' voices/perspectives will be shared regarding their experiences in the course. In summary, this session will provide a concrete model for creating and implementing a social justice course that uses cooperative learning to support the university mission of empowering leaders for a just and humane world.

Dr. Luiza Kraft

"Carol I" National Defense University, Bucharest, Romania

Cooperative Learning for Intercultural Education in Foreign Language Teaching - the Military Higher Education Case

Objective: to analyze critically the way in which cooperative learning methods towards education for intercultural understanding and conflict resolution are used in our institution to promote greater mutual understanding and acceptance of difference and 'otherness' for exposure to the present multicultural and multilingual environments .

The paper answers the following questions: What is the intercultural dimension of military foreign language teaching? What elements make the military group effective language wise? Which are some possible ways of assessing intercultural competence in this environment (with examples) Purpose: to stress out the imperative of training and assessing military language learners as people meant to become 'intercultural speakers' and 'mediators' in order to be successful not only in communicating information in foreign languages, but also in developing a human relationship with people of other languages and cultures .

Value: 'cooperative learning' and the 'intercultural dimension embedding' in foreign language courses must not be seen as new methods of language teaching, but rather as a natural extension of what the foreign language teachers in the Romanian military education system recognize as extremely important for the accomplishment of today's peace support operations in which Romania as a NATO member and its armed forces are currently participating.

Ms. Julia Hsu

University of Durham, Durham, UK

Using a Cooperative Task-based Learning Strategy with Low Achievers in Taiwan's Higher Education Milieu

To what extent does a cooperative task-based learning approach, with an emphasis on group work, increase motivation amongst Taiwanese university students with low achievement levels?

In this paper I will address the current situation of some first-year university students in Taiwan who garnered low English scores on their university entrance examinations and who were in C level "achievement grouping" (AG) English instruction classes but still did not perform at their full potential in the English language. I will present significant theories in relation to pedagogy combined with cooperative learning and task-based language teaching strategy (CTBL) and I have considered both teaching approaches as an intervention within this study, thus my purpose is not solely to review researches on CTBL

The fundamental purpose of this paper is to address the existence of the current situation of many Taiwanese first year university students with low achievement English scores. I investigated whether students' motivation in a CL group can be enhanced in a foreign language class. This study also seek an effective teaching strategy in order to ascertain how this new strategy can improve these students' motivational levels.

The value of cooperative learning centres on the sharing of work amongst members of a group whose members learn skills and competencies that develop with mutual help and not just from individual work. Therefore, a cooperative task-based learning strategy involving effective group work might be a solution to developing a given student's motivational efforts.

Many studies recommend that lower achievers can receive attention and help through group work (Johnson et al. 1991). To be specific, low achievers in heterogeneous groups can benefit from their classmates as well as from their teacher (Jacobs, 2006). Furthermore, Johnson & Johnson (1987) indicate that: "low-achieving students tend to reach higher levels when they are members of heterogeneous CL groups" (p.32). In so doing, I worked to change the entire dynamics in a traditional English-language class in Taiwan.

Dr. Pasi Sahlberg

European Training Foundation, Turin, Italy

The More You Talk, the More You Learn: Missing Conditions for Cooperative Learning in Secondary Schools

Teaching determines the opportunities to learn and hence influences whether learning is cooperative or competitive/individualistic in schools. The popularity of classroom observation studies has decreased in recent years and has led to more speculative rather than evidence-based views of teaching. Modern educational media and facilities are often thought to transform traditional presentation-recitation mode of instruction into student-centred cooperative learning. In this paper I assume with many other scholars that teaching for modern multicultural knowledge societies has to reflect multi-lateral communication, active role of students and balance between verbal interactions in order to create productive learning in classrooms. Based on classroom observation data from more than 300 upper secondary school classrooms in 34 schools that were analyzed using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories this study found that verbal episodes constituted by teachers' talk dominated teaching and that these episodes were rarely interrupted by student talk. On average, these data suggests that time for student-initiated talk in typical upper secondary school classrooms is about one per cent of total lesson time. This study also confirmed that intellectual environments in classrooms are poor in terms of stimulating student initiation, participation or cooperation with other students. The key conclusion is that teaching in secondary schools rarely provides students with opportunities to meaningful, active participation in learning. Therefore, unless balance of verbal interactions in classrooms is changed, students will not learn what they need in modern multicultural knowledge societies.

