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ATE PHASE EDUCATORSØ

PERCEPTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

OF

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

BY

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Submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements of the degree of
Master of Education

in the Department of Educational Psychology

Faculty of Education

University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

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DECEMBER 2008



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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation:

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is my own original work.

All the sources that I have used or quoted,
have been indicated and acknowledged,
by means of complete references.

Furthermore, this dissertation, was not
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DEDICATION

*TO MY HUSBAND
STRINI*

*AND SONS
DELWYN AND RELWYN*

THE LIGHT IN MY LIFE ...

KNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God for giving me the strength, determination and wisdom to succeed in the completion of this research.

My heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes to Mr. H. Muribwathoho, who supervised this study. I am especially grateful for his unflinching support and encouragement, invaluable advice, and guidance throughout the study.

My gratitude and appreciation is extended to all the educators who so willingly participated in this research. I am grateful for their co-operation without which this study would not have been possible.

Thanks to my parents, who have instilled in me the value of education, and the will to persevere. Thanks for the love, support and encouragement during my study.

Thanks, to my sister, Leighann, for her assistance, support, motivation and encouragement.

Thanks to my parents-in-law, for their, support and encouragement during my study.

Thanks to my sisters-in-law, Sundrie and Lulu, for their support.

A special thank you, to my husband, Strini, for his, sacrifice, tolerance, encouragement and invaluable comments and assistance throughout the study. I love you !

Finally, the infinite love, support, assistance and encouragement given by my two sons Delwyn and Relwyn, have been tremendous. Thanks guys! I love you!

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ABSTRACT

This study is intended as a contribution and upliftment to pedagogy in South-African Intermediate Phase Classrooms. The thrust of this dissertation revolves around attempts to unravel, intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, and to ascertain, to what extent co-operative learning enhances learning, in intermediate phase classrooms.

Through a process of simple random sampling, three intermediate phase educators were selected as a sample for this research. An observation schedule was used to ascertain whether co-operative learning was being practised in the intermediate phase classrooms. Through my observation and discussion thereafter with the educators, it was clear that co-operative learning was not being used as a teaching strategy in the intermediate phase classrooms. Furthermore, these three educators, indicated to me that they were not knowledgeable on co-operative learning and were not exposed to this pedagogy at all. I presented a workshop on co-operative learning, to these educators. Thereafter, they practised this type of pedagogy in their classrooms for three weeks, after which they were interviewed. This sought to provide an insight into intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as well as to see the extent to which co-operative learning enhances learning.

This dissertation encapsulates the findings of the study conducted with educators, with regards to co-operative learning. Findings of the study, indicated that intermediate phase educators, perceived co-operative learning as a significant pedagogy that will enhance the culture of learning and teaching in the intermediate phase class. Furthermore, they indicated that co-operative learning assists intermediate phase learners to achieve a range of academic, as well as social outcomes.

recommendations, emanating from the study, list the
of co-operative learning in intermediate phase
classrooms. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994) ÷ The ability of all
students to learn to work co-operatively with others is the keystone to building
and maintaining stable marriages, families, careers and friendships ö.

Education is the forefront of any nation. It is therefore incumbent on
educationists to ensure that schools promote the culture of teaching and
learning, in pedagogical styles, that develops the learner holistically and
prepares him for society at large.

*“Two are better than one,
Because they have a good reward for toil.
For if they fall,
One will lift up his fellow,
But woe to him who is alone when he falls
And has not another to lift him up...
And though a man might prevail
Against one who is alone,
Two will withstand him.
AS threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).



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*“What children can do together today,
They can do alone tomorrow.”*

Vygotsky (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).



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*“We must reindulcate
the culture of
learning and teaching
and make it possible
to thrive.”*

Nelson Mandela (cited in Johnson 1996).

CHAPTER ONE

1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

*“If we would seek for one word
better than any other,
the word is co-operation.”*

Ashley Montagu (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

Co-operation permeates every aspect of human nature and human life. Co-operation is an inescapable facet of life. We co-operate with others, each day of our lives.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1994),

“From cradle to grave we co-operate with others.”

As human beings, we do not have a choice, we have to co-operate. We cannot operate in a vacuum encapsulated from other human beings. Co-operation is the power house of our biology, our family life, our schooling life and our working life. Co-operation is the heart of all economic systems, all legal systems, all technological systems, all political systems, all ecological systems and the worldwide community of humans.

g new that is really interesting
comes without collaboration.”

James Watson (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

The way learners perceive and interact with each other is a neglected aspect of instruction. With respect to interaction in the classroom, much time is utilized in helping educators arrange appropriate interactions between learners and study materials, like textbooks, charts, worksheets and curriculum programmes. Some time is devoted to how educators should interact with learners, but the way learners should interact with each other is completely ignored.

There are three basic ways in which learners interact with each other as they learn:

- *Learners can compete to see who is the “ best ” (competitive learning).*
- *Learners can work on their own towards a goal without paying attention to other learners (competitive learning).*
- *Learners can work co-operatively with a vested interest in each other’s learning, as well as their own. (co-operative learning).*

The most dominant of interaction patterns is competition. Research indicates that a vast majority of learners view school as a competitive enterprise, where you try to do better than the other learners. This competitive streak is already fairly ingrained when learners enter school, and grows stronger as they progress through school.

The individualistic interaction pattern has been most talked about, but has not really caught on. Co-operation among learners, where they encourage each other to do homework, and learn to work together regardless of ethnic background, sex or socio-

classrooms are plagued by competitive learning. Co-
on-existent in many schools today.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as well as to bring to the fore, the extent to which co-operative learning can enhance learning. In doing so, it is hoped that some issues, as to why our schools are plagued more so with competitive learning rather than co-operative learning, may surface.

1.3 CRITICAL QUESTIONS

- *What are intermediate phase educators' perceptions of co-operative learning?*
- *How knowledgeable are intermediate phase educators on co-operative learning?*
- *To what extent, does co-operative learning enhance learning?*

1.4 RATIONALE

Although I have been teaching for several years, I was not aware of this phenomenal pedagogy, co-operative learning. It was through my research on multicultural education, that I learnt about co-operative learning. Research on this remarkable pedagogy, boasts great merits on the learners' academic, personal and social development. Co-operative learning appeals to me greatly, as diverse goals can be accomplished by the use of just one single pedagogy.

I have found out that this pedagogy is used on a international basis. According to Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998), responding to a survey, 93% of teachers from six elementary schools in two districts indicated they use co-operative learning. This pedagogy was unheard of in the various schools I taught at. Furthermore, through discussions with colleagues, I have discovered that none of them were exposed to this brilliant pedagogy. Therefore, I decided to embark on this research, and expose a sample of intermediate phase educators, to this pedagogy, by workshops, and giving them an opportunity to work in class using this approach. Thereafter, I needed to ascertain intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as well as the extent to which co-operative learning enhances learning.

Because schools socialize children to assume adult roles, and because co-operation is so much a part of adult life, one might expect that co-operative activity would be emphasized. However, this is far from true. Among the prominent institutions of our society, the schools are least characterized by co-operative activity.