The main purpose of this study is to provide evidence from real classrooms to policy-makers, school leaders and teacher trainers in strengthening the attention in policies and actions to verbal interaction in classrooms.

The study calls researchers' attention to classroom research that has been gradually diminishing since the 1980s. Particularly in countries in transition it is paramount that a knowledge base on how teachers teach will be established to enable evidence-based education policy-making. This study is also important in challenging the beliefs and claims that cooperative learning methods are already used in schools. Although only a case study of one country, this study finds this conception very difficult to accept.

Prof. Mariana L. Gimenez, Dr. Marisa Censabella

Universidad Nacional del Nordeste – Resistencia (Chaco) – Argentina

Strategies of Cooperative Learning Used in Toba Language Teachers' Training Programs in Chaco-Argentina

This paper examines the concrete achievements and failures that have occurred in the process of application of a teacher training program that involves the implementation of cooperative learning strategies and aims to increase the empowerment of aboriginal teachers to innovate the didactic practice of Toba as L2 (undergoing a deep process of language shift). The program intends to instruct indigenous teachers of the Toba language in the didactics and methodology of L2 teaching grounded in the recognition of the interdependence of language, culture and identity and thus appealing to aboriginal protocols and cultural requirements and reflecting the values and beliefs inherent in the Toba culture in relation to language and culture in the classroom. Even though this teacher training program is in its initial period, the preliminary findings concern the ways to lead the Toba language teachers towards a metalinguistic reflection about their language in order to produce an organising criterion for making choices of contents, sequence, goals and materials for the classes. Another early learning is that if experiences, resources and

successful teaching techniques are shared and the work is done cooperatively with a vested interest in each other's learning, then teacher training programs can continually improve to benefit everyone, but particularly the aboriginal students and communities. This research work intends to contribute to the improvement of Intercultural Bilingual Education by stating conclusions that result from didactic and sociolinguistic reflections. A research question has guided our work: how does the didactics of L2 teaching improve the teaching of Toba language in contexts of language shift? Qualitative methodology has been used and the theoretical framework involve linguistic ideology; linguistic revitalization; cooperative learning; L2 didactics and methodology; instructional design theories and intercultural studies.

Dr. Silvia Guetta

University of Florence, Florence, Italy

**Il cooperative learning nell'Alta Formazione: l'esperienza di laboratorio ricerca nella Scuola di Dottorato di Qualità della Formazione dell'Università di Firenze
Designing a Cooperative PhD Course in Peace Education**

L'esperienza di Cooperative Learning che viene proposta, è la riflessione sul Laboratorio di ricerca e formazione che la Scuola di Dottorato in Qualità della Formazione, dell'Università di Firenze, sta realizzando. Il Laboratorio si presenta come un sistema aperto di apprendimento cooperativo e partecipativo che poggia su due assi portanti: quello della produzione scientifica realizzata attraverso il lavoro di gruppo e quello del successo scientifico che ha la doppia dimensione di essere un contributo alla ricerca e di essere soddisfacente e gratificante per tutti i soggetti coinvolti. Il Laboratorio è inoltre strettamente integrato con la Cattedra UNESCO per "Lo sviluppo umano e cultura di pace" insediatasi nello scorso anno nella Università di Firenze. Per la natura stessa dei temi e degli aspetti trattati nella ricerca, la metodologia scelta come modello di realizzazione del Laboratorio è di tipo cooperativo e partecipativo.

Pertanto nella riflessione che verrà proposta, come studio di caso, saranno considerate le seguenti questioni: come gli aspetti strutturali del Laboratorio siano stati costruiti sul modello del Cooperative Learning; perchè tale modello si presenta coerente con i contenuti dei progetti di ricerca che si intendono realizzare; in quale modo la partecipazione cooperativa favorisce gli apprendimenti di qualità; quali sono le dimensioni emozionali che favoriscono una formazione di qualità.

As a part of the "UNESCO Chair for Human Development and the Culture of Peace" a PhD level course at the University of Florence trains doctoral students to do educational action research in teams and is conducted as an experiential workshop. The doctoral candidates form groups of 3 or 4 students from different academic fields; each group chooses a research question related to peace education to investigate as a team and teams divide the research study among members. In the course of the investigation each candidate learns how to design a research study yet all candidates simultaneously develop social and interpersonal skills. I will discuss how to build methodological coherence in the university teacher's role as a facilitator of cooperative investigative groups.

STRAND 6. COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Ms. Dina Sela

Center for Educational Technology, Tel Aviv, Israel

"Representing My Self" – An online self advocacy course for students with learning disabilities

“Representing My Self” is an online computer course for middle school students with learning disabilities, which develops self-advocacy skills, autonomy, a sense of competency, and relationship skills .

Self-advocacy means a person can speak up for oneself and represent his/her personal interests, defend his/her rights and ensure that he/she is provided the appropriate services. The course provides meaningful learning of self-advocacy and interpersonal interaction, in cooperation with an educational advisor. Each student is a member of a group that meets once a week throughout the school year with a facilitator. The program presents a variety of situations typical of the daily dilemmas faced by learning disabilities students. Individually and in the group students suggest ways of coping and enact them in simulations. The group serves as a support group for the students. Groups are made up of students of varying cultural backgrounds, who represent the cultural diversity of Israel's population .

The presentation will outline the rationale and structure of the virtual self-advocacy course, and will present examples of interpersonal interactions among participants and the extent to which cultural factors affect their outcomes

Dr. Elaine Hoter

Talpiot College of Education, Tel Aviv, Israel

Dr. Miri Shoenfeld

The Kibbutzim College of Education, Tel Aviv, Israel

Cooperative Online Learning: A Model for Bridging Between Cultures

Israel is a multicultural society and in addition the educational system is divided into 3 sectors, Jewish religious, Jewish secular and the Arab sector. These sectors would never normally meet and there is great mistrust and stereotyping between them. The contact theory ((Allport) has been adapted and developed to connect between groups using technology in a gradual process, writing online, talking through the internet and finally conducting face to face meetings. Contact theory (Pettigrew and Tropp) stipulates that one of the basic requirements for successful contact between cultures is cooperation and collaboration.

In this presentation we will present the intervention model whereby preservice teachers from 9 colleges representing the 3 different cultures collaborate online in a joint online course between the various colleges of education. We will discuss the success of online collaborative learning and the obstacles met on the way .

Mrs. Sílvia Blanch Gelabert, Dr. David Duran Gisbert

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

International Online Peer Tutoring to Promote Modern Language Development in Primary Schools

The paper reports data from an on-line peer tutoring project. In the project 10-11 year old students from Scotland and Catalonia peer tutored each other in English and Spanish via a managed on-line environment. The project aimed to:

- Identify suitable schools for study in Catalonia and Dundee who are studying English and Spanish as a second language respectively.
- Develop activities aligned to the modern language curricula in each school to facilitate the practice of language skills learned by the children in class.
- To establish a managed on-line learning environment to act as a vehicle for peer feedback from a peer tutor to develop modern language capability.

Peer tutoring is a form of peer-assisted learning characterised by specific role taking as tutor or tutee, with high focus on error correction and clear procedures for

interaction, in which participants receive training (Topping, 2001). Untrained tutoring behaviours tend to be primitive (e.g., Person & Graesser, 1999), characterized by infrequent correction of errors and giving of positive feedback when inappropriate. When peer tutoring is implemented with reasonably high implementation integrity, results are typically good (e.g. Duran & Monereo, 2005; Topping, 1987; Topping & Ehly, 1998 .(

The project involved 34, 10-11 year old students based in Catalonia and Scotland. Schools were selected after an invitation within the local education authority with an invitation to participate. The sample schools volunteered their involvement in the project. The schools had students who were studying English or Spanish as a second language in addition to an IT infrastructure that would support the intervention. Students conversed in a managed on-line environment. Students wrote messages in their modern language and correct messages in first language. Schools worked on the project for four hours per week over an eight week period. Children in each country were matched on the basis of attainment in Spanish and English. A rank order was produced of the class from best to worst in Spanish (Catalonian students) and English (Scottish). The best at Spanish was paired with the best at English, second best at Spanish paired with the second best at English and so on until each pupil was matched in a pair .