In a school situation, learners for most of the time, work independently and are continuously in competition with one another for praise and recognition. Such competition does not have a positive impact, because winners and losers can be predicted fairly reliably, the day they enter a grade. The learners who have succeeded in the past, will probably succeed, and those learners who have failed in the past will probably fail. Low - performing learners may give up or try to disrupt a task, because they know they have a small chance of success, whereas, high performing learners may not give off their best because they know they will be near the top anyway. Thus, competition for high marks in the class is poorly matched.

Co-operative learning, on the other hand, lives by the credo,



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her ” (Johnson & Johnson 1994).

1.5 LIMITATIONS

This study is faced with some limitations. The value of this study is not diminished by the fact that there are limitations, but actually it is enhanced by reporting these limitations.

One of the major limitations was that it was not possible to interview all intermediate phase educators in the Durban South Region due to financial and time constraints. The study had to be limited to a sample of this population.

The study is restricted to intermediate phase educators. A more comprehensive view on educators' perceptions on co-operative learning would have been gained if foundation phase, senior phase and secondary phase educators were also included in the sample of the research.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study is expected to be, a precursor for further research in the field of co-operative learning in schools.

According to Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998) i

“ Given the extraordinary constellation of factors favouring co-operative learning – it’s dual focus on social and academic outcomes, compatibility with social constructivism, strong advocacy by some of the most respected researchers in education, and broad dissemination via teacher preparation and professional development programmes and practitioner’s publications – it is reasonable to expect that many teachers, perhaps a majority, incorporate co-operative learning in their classroom lessons. ”

However, this is not so. Willis (1992) cited an interview with Slavin who estimated that about 10 % of educators use co-operative learning in some way.

The question arose ó Why are many educators not using co-operative learning, despite research indicating its valuable achievements with this learning style.

- *Could it be that educators fear making that paradigm shift in pedagogy.*
- *Could it be that educators are not knowledgeable on co-operative learning.*

Thus, this study seeks to investigate intermediate phase educators’ perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning.

CONTENTS

- CHAPTER ONE :** This chapter has provided the context and introduction to the study. It has also outlined the aim and rationale for this study.
- CHAPTER TWO :** Chapter two presents the literature review of the study. A significant chapter that provides an outline of co-operative learning, stepping into the very essence of co-operative learning and zooming in and culminating with educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as well as the extent to which co-operative learning enhances learning.
- CHAPTER THREE :** Chapter three presents a theoretical overview that is relevant to this study.
- CHAPTER FOUR :** Chapter four provides a description of the research methodology, research instruments and the procedures employed to analyze the data.
- CHAPTER FIVE :** Chapter five presents the results of the study, which is, intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as well as the extent to which co-operative learning can enhance learning.
- CHAPTER SIX :** Chapter six is the final chapter, concluding the study, and indicates the limitations of the study and makes recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Co-operative learning, like other instructional strategies, encompasses a variety of instructional techniques. In general, co-operative learning environments are characterized by positive goal interdependence: that is, common goals for an individual as well as group success are expected. Members of the group are accountable to one another. The group sinks or swims together, working in concert toward a particular instructional goal (Cushner, McClelland & Safford 1992).

2.2 TYPES OF LEARNING

Learning can be classified into three categories:

- *individualistic learning*
- *competitive learning*
- *co-operative learning*

(Johnson & Johnson 1994).

LEARNING

In an individualistic learning situation, individuals work by themselves to achieve goals. These goals that the individuals work towards, are unrelated to and independent from the goals of others (Ibid).

Learners are independent of one another and work towards a set criteria, whereby their success, depends on their own performance in relation to an established criteria. The success or failure of other learners does not affect their score. The score that an individual will receive is based primarily on his achievement alone (Ibid).

Lessons can be structured individualistically, but individualistic learning is appropriate only under a very limited set of conditions. Individualistic efforts rarely increase student achievement and rarely facilitate the accomplishment of instructional goals (Ibid).

2.2.2 COMPETITIVE LEARNING

We live in a highly competitive society. The competitive streak infiltrates every aspect of society.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1994),

“Competing with and defeating an opponent is one of the most widely recognized aspects of interpersonal interaction in our society. The creed of competition as a virtue is woven deeply into our social fabric.”

Every facet of our society, including education, is filled with win or lose terms. For one to win, the other has to lose. Vince Lombardi, sums it up beautifully, when he says, “Winning isn’t everything. It’s the only thing !”

most classroom situations, rests on the assumption that when one wins, the other loses. This type of learning is characterized by negative goal interdependence and evaluation is based on correct answers.

In a competitive learning situation, rewards are restricted, so that only the few who are the high performers, are acknowledged as being successful, and are rewarded in some way. Research has shown that competition rarely increases learners' achievement and rarely facilitates the accomplishment of instructional goals.

*“The true security is to be found in
social solidarity
rather than in
isolated individual effort.”*

Fyodor Dostoyevsky (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

2.2.3 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Co-operative learning is instructional procedures, whereby learners work together in small heterogeneous groups and are rewarded for their collective accomplishments. Learners are not only responsible for learning the material that is presented, but also to ensure that everyone in the group knows the material as well. Thus, co-operative efforts result in learners striving for mutual benefit so that all group members gain from each other's efforts.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), co-operative learning has five essential components :

- *Promotive Interaction*
- *Individual Accountability*
- *Interpersonal & Small Group Skills*
- *Group Processing*

Unlike individualistic and competitive learning, research indicates that co-operative learning greatly increases learner's achievements and facilitates the accomplishment of instructional goals. Furthermore, research supports the proposition that co-operative learning results in greater effort to achieve more positive interpersonal relationships, and greater psychological health and self-esteem than do competitive or individualistic efforts (Ibid).

*“ There is no violent struggle between plants,
no warlike killing,
but a harmonious development
on a share – and – share – alike basis.
The co-operative principle
is stronger than the competitive one”.*

Frits W. Went (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

In co-operative learning, interaction is by positive goal interdependence with individual accountability. Positive goal interdependence requires acceptance by the group, that they all do well, or they all do not so well, together. They ÷ sink or swim together. ö For example, in a co-operative learning class, learners will work in small groups to help each other learn the words for an individual spelling test scheduled on Friday. Each learner's score in the test is increased by bonus points earned by the group. Therefore, a learner concerns

how he can spell, but also with how other learners in the cooperative approach, could also be extended over the entire class, if bonus points are awarded to each learner, when the class can spell more than a reasonable, but demanding, criterion set by the educator (Ibid).

2.3 DEFINITION OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

According to Slavin, Sharan, Kagan, Lazarowitz, Webb and Schmuck (1985), co-operative learning methods are structured, systematic instructional strategies capable of being used at any grade level and in most school subjects. The educator assigns the learners to four to six learning groups which comprises of high, average and low achieving learners, boys and girls as well as learners from different cultures. Each group is a microcosm of the class in academic achievement level, sex and ethnicity.

Co-operative learning is the instructional use of small heterogenous groups of learners, who work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. The underlying assumptions and beliefs of co-operative learning may differ from group, on the basis of race or ethnicity. Pang and Barba (1995:359) as cited in Vaughan (1995) states that co-operative learning is not simply a matter of grouping students heterogeneously but also of understanding that some groups of students, especially students of colour, are more inclined to function better in group settings than individually.