Data indicated that the intervention was successful at raising reading attainment in first language of tutors and also indicated that the intervention raised attainment in modern language in both Spanish and English. Both Scottish and Catalonian students reported more positive attitudes towards language learning.

Prof. Stefano Cacciamani

University of Valle d'Aosta, Italy

Community of Research at School and New Technologies

The literature about the use of the Internet in classrooms highlights the possibility to create a community concerned with different topics of study (Garrison, Cleveland-Innes, Koole, & Kappelman). Educational research shows many different ideas of community: Community of practice, Virtual community, Community of inquiry. A different kind of community is described by the "Knowledge Building Community" model (KBC hereinafter), created by Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia and identified by 12 principles indicating a system of conditions implementing, within a group, the collective cognitive responsibility towards a progressive refinement of ideas and the building of increasingly complex theories concerning topics and problems connected to the tasks to be fulfilled. The focus of a KBC is not on learning but on knowledge building, it means, both on the creation and the development of ideas that are useful for the whole community. With reference to the KBC model, the main goal of this work was to implement a Community of Online Research at school. The questions of inquiry were: 1. how this kind of Community can support a research activity at school concerning scientific topic of study? 2. How is it possible to support the collaboration among classrooms of different schools? 3. Is this model really effective with regards to the evaluations of the participants? The Community of Online Research was implemented in three different cycles (from 2003 until 2007) involving respectively 382 students and 38 teachers (1st cycle), 624 students and 32 teachers (2nd cycle) 526 students and 32 teachers (3rd cycle) from primary and secondary schools. The results allow us to identify an epistemic and methodological scheme driving research activities, the organisational conditions to support the collaboration among classrooms and the positive evaluation of the project by the teachers and the students involved.

Dr. Kumiko Aoki

National Institute of Multimedia Education, Chiba, Japan

International Cooperative Project-Based Learning through ICT for Fostering Intercultural Competence

Fostering intercultural competence is becoming an important issue in education in this age of globalization. Assuming that intercultural competence can be fostered through proper learning activities, the research question in this paper is “what learning activities will foster intercultural competence?” Development of intercultural competence is often discussed in the context of study visits or exchanges, but thanks to the advancement and prevalence of information and communication technologies (ICT), interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds is now possible for students without leaving their own classrooms. Of course, such interaction may be limited in scope in comparison to the interactions a student experiences when he/she lives and studies in a different country. However, with properly designed learning activities, students should be able to develop at least one or two dimensions of intercultural competence, namely attitudes and awareness, out of the five dimensions of intercultural competence: awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge and language proficiency. This paper will explore learning activities which aims to foster some aspects of intercultural competence through the use of ICT, and present case studies of such learning activities. Specifically, the paper will explore the potentials of cooperative project-based learning by intercultural student groups through the use of ICT.

Dr. Maria Teresa Brancaccio

Anne Frank House, Amsterdam, Netherlands

FREE 2 CHOOSE- The Boundaries of Freedom

Free2choose in Europe is a debate programme developed by the Anne Frank House Amsterdam in cooperation with partners in 11 European countries. It includes a series of stimulating film clips in which topical questions from different countries are raised : What happens when fundamental rights conflict with each other? Or if the security of a democratic society is threatened? Is there a limit to these basic human rights? Free2choose presents current examples, from around the world, of fundamental rights that clash with safeguarding democratic rule of law and explores the present-day boundaries of freedom

The objective of the programme is to challenge young people to think critically and take a stand. The education manual leans heavily on insights from intercultural education and cooperative learning. In this presentation I will focus on the impact of active listening methods and cooperative learning methodologies on traditionally competitive debate approaches.

Nicholas Breeze

University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

Filippo Fano

Interaction Design Centre, University of Limerick, Eire

Educational Format: the Use of a Conceptual Tool as a Means of Reflection upon Two Education Settings Using Music Technology in Italy and England

The presenters of this paper, from Italy and the UK, are both members of the European Research Team, 'Production of Educational Formats', made up of collaborators from Italy, Greece, Catalonia, Belgium, Ireland and the UK. The team is part of the Kaleidoscope Network of Excellence (<http://www.noe-kaleidoscope.org>),

funded by the European Union. An underpinning belief of the team is that the traditional concept of lesson plan is outdated, especially in the light of recent technological developments, and a new approach is now needed for the organisation of learning activities. The team calls this new concept 'Format.'

This paper explores two educational settings through the lens of a conceptual tool developed by the team and we examine what this exploration tells us about the use of the tool as a reflective instrument.

The two studies chosen for this exploration were based in mainstream classrooms in Firenze, Italy and Bristol, England. Both examined the use of computers by small groups of pupils for music composition .

The application of the conceptual tool to this task allowed three key themes to emerge, which we then examined in depth and then made further comparisons between the two settings. The key theme we wish to examine in this paper is 'Meaning construction and community building' which investigates the collaboration both within the small groups of learners as well as within the whole classroom setting. In particular we elaborate key cultural similarities and differences between the two settings.

Dr. Enric Gil Prats

University of Barcelona, Spain

Fostering Intercultural Competences in Education Specialists Training Through ICT : the Case of the Subject 'Interculturality and Education' in the Open University of Catalonia

Is it possible to foster intercultural competences using ICT and collaborative strategies in higher education? How is it possible in virtual environments? What advantages does it bring ?

This paper tries to answer all these questions presenting the case of the compulsory subject 'Interculturality and Education' of the studies of Psycho-pedagogy in the Open University of Catalonia .

The main objective of this subject is to introduce future Psycho -pedagogy specialists into the mainstreams of Interculturality, capacitating these experts to evaluate, design and introduce programs that take into account the cultural diversity in Education. To respond to this task in a virtual environment, it was necessary to introduce asynchronous dialogue tools, as well as other creative tools to allow students to analyse, discuss and reflect in a concrete proposal what they have learnt .

This 'learning by doing' was possible thanks to a subject planning that started with a case study activity that was presented using a YouTube video, about the Hijab (head dress) in the Spanish high school classrooms. Then, students were asked to watch the video and discuss using a Forum tool. The discussion aimed to analyse conceptual and attitudinal aspects collaboratively. After this analysis, all students in small teams, had to create a proposal for intervene in the context of the case, supported by a material that they had to create. This material was a webquest (Dodge, 1998), which is a material that proposes complex collaborative tasks. In this point, they could choose to plan teachers training or students training, responding in any case to the topics that emerged from the analysis of the case, and trying to solve the real needs that this case presented .

Students were asked to respond to a real context that required a high level of competences to act in cultural diversity realities, solving ethnocentric attitudes and promoting dialogue and coexistence. In conclusion, ICT allowed this intercultural competence training achieved through collaboration and cooperation .

Dr. Tricia Kress

University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA, USA

Using Video-Microanalysis to Examine Identity Construction during Teacher Collaboration

Urban high school teachers work under challenging conditions and are often isolated from their peers during much of their day. When beginning to integrate technology into their classrooms, it is important to create spaces where urban teachers can collaborate and envision what is possible outside their own classrooms and schools. This research addresses the following question: How can we identify cultural production and identity construction in a group of collaborating teachers? The English/Technology Curriculum Writing Group at the Discovery Institute, College of Staten Island, City University of New York was designed to create a space where teachers with diverse experiences and backgrounds could work together to exchange ideas and gain new resources, thereby producing new culture that could be transferred back to their home schools. The purpose of the study is to identify when and how this new culture is produced and, in turn, when and how individual and collective teacher identities are reconstructed within the group.