Kohn (1992) and Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind (1992) considered co-operative learning to be a form of critical pedagogy that moves classrooms and societies closer toward the ideal of social justice. Burrin, James and Ambrosio (1993) and Ossont (1993) cited in Vaughan (1995) envisioned co-operative learning as a strategy to help students improve intellectual and social skills. Slavin, Sharan, Kagan Lazarowitz, Webb and Schmuck (1985) says that the "engine" that runs co-operative learning is always the same: heterogenous groups working toward a common goal.

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Co-operative learning is renowned for achieving multiple educational goals. Goodlad (1984) cited in Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998) state that although academic learning goals hold primacy in most schooling efforts, teachers are also deeply concerned about their students' social and personal development. Co-operative learning with its dual emphasis on academic and interpersonal skills (Johnson & Johnson 1991) cited in Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998) appeals to teachers because it addresses and integrates seemingly diverse goals within a single approach.

Furthermore, in co-operative learning individual differences are exploited to promote learning. Co-operative learning has been widely researched. Researchers believe that co-operative learning is a valuable component of classroom learning. Research has proven that this methodology can be very effective in encouraging student interaction and developing positive attitudes towards school (Vaughan. W. 1995). Co-operative learning environments emphasize social interaction between peers positively which in turn has a positive impact on student achievement.

According to Glass and Putnam (1989), in co-operative learning, more students learn and remember material for longer periods of time, approach learning at higher cognitive levels, feel positive about themselves and the subject matter, and become more skilful in interacting with one another.

I THE FIELD OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Leaders in the field of co-operative learning include:

- *Robert Slavin, Director of the Elementary School Programme Centre for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools at the John Hopkins University.*
- *Roger T. Johnson, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, and David W. Johnson, Professor of Education Psychology. Both these brothers are Co-Directors of the Co-operative Learning Centre at the University of Minnesota.*
- *Spence Kagan, Director of Resources for Teachers at San Juan Capistrano in California.*

(Henley 2004).

2.6 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING METHODS

Alternatives to the traditional, competitive classroom methods have emerged. These alternative methods are referred to as co-operative learning. All co-operative learning methods are based on social psychological research and theory. These co-operative learning methods have been adapted to meet the practical requirements of classrooms and to solve problems by the use of co-operation ó maintaining individual accountability as well as group responsibility.

The most widely researched and used co-operative learning methods are:

vements Divisions (*STAD*)

- *Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT)*
- *Jigsaw 1*
- *Jigsaw 11*
- *Learning Together*
- *Group Investigation*
- *Numbered Heads Together*

(Slavin 1990).

2.6.1 STUDENT TEAMS ACHIEVEMENTS DIVISIONS

Slavin (1986) cited in Killen (2000) states that Student Teams-Achievement Division (STAD) is composed of students in mixed ability teams. Initially, the educator presents a lesson. Thereafter, the learners meet in a four-to-five member team to master a set of worksheets based on the lesson. Learners within these teams work together to master the material. The learners may use a variety of methods to master the material, such as quizzing each other, worksheets or manipulatives. Each learner takes a quiz on the material. The learner's scores contribute to their teams and are based on the degree to which the learners have improved over their individual past averages. The teams with the highest score are recognized in a weekly class newsletter.

2.6.2 TEAMS-GAMES-TOURNAMENT

Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT) was the first co-operative learning method from John Hopkins University. TGT is identical to STAD, except that quizzes are replaced with academic tournaments and individual improvement scores are replaced with a bumping system. The learners play games in which they win

er knowledge of academic work, which has been
can earn extra points if they challenge the answer of
another learner (Killen 2000).

Learners play academic games at tournament tables. The highest scorer earns six points, the middle scorer earns four points and the lowest scorer earns two points for the team. Tournament tables are homogenous with regard to ability level.

Initially, the educator assigns learners to the tournament tables. Thereafter, a bumping system is used, whereby the highest scorer at each table advances to a higher ability level table and the lowest scorer moves to a lower ability level table.

As with STAD, learners can bring back points to their team that can be used for various extrinsic rewards as determined by the educator or agreed upon by the group.

2.6.3 JIGSAW 1

The jigsaw model was originally presented by Aronson and colleagues in 1978. In the STAD and TGT methods of co-operative learning, all the learners have access to all the learning material at the same time. Each group has to decide how to tackle the learning task. However, in the Jigsaw Method, each learner, in a five to six member group is given unique information on a topic, that the whole group is studying. The learners read their sections. Thereafter, the learners meet in expert groups with their counterparts from other groups, to discuss the information. The learners, then return to their groups and teach their team-mates what they have learnt. The entire class may take a test for individual grades at the end of the session (Slavin 2003:273).

break the learning into manageable pieces and then
reassemble them into a meaningful whole. It is based on the idea that each

learner will first become an "expert" in a small part of what they have to learn,
and then teach other learners about this part of the learning material. (Killen
2000:120.)

2.6.4. JIGSAW 11

Jigsaw 11, is designed to integrate Jigsaw 1 with other STAD Methods. Learners
are in four to five member teams.

Slavin (2003:273) notes:

*"Instead of each student being assigned a unique section, all students read a
common text, such as a book chapter, a short story, or a biography. However,
each student receives a topic on which to become an expert. Students with the
same topics meet in expert groups to discuss them, after which they return to
their teams to teach what they have learned to their team-mates. The students
take individual quizzes, which result in team scores, as in STAD."*

2.6.5. LEARNING TOGETHER

The "Learning Together" Method, is closest to pure co-operation. This model of
co-operative learning was developed by David Johnson and Roger Johnson
(1999), and it involves four or five member heterogeneous groups working on
assignments. The group hands in a single completed assignment. Thereafter, the
group receives praise and recognition, based on the group product.

...es training learners to be good group members and
...up functioning by the group members. According to
Slavin (2003), this method emphasizes team building activities before students
begin working together and regular discussions within groups about how well
they are working together.

2.6.6. GROUP INVESTIGATION

Group Investigation is the most complex of all co-operative learning methods.
This method requires learners to take responsibility for deciding what they will
learn, how they will organize themselves to learn material and how they will
communicate what they have learned to their classmates.

Sharan and Sharan (1992), cited in Slavin (2003), states that Group Investigation
is a general classroom organization plan in which students work in small groups
using co-operative inquiry, group discussion, and co-operative planning and
projects.

In Group Investigation, learners form their own two to six member groups.
Thereafter, the group chooses a subtopic from a unit that the entire class is
studying. The groups, then, break their subtopics into individual tasks and carry
out various activities that are necessary to prepare group reports. The tasks
frequently involve open-ended investigations using a variety of resource
materials. Each group then communicates their findings to the entire class, in the
form of a presentation or display.

2.6.7. NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER

Kagan (1994), provided a co-operative group methodology called Numbered
Heads Together, which can be used as an alternative to the whole class question

method, learners work in heterogeneous groups, which usually, one high achieving learner, two average achieving learners and one low achieving learner. Each learner is assigned a number from one to four.

The educator asks a question to the class and does not ask any particular child initially. Every learner is asked to put their heads together to make sure that everyone in the group knows the answer to the question. The learners are given enough time to make sure that everyone in the group knows the answer to the question. The educator calls a number, and only those learners whose number is called, will give the answer (Ibid).

This methodology involves learners discussing the question and therefore they benefit by direct involvement with the content. Numbered Heads Together, integrates positive goal interdependence, that is, if any learner knows the answer, the likelihood of each learner's success is increased. Individual accountability is required, as once a learner's number is called, he or she, on their own must respond. This approach leads to co-operative interaction between learners, and can be applied to any grade or learning area (Ibid).

2.7. ELEMENTS OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Slavin (1990), proposed a two- element theory of co-operative learning, made up of positive interdependence and individual accountability. The five component theory of Johnson and Johnson is currently the one that appears to be most used.

According to the five component theory, the following five elements are essential for maximizing the success of co-operative learning:

- *Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction”*
- *Individual Accountability*
- *Social Skills*
- *Group Processing*

(Onwuegbuzie 2001).

2.7.1. POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE

Positive interdependence operates on the premises that all members in the group believe that they, and all other members of their group are essential for the success of the group. This element, Positive Interdependence, promotes an arena in which learners not only perceive that their work benefits their group members, but also that the efforts of their group assist them. According to Johnson and Johnson (1991), under optimal conditions, positive interdependence necessitates the sharing of resources, the provision of mutual support and encouragement, and the acknowledgement and celebration of joint successes, however small.

Ibid noted that positive interdependence, can be structured in the following ways:

- *Positive Interdependence can be incorporated. This means that the educator promotes one or more mutual goals for each group, and ensuring that every member of the group learns the assigned material.*
- *Positive Reward Interdependence can be implemented. The educator may provide joint rewards. The rewards may take the form of bonus points to*

up, provided that every member of the group satisfies

- *Positive Resource Interdependence can be enforced. The educator may supply learners with limited resources that must be shared within the group. The educator may also provide each learner with a part of the required resources that the group must fit together. This is referred to as the Jigsaw Method.*
- *Positive Role Interdependence can be promoted by assigning each member of the group, complimentary roles, as reader, not taker, motivator and checker.*

A myriad of studies revealed that positive interdependence, is the propellant for the other four elements of co-operative learning, and that goal interdependence combined with reward or resource interdependence is effective for increasing achievement (Ibid).

2.7.2. FACE-TO-FACE PROMOTIVE INTERACTION

Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction occurs when individuals in the group encourage and facilitate each group member's efforts to accomplish group goals. Johnson (1991), noted that examples of promotive interaction include students within a group providing each other with feedback to improve their future performance and influencing each other's efforts to achieve the group's goals.

2.7.3. INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Individual Accountability occurs when the performance of each learner is evaluated, and then feedback is given to the individual and to the group. Thereafter, the learner is held responsible by other group members for not coattailing (Onwuegbuzie 2001).

y can be promoted in the following ways:

- *By keeping the size of the group small.*
- *Giving an individual test to each learner.*
- *Calling on learners in the class randomly and asking them to present the group work to the entire class.*
- *Observing how members of each group interact with other members.*
- *Assigning one member of each group to ask other group members to explain new material to the rest of the group.*
- *Requiring that each learner teaches what he or she has learned to a fellow group member or to someone from another group.*

(Ibid).

2.7.4. SOCIAL SKILLS

Social Skills involves appropriate use of small group and interpersonal skills. In order to facilitate social skills, the learners must have mutual knowledge and trust. Furthermore, they must be able to communicate effectively with one another and solve conflicts when they arise. According to Johnson & Johnson (1991), teachers should not assume that every student has the necessary social skills to work effectively with other group members. Thus, educators should teach social skills and reward learners for the use of these social skills.

2.7.5. GROUP PROCESSING

Group Processing involves reflecting on a group session. One needs to reflect on whether the actions of the members were effective or ineffective and decide upon which actions to continue, which actions to modify and which

on and Johnson (1991), suggested that teachers
ically to evaluate group processing.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1991), these five elements help to
promote a successful co-operative learning experience for students.

2.8 THE NEED FOR CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

There is a need for co-operative learning in our classrooms because of the
present day family structure, school structure, technological advancements
and changing demographics.

2.8.1 FAMILY STRUCTURE

According to Kagan (1994) í

*“Socialization – Kids today come to school without the necessary skills to
function appropriately. The family structure of children has changed. One
can no longer assume that students come from two-parent households. The
number of one-parent households continues to grow. It is estimated that by
the year 2000, nearly one-third to one-half of school children will come from
one-parent households in the United States. This phenomena has resulted in
an increasing number of “Latch-Key” children – or children who must come
home to an empty household after school. The opportunity to develop
appropriate social skills around the family dinner table, is no longer a given.
Complicating matters even further, the extended family often has very little
contact with many children, closing yet another opportunity to practise
socialization skills. Without appropriate socialization skills, the ability to co -
operate and work with others as a team is minimized. ”*

Schools are plagued by individualistic and competitive learning. Johnson & Johnson (1994:37) state that educators seem drawn to competitive and individualistic learning, crashing their teaching on the rocks due to the seductive and tempting attractions of explicating knowledge to an adoring audience and teaching as they themselves were taught. Srikhao supports this statement by saying that teachers teach the way they have been taught ó in a direct and linear instructional format.

Schools must prepare learners for a new society. Society has changed dramatically and therefore schools can no longer operate independently from the rest of the world.

According to Johnson & Johnson (1991) í

“Socialization involves co-operation and co-operation is at the heart of our society. Families must co-operate to survive, just as our entire economic system is based upon co-operation. Humans very survival depends upon their ability to “get along” and work together. Socialization issues continue to result in tremendous problems for the child. Students are unable to co-operate and/or utilize the skills of conflict resolution. It is up to the schools to provide intervention to the socialization deficits. Although co-operative learning is not a panacea for all the socialization deficits students might exhibit, it provides a forum to teach children how to socialize in appropriate ways.”

ADVANCEMENTS

Learners are becoming more and more consumers of the television industry. Television, to a certain extent, has a negative impact on learners by its anti-social content and advertising. The greatest negative impact that it has on learners is that it erodes family communication. Thus, television is another roadblock to the development of adequate social skills. Co-operative learning cannot be seen as a substitute for family communication, but, can greatly assist with socialization skills, that supposedly one learns at the home base via family communication

(Henley 2004).

2.8.4 CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The traditional teaching paradigm which was based on the premise that educators will be dealing with basically homogenous, single-language learners is a thing of the past. Population shifts are increasing the number of learners living in urban areas, and racial diversity is escalating. Due to the many second language learners and different races in schools, social skills need to be taught. Thus, co-operative learning provides a terrace for instruction (Henley 2004).

2.9 THE ADVANTAGES OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

The advantages of co-operative learning is far-reaching and wide, as it spreads its enormity over the academic, as well as the social terrain.

“The importance of co-operative learning goes beyond maximizing outcomes such as achievement, positive attitudes toward subject areas, and the ability to think critically, although these are worthwhile outcomes. Knowledge and skills are of no use if the student cannot apply them in a co-operative interaction with other people. Being able to perform technical skills such as reading, speaking, listening, writing, computing and problem solving are valuable but of little use if the person cannot apply those skills in co-operative interaction with other people.”