In this study, culture is thought of as a system of symbols and practices (Sewell, 1992) shot through with emotional energy (Collins, 2004), and the curriculum writing group is seen as a “cultural seedbed” where new practices are developed and tried out before being brought back to the teachers’ home schools. Culturally rich discussions usually took three forms: 1) collegial storytelling about teachers’ histories, lessons and experiences; 2) imagining by putting oneself in another’s shoes or “trying on” another teacher’s lesson; and 3) in-depth discussion about technological resources. These conversations were most productive for building group solidarity and producing new culture. The group’s interaction patterns indicated that, the more mutual focus the group displayed, “the greater the solidarity and identity consequences,” and this occurred more readily through activity than passivity (Collins, 2004, p. 83). Such interactions, which have very high levels of positive emotional energy, will resonate with teachers in other fields. Put simply, when teachers have positive experiences collaborating on their curriculum within a group, they will in turn feel energized to put their newly acquired capital (Bourdieu, 1997) to work in other fields, namely their schools.

Dr. Antonio Bruno Vincenzi

University of Florence, Italy

Searching For Strategies Together: A Students’ Self-Managed Optional Workshop

Setting up a “strategy workshop” run by (upper secondary school) students themselves aims at highlighting the value of cross-curricular, “mastery-oriented” objectives, and to relate these to curricular, “performance-oriented” objectives, by a) focusing on strategies as a tool for success; b) tracking the development of the various aspects of competence through a personal “profile”; c) using the interrelationship of “profiles” and positive interdependence to discover strategies.

The workshop experiences are based on a digital device to investigate six cross-curricular competences, i.e. knowing how to communicate with classmates; study efficiently; think in a productive way; self-explain the logical reasons for failure; accomplish a task; learn from experience to develop self-direction.

Students fill in a questionnaire individually (stage 1), then form groups freely even with students from other classes (stage 2) and finally work as a whole class (stage 3). As they can make their own choices, the students who carry out stage 1 are probably oriented towards competence (mastery objectives), besides being

interested in the specific topic or problem. The decision to carry out stage 2 then implies that they probably possess a sense of self-efficacy as they compare themselves with their peers. The group's affective support finally promotes stage 3, which involves classmates and at least one teacher under the precise guidance of a hidden "strategy adviser".

The self-regulation tool supplied to the students (called "mixer of strategic behaviours") is something more than a portfolio. The interpersonal interactions, in which students compare and share ideas, mostly in pairs, favour the development of relationships which help to develop competences and promote self-awareness, a "learning to learn" disposition, the valuing of personal (including cultural) differences and the creation of a good classroom climate.

Dr. Esmarie Strydom

North West University, South Africa

Cooperative Learning as a Tool to Accommodating Learner Diversity in an ICT Course

Institutions of Higher Education Institutions are both a reflection of changes in society and catalysts for change. Despite the fact that higher education institutions should meet the needs of an increasing technologically oriented economy, the primary goals of higher education remain the same regardless of mode of delivery or educational content. These enduring goals included creating a learning environment in which the learner is comfortable yet intellectually challenged, foster the concept of life-long learning and leading by setting examples of high standards. Within this parameters designers, teachers and administrators of higher education curricula are faced by global challenges to widen access and improve graduation rates, retention and articulation of learners from diverse backgrounds. Curricula should provide greater flexibility in educational provision, delivery modes and methods of teaching.

The advent of mass usage of technology has been fast and dramatic with enormous impact on the lives of most people in technological societies. The use of Information Technology (IT) became one of the key factors in all the learning programs in order to foster future success for both graduates and the economy.

Cooperative learning as a method of instruction in an ICT learning environment has become a more viable option in higher education where students work collaboratively in groups to overcome the barriers of a diverse learning society. The study investigated different cooperative learning activities to accommodate learner diversity in an ICT environment. The objectives are to accommodate learning diversity in and ICT course, make learning focused and achievable for each learner, provide learning opportunities for a diversity of learners, allow for intervention if the learning outcomes were not met, and focus on and guide the learning process, i.e. teach learners how to learn, assist learners who were not computer literate and were unable to self-regulate learning in a e-learning delivery mode.