Co-operative learning allows learners to work co-operatively with each as a team. It allows for lots of interaction and develops ones talking and listening skills, and more importantly it demands co-operation from all team members. Because of the great amount of interaction, there’s bound to be conflict situations arising from time to time, and learners will have to deal with these situations and resolve them co-operatively. In essence, they are learning the art of conflict management.

The very essence of most jobs is teamwork, which involves working together, co-operating with each other, getting others in the team to co-operate, coping with complex issues, finding solutions to problems with everyone’s input and overall working collaboratively. Thus, co-operative learning keeps abreast with the real world in that the learner works co-operatively as a team, and as such, prepares a learner for the work force.

Co-operative learning is synonymous with co-operation which is synonymous with **T E A M – Together Everyone Achieves More.**

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING ENHANCES THE LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Studies (Lan & Repman 1995; Mueller & Fleming 2001) have indicated that co-operative learning enhances student's enthusiasm for learning and their determination to achieve academic success. Research shows that co-operative learning increases the academic achievement of learners of all ability levels in reading, writing, mathematics computation and application, comprehension, critical thinking and physical education. Co-operative learning is great for social studies classes (Morton 1998). Students who engaged in co-operative learning experiences have been able to identify an increase in their own knowledge and self-esteem, trust of peers, problem solving and communication skills (Elliot, Busse & Shapiro 1999), and technology proficiency (McGrath 1998).

2.9.2 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING PROMOTES GOOD CITIZENSHIP

For learning groups to be effective, learners must learn to honour and respect one another's differences, to support one another through learning processes, to communicate effectively with one another, and to come to a consensus or understanding when needed. Thus, co-operative learning provides valuable training in skills needed to become effective citizens, to engage in group problem solving, and to attain and keep employment (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan & Brown 2004). According to (Megnin 1995; Zhang 1994 & Zuckerman 1994), co-operative learning has been shown to improve interpersonal relations and strengthen conflict resolution skills.

EARNING COMPENSATES FOR A SOCIALIZATION VOID

There appears to be a lack of socialization among many young people, especially culturally and socially disadvantaged ones, in their family and community relationships. Co-operative learning could be used as an instrument to provide these young people with the much needed social skills. According to Hargreaves (1995), the designated tasks and roles of co-operative learning and the specialized language which surrounds them are therefore seen to address and fill up the social skills void which many children are said to encounter in their homes and on the streets outside their schools. In contrast, researchers Rudduck and Quicke (1985), cited in Hargreaves (1995), have demonstrated that many learners from the working class and ethnic minority backgrounds, do not lack the social skills of co-operation, nor experience a socialization void. They go on to say that the cultures of their class and community supply them with forms of association and assistance of an informal, spontaneous nature. In schools, these things appear as *õcheatingö*- a form of co-operation that is unwanted and illegitimate in the atmosphere of competitive achievement and hierarchical grading which characterizes school life.

In this way, the insertion of co-operative learning into classroom teaching and learning can be read not as a response to a socialization void in home and community, but in response to a void created by the school itself, with its disciplinary processes, and grading and assessment practices that have already driven more dangerous, spontaneous, desire laden forms of student collaboration out of the classroom and made them illegitimate. Co-operative learning is then inserted and inscribed as a contrived and controlled set of collaborative structures, practices and behaviours with its own special language: a language that takes lots of expensive training to acquire! It becomes its own self-contained and self-affirming system- a safe simulation of the

ent collaboration which the school and its teachers
aves 1995:80).

2.9.4 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING EMBRACES

MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOMS

Learners will not unlearn prejudice, simply by going to the same school or sitting in the same class as those of other racial or cultural backgrounds.

Learners in multicultural schools tend to become increasingly polarized as they get older, so that by the time they reach secondary schools, their social segregation becomes obvious to anyone entering the classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, grounds or watching groups of learners moving around the school. Furthermore, there is a tendency for learners to choose to work with others of similar backgrounds or with similar interests to their own. Therefore, it is possible for learners in multicultural schools and classrooms, to have very limited contact with learners from other backgrounds. It is possible, as illustrated by Coelho (1998), that tensions arise among different groups, based on stereotyped perceptions of "the other" and a lack of rapport.

Specific measures must be taken to equalize the status of different groups within the school and within the classroom. In order to achieve this, one can involve the learners in activities in mixed co-operative learning groups. The shared goals of the group members result in a common sense of identity and purpose and help to promote positive interpersonal interaction. The frequent, meaningful, and mutually supportive contact involved in co-operative learning assists students to view each other in non-stereotypical ways. By assigning students to work in heterogeneous groups, teachers communicate their expectations that students can and will work effectively and co-operatively with people of different backgrounds (Coelho 1998:140).

Joelho 1998:140) state:

“Many studies have revealed that intergroup relations improve dramatically after co-operative learning experiences in heterogeneous groups, whatever the content of those learning experiences, and that the improvement in race relations has long term effects.”

As Gollnick and Chinn (1994) note:

“The principles which undergird co-operative learning are supportive of multicultural teaching. It is also supportive of positive intergroup relations. Learning these social skills are not only helpful in learning the subject matter, but also helpful in working with others in both personal and work settings.”

There is merit to Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewindø (cited in Gollnick & Chinnø 1994) statement that co-operative learning is designed to be democratic, to help students take responsibility for both themselves and others, and to value heterogeneity and diversity.

In addition, there is a positive effect on race relations, with students of different races being chosen as friends more often than occurs in traditional classroom settings (Gollnick & Chinn 1994).

*“ Achievement is a we thing,
not a me thing,
always the product of many heads and hands. ”*

J.W. Atkinson (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

WORK ?

There is still a great deal of confusion and disagreement about why co-operative methods affect achievement and even more importantly, under what conditions co-operative learning has these effects (Slavin 1996:43).

Some researchers say that learning through co-operative group work can be explained in terms of a number of learning processes or from a number of theoretical perspectives- motivational perspective, social cohesion perspective, the cognitive development perspective, and the cognitive elaboration perspective.

2.10.1 MOTIVATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Group rewards encourage learners to help one another to achieve. According to Killen (2000:101), group members attain their personal goals only when their group is successful. The use of group goals or group rewards enhances the achievement outcomes of co-operating learners if and only if the group rewards are based on the individual learning of all group members (Slavin 1996:45).

When you use co-operative learning, there are three possible motives for learner engagement and learning, namely outcome motives, means motives and interpersonal motives. Outcome motives encourage group learning through rewards, recognition and goal achievement. Means motives encourage group learning through intrinsic interest in the task, task novelty and task structure. Interpersonal motives encourage group learning through peer support, a desire to help others, and the need to belong to a group.

HESION PERSPECTIVE

Slavin (1996), cited in Killen (2000), states that the social cohesion perspective attempts to explain the effects of co-operative learning on achievement by suggesting that students will help one another to learn because they care about one another and want one another to succeed. According to (Ibid), team building and self evaluation by the groups help to create a positive climate in which each group member wants all the group members to succeed.

2.10.3 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

The cognitive development perspective is Vygotsky's theory of proximal development. The essence of this theory is that learners can provide each other with "stepping stones" for thinking. This is why learners can learn from one another when they work co-operatively (Killen 2000).

2.10.4 COGNITIVE ELABORATION

This perspective says that in order for learners to understand and remember information, they must engage in some form of cognitive restructuring or elaboration of the material. An important method of elaboration is to develop explanation for others, which is necessary in most models of co-operative learning.

The various perspectives on why co-operative learning influences learner understanding suggest that group goals based on the learning of all group members have three main effects- they motivate learners to learn, they

encourage one another to learn, and they motivate
each other to learn (Killen 2000:102).

Most researchers of co-operative learning stress that it promotes academic learning, positive peer interactions and relationships. All this is only possible if a co-operative learning environment is created. Thus, team building activities should precede co-operative learning (Ibid).

2.11 PLANNING FOR CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Co-operative learning is not just grouping learners to learn. The educator must get learners to work as a team, exchange ideas, think critically and help one another to learn. Thus, careful planning is required. The educator must create a learning environment in which there will be face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, individual accountability and the appropriate use of interpersonal and small group skills (Ibid).

Educators must clearly specify what outcomes they want their learners to achieve and must select the appropriate co-operative model to be used. Educators must explain to learners how the co-operative learning sessions will work, what is expected of them, how the educator will assist them and how they will be assessed. Learners must understand the concept of co-operative learning and must know how to use it in order to achieve success at academic tasks (Ibid).

Learners must be given guidance and practice at working co-operatively. Small co-operative tasks must be given on the first day the educator meets his class. The educator must gradually move these activities into longer and more complex learning episodes. Educators must spend some time in helping

strategies for assisting one another before they attempt to
success. According to (Killen 2000:108), it is a good idea
to have learners work in pairs until you are satisfied that they have developed
the skills they will need to work in large co-operative groups.

It is also important that educators arrange access to materials that learners will
need. Topics must be carefully selected, in that it must have room for diverse
opinions, so that discussions could take place. Grouping of learners is
important. It is recommended that groups should be mixed of males / females,
high achievers / low achievers, different cultures etc.

The educator must devise a system for rewarding individual learners, as well
as achievement of groups. Slavin (1996) cited in Killen (2000), states that
group rewards based on individual learning have an indirect effect- they
motivate learners to engage in certain behaviours, such as giving one another
elaborate explanations and this in turn enhances learning.

Educators must prepare appropriate assessment instruments, so that learners
will be able to demonstrate their mastery and retention of academic content
and skills after the co-operative learning groups have completed their work. It
must be made clear that each learner is responsible for mastering and retaining
all of the targeted content and abilities (Killen 2000:109).

The educator must develop a system of keeping records of the group and
individual achievements of learners. Finally, a period of reflection, so that
after the groups have completed their tasks and received their feedback, the
learners can analyse their achievements and group processes.

SHOULD CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING BE USED AS A TEACHING STRATEGY ?

Co-operative learning is a very flexible teaching strategy and can be used effectively in all areas.

As Killen (2000:103) says:

Co-operative learning can be an effective and motivating way of achieving both academic and social learning outcomes, and is particularly useful in the following circumstances:

- *When you want to encourage and develop co-operation among learners and develop their respect for one another's strengths and weaknesses, particularly in culturally diverse classrooms and in classrooms that include learners with disabilities.*
- *When you want to improve learners' communication skills as they learn the curriculum content.*
- *When you want to show learners that both their individual and collective learning efforts are important. This can improve their self-esteem.*
- *When you want learners to exchange ideas and to see that they can learn from one another, and learn from helping one another.*
- *When you want to improve learners' problem solving skills and have them discover that there are multiple solutions to a problem.*
- *When you want to encourage learners to think about their learning processes, identify the limitations of their knowledge, and learn to seek help when necessary.*

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

In this section the research will present a comparison of co-operative learning and Outcomes Based Education.

2.13.1 OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION

Outcomes Based Education can be viewed as follows:

- *Theory of Education*
- *Systemic Structure for Education*
- *Classroom Practice*

For Outcomes Based Education (OBE), to take place, the systemic structure and the classroom practice, has to be aligned with theory of education.

Outcomes Based Education is a theory or philosophy of education in the sense that it embodies and expresses a certain set of beliefs and assumptions about learning, teaching and the systemic structures within which classroom activities take place (Killen 2000).

As Spady (1994:1) asserts:

“Outcomes Based Education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be

...ing the curriculum, instruction and assessment to
...ultimately happens.”

The principle behind Spady's definition, is that Outcomes Based Education is an approach to planning, delivering and evaluating instruction that requires management, educators and learners to focus their attention and efforts on the desired results of education, which are expressed in terms of individual learner learning.

The broad philosophy of Outcomes Based Education encompasses two common approaches. One approach emphasizes learner mastery of the traditional learning area, whilst the other approach emphasises long term, cross curricular outcomes that are related directly to the learner's life roles in the future.

According to the Northern Territory Board of Studies (1998:2),

“The learning outcomes comprise the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that students should acquire to enable them to reach their full potential and lead successful and fulfilling lives as individuals, as of the community and at work.”

2.13.2 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Co-operative learning is only one of the teaching strategies amongst many others, that can be used in the Outcomes Based Education System.

Co-operative learning is a teaching strategy in which small groups, each with learners of different ability levels, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a learning area. Each member in the group is responsible for their understanding of the subject, as well as helping their team mates learn (Slavin 2003).

, learners strive for mutual benefit so that all group members share a common fate, know that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's team members and feel proud and jointly celebrate when a group member is recognized for achievement (Johnson & Johnson 1994).

Research has shown that co-operative learning techniques promote learners learning and academic achievement, increase learners' retention, help learners develop skills in oral communication, develops learners' social skills, promote learner self-esteem, help to promote positive race-relations and embraces learner satisfaction with their learning experience (Ibid).

The five pillars of co-operative learning are positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual and group accountability, interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing (Ibid).

2.13.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION AND CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Outcomes Based Education has a strong relationship with co-operative learning. Although Outcomes Based Education is a philosophy of education and co-operative learning is a pedagogy, they still bond together, in that they share the same key principles.

The main key principle that Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning share, is that they are designed, so that education must prepare learners for life-roles in the future. This philosophy and pedagogy adopts a holistic approach to education. They both move from traditional learning to authentic learning, which is underpinned by co-operation, knowledge

problems collectively in groups and learning beyond

Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning focuses on learners working co-operatively, rather than competitively or individualistically. Co-operation and team work are salient features of Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning. Learners take responsibility for their own learning as well as the learning of all group members.

Both, Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning believe that when learners work co-operatively, they:

- *Achieve more,*
- *Develop a more positive attitude towards school, learning areas, educators and fellow learners,*
- *Are more effective interpersonally.*

(Johnson & Johnson 1998).

This philosophy and pedagogy of education focuses on the development of the learner academically and socially. Therefore, academic and social development is assessed.

In respect of assessment, Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning:

- *recognize prior learning,*
- *help educators to identify whether learners have understood and acquired new learning and when they are ready to take the next step in the learning process,*

- ify any difficulties that the learners are experiencing
and help the learners to overcome these difficulties.
- gives educators a clear idea of each learner's abilities, personality and learning patterns.
 - Assess group work, paired work and individual work,

(Killen 2000).

Outcomes Based Education and co-operative learning operates on the premise, that all group members share a common fate, ÷we all sink or swim together hereö. Co-operative efforts result in learners striving for mutual benefit so that all group members gain from each otherø efforts. Thus, your success benefits me and my success benefits you. There is a positive interdependence among learnersø goal attainments as learners perceive that they can attain their learning goals if other learners in the group attain their learning goals. A team memberø success in creating a presentation depends on both individual effort and effort on other group members who contribute needed knowledge, skills and resources. Thus, performance is mutually caused by the individual and his fellow learners

(Johnson & Johnson 1995).

2.14 THE HUMAN RESOURCE IN THE CLASSROOM

Educators need to tap into the strongest resource in the classroom- the learners. According to Brookover, Erickson and McEvoy (1997:208), educators often talk about peer power but all too often fail to harness this power effectively.

...s in their ability to reinforce the attitudes, actions and
...ers. Co-operative learning groups, together with the
learner culture in general, are powerful forces in shaping the social and
academic behaviour of individual learners. This enhances the academic
achievement climate of the whole school.

For human-beings, acceptance as a member of a group is important. Learners
become sensitive to rejection or disapproval by their peers or fellow group
members. On the contrary, learners are receptive to praise, acceptance by the
group, being liked by the group members, and other signs of approval by their
peers (Ibid).

According to Brookover, Erickson and McEvoy 1997:208,

*“This is, in fact, how groups “keep their members in line”. If group members
act or even talk in a way contrary to the group’s values or norms, they are
likely to receive negative sanctions. By the same token, if group members
subscribe to and act upon shared values and norms, they are likely to be
popular, well-liked, praised and rewarded. Using these techniques of social
control, groups tend to persist, show consistent patterns of behaviour and
attitudes, and very powerfully “shape” members’ actions.”*

Learners always form groups, be it friendship groups, boy groups, girl groups,
common-interest groups, and sometimes racial or ethnic groups. Every group
hold shared values and pursue various goals. For example, one group may be
interested in trading pop-starsøcards, whilst other groups may be interested in
cars, sports, fashion, drama, music and so on (Ibid).

In very few instances, learners are arranged around academic criteria or the
reinforcement of learning. Thus, as a way forward, educators must discover

are traditionally formed for non-academic purposes,
force academic learning and appropriate social skills

(Ibid).

2.15 EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

An international research on co-operative learning ó ðPrevalence, Conceptualizations, and the Relation between Research and Practice ö was conducted by Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy in 1998. The research examined the prevalence, conceptualization and form of co-operative learning used by elementary school educators. Ninety six percent of the educators indicated that they used co-operative learning. The majority of the educators used co-operative learning to achieve academic, as well as, social learning goals. However, when the researchers applied criteria for co-operative learning, derived from research literature, few educators were employing recognized forms of this pedagogy, primarily because they did not tie individual accountability to group goals.

All educators interviewed in this study, indicated that they used co-operative learning. Furthermore, they mentioned that they organized their classrooms in ways that encouraged learners to work together. The researchers expected to find educators using some of the co-operative learning models, prominent in research literature. However, this was not the case. Some of the educators distinguished their version of co-operative learning from the more öformal versionö. They felt that this öformal versionö of co-operative learning was too restrictive, formal and exacting (Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy 1998).

ated that he tried to follow an approach developed by
e learning researcher/developer. Not only did

educators ignore formal models of co-operative learning, but only twenty-nine percent could recall any researchers or developers whose work influenced their own.

Some educators referred to Johnson and Johnson (1994), in connection with a training experience, or to distinguish their own approach to co-operative learning from a recognized model.

Some educators felt that by distancing themselves from "formal" co-operative learning, they are able to create more room for their own adaptations. Two thirds of the respondents believed that their version of co-operative learning qualified as an authentic form of this pedagogy.

Another educator made mention of the fact, that he modified a particular model, which he had learnt. He went on to say that with any new pedagogy, you will have to make it work for you. Thus, adaptation and modification were the frequent themes underlining co-operative learning.

Educators appeared to have sampled from a menu of co-operative learning features, until they settled on an amalgamation that suited their context.

The educators interviewed showed a preference for organizing classroom instruction around partner and group work activities. According to (Johnson & Johnson, 1994) not all peer-mediated instruction qualifies as co-operative learning. Virtually, all the educators said that they had constructed a version of co-operative learning that suited their classrooms.

This version was an amalgamation of ideas gained from schooling, in-service training, colleagues and personal experience. None of the educators referred to other models of co-operative learning in research literature, other than the Johnson and Johnson Model.

er these adaptations and modifications to co-operative

learning qualify as the real thing or the distortion is so great that it changes the pedagogy. Co-operative learning depends on the presence of certain critical features that transform group work arrangements into authentic co-operative learning. Research emphasizes that co-operative learning must include conditions that promote positive interdependence and individual accountability.

The educators described multiple strategies for establishing interdependence among group members, but assigning a single product for the group and assigning roles were used extensively. Although many educators did not use Johnson and Johnson's three types of interdependence, which is, task, identity and environment, they used other strategies to induce interdependence.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1991),

“Individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual student is assessed and the results given back to the group and the individual.”

This provides information to the group about each individual's learning and thus enables team-mates to provide assistance where needed. Moreover, by making the individual's results visible, discourages individuals from slacking off and relying on others to do the work and learn. The results of the research indicated that only twenty-four percent of educators utilized individual accountability in their pedagogy.

Learners teach what they have learned to other learners in the group. When done concurrently by all learners working in pairs or otherwise, this is called simultaneous explaining. Fourteen percent of the educators indicated that they use simultaneous explaining by encouraging team-mates to tell each other what they have learned or to edit one another's work.

for their own learning first and foremost.

They are responsible to find out the information that they need. But they're also responsible for taking the knowledge that they have and imparting it to others and making sure that the other person understands. So they are responsible forgetting it across in a way that the other person will understand, and if they don't get their point across one way, then they've got to figure out how to teach them in a different way."

Antil, Jenkins, Wayne & Vadasy (1998).

It was unclear as to whether, educators required all group members to teach, or whether, educators relied on the more skilled learners to teach or to respond to peer requests. Individual accountability can only be established if all team members give explanations or demonstrate their skills to their peers.

Several educators indicated that they assigned the role of checker to monitor teammates participation or completion of an assignment. However, none of the educators, used checkers, to monitor peer telling, explaining or teaching.

Fourteen percent of the educators used random oral examinations as a means of keeping learners accountable. Fifty-two percent of the educators believed that the learners were responsible for one another's learning, but none of the educators indicated that they used testing to promote co-operation, mutual helping or to demonstrate how an individual's performance affected their group's outcomes.

All in all, educators preferred using mutual explaining and random oral examinations for establishing individual accountability. However, for most of the educators, individual accountability was not a consideration, in the sense of informing

about the status of their knowledge and possible need
focused on keeping tabs on the individual's learning.

Two educators reported that they often required individual products, either in place of a group product or in addition to a group product, so that they could monitor the individual's learning.

The image created by most of the educators was one in which individual learners were held accountable to the educator via tests or inspection of work products but not accountable to their team-mates vis-à-vis the learning goals of the group.

Accountability to the educator, rather than to the group, is illustrated in the following quotation.

*"I want the group product to be spectacular,
but the whole point of it is for the individual
student to learn and grow and produce
something. It's important for me to know how
each student is doing. I need some kind of project
or activity that demonstrates their knowledge.
A lot of times, I'll insert that after they've done
a co-operative project to get the knowledge and
skills. Then I can evaluate individual students."*

Antil, Jenkins, Wayne & Vadasy (1998).

Thus, the researchers were left to question whether the sample of educators interpreted the idea of individual accountability differently from researcher/developers, or whether they simply did not see individual accountability as a key aspect of co-operative learning, or whether their

ism made them uncomfortable with the idea that
the responsibility for one another's learning.

2.16 USING CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING TO DEVELOP LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS

According to Statkeviciene and Klimoviene (2006) í

“The positive effects of the co-operative learning paradigm are impressive. But despite its widespread recognition and appreciation, co-operative learning remains an instructional strategy seldom used in a systematic manner by practitioners in most schools and universities.”

Therefore, Statkeviciene and Klimoviene (2006), examined educational opportunities of co-operative learning while teaching foreign languages.

A classroom investigation was conducted to reveal the influence of co-operative learning on the development of students' social skills and personal qualities, as well as on their language competence. The participants were 46 master students majoring in Economics. These students were grouped together heterogeneously. They stayed together for twelve weeks and had taken English for two hours a week. The participants were introduced to a broad range of co-operative learning activities (Ibid).

Statkeviciene's and Klimoviene's research revealed the following:

- *A major percentage (87 %) of students said that they found co-operative learning to be the most satisfying of all learning activities.*

learning helped them to improve on both verbal, as well as written communication skills.

- 89 % said that they have developed some social skills, namely, problem solving, decision taking, conflict handling, negotiating, leading, delegating, listening and presentation making.
- 89 % said that they have developed their personal qualities, namely, high degree of motivation, enthusiasm, self-confidence, self-esteem, ambitiousness, responsibility and creativity.
- 48 % said that the worst aspect of co-operative learning activities were related to the occurrence of social conflict such as arguing and not listening.
- Conflicts were task related and occurred only 10 % of the time.
- Participants obtained academic, social and attitude benefits from co-operative learning practices.
- Both teachers and students attributed academic and social benefits to working in teams.
- Co-operative learning saves teachers' instructional time and maximizes students' learning.
- Co-operative learning serves a variety of purposes in foreign language classrooms.
- Co-operative learning allows students to utilize their strongest talent across the curriculum.
- Co-operative learning promotes ways of improving students' weaknesses.
- Co-operative learning is an effective method to be used with any problem-solving task because it encourages people to express divergent points of view and at the same time helps students to become better listeners, speakers, readers and writers.

(Ibid).

oviene (2006) noted that,

“By adopting a co- operative learning paradigm in the classroom, teachers will be empowered to reach not only academic achievement benefits, but also various educational objectives.”

Finally, the researchers thought that it is best that students in co-operative learning must be tested individually and held accountable for mastering the assigned material, but the main focus should be on the efforts each individual makes to support group progress.

2.17 LIMITATIONS OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

According to Killen (2000), using co-operative learning does not guarantee that learners will learn or that the educator will have no problems with classroom management.

Co-operative learning has the following specific limitations.

2.17.1. INTERNALS

These learners prefer to work alone and do not like to learn co-operatively. As Sternberg (cited in Killen:2000) refers to these as internals- learners who prefer to apply their intelligence to things or ideas in isolation from other people. These learners do not necessarily lack ability and are not necessarily trying to be disruptive through their lack of co-operation. Educators need to be patient and recognize that these learners may be anxious about working in



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them in becoming more flexible in their approaches

2.17.2. PEER TEACHING

Co-operative learning relies on learners learning from one another. If peer teaching is ineffective, learners may learn much less than they would under the direct instruction from the educator (Killen 2000:106).

2.17.3. ASSESSMENT

The idea that an individual's assessment depends on the learning of others in their group, may not go down well with some learners. Therefore, educators need to clarify that groups will complete tasks or produce products that will be assessed as group efforts, but the learning is done by individuals and that each learner must demonstrate the achievement of the outcomes (Ibid).

2.17.4. DURATION

Successful co-operative learning needs to be used over an extended period of time so that learners develop the necessary group interdependence (Ibid).

2.17.5. RECORDS

Co-operative learning, the type suggested by Slavin (1990), means keeping detailed records of each learner's performance on each learning task and much time is spent on calculating group achievement scores (Ibid).

According to Stallings & Stipeck (1986), as cited in Killen (2000) stated that, because co-operative learning relies heavily on group incentives to motivate learners, there is some concern that learning may not transfer to situations in which the structures are not present.

2.17.7. INDIVIDUAL EFFORT

Although co-operation is a very important ability for learners to master, many of life's activities are based on individual effort. Therefore, learners have to learn to be self-reliant as well as learning how to co-operate. (Killen 2000:107.)

Lindblad (cited in Killen 2000:107) said that, *"It is difficult to achieve both of these outcomes from a single co-operative learning lesson."*

2.17.8. LEARNER'S PERCEPTIONS

The learner's perceptions of the ability and social standing of group members can influence and affect the functioning of co-operative groups. If learners perceive fellow learners as intellectually inferior, then they will relate to them differently, as opposed to, if they perceived them as intellectually superior. These perceptions can have a negative impact on the functioning of the group as a whole (Killen 2000).

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Numerous criticisms have been forwarded at the concept of grouping together learners of varying abilities.

Advocates for gifted children believe that heterogenous grouping may hold back those with the greatest academic talent. Advocates for students with learning difficulties state that children with disabilities may not get a chance to improve their reading, writing and maths skills when they receive so much assistance from peers. (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan & Brown 2004:298.)

Johnson & Johnson, Slavin & Stevens (cited in Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan & Brown 2004:298) noted that,

“Research tends to refute this, showing significant academic gains for students who are gifted and students with learning disabilities in co-operative settings”.

Another criticism of co-operative learning is the practice of rating, grading or rewarding learners on the basis of group accomplishment. Many parents have criticized this practice, mentioning that there were several instances whereby an individual learner did his part of the group task but received a low mark, because someone in the group did not do his part, and this brought down the quality of the group's task. Therefore, this system, tends to foster an atmosphere of blame, of punishing learners for situations beyond their control (Ibid).

There is merit to Kagan's (cited in Orlich's, Harder's, Callahan's, Trevisan's & Brown's 2004) argument that awarding privileges on the basis of group performance once again sets up a competitive process, subtly undermining the notion of co-operation and success for all.



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The focus of this chapter was the very essence of co-operative learning, that is, the positive impact that it has on the holistic development of the learner, on the community and society at large. Co-operative learning does not confine itself to the perimeters of the classroom. It stretches and extends way beyond into unknown work force, thus preparing a learner, not just for an assessment, but for the real world. Co-operative learning taps on the development of social skills, making it possible for a person to relate and adjust to new environments.

Nothing good comes without carrying negative baggage. Co-operative learning too, like any other pedagogical style comes with negatives. However, research has proven that co-operative learning contributes greatly to the holistic development of a learner, and that it out weighs the contribution of any traditional methods of pedagogy.

Locally, research on co-operative learning in schools, appeared to be non-existent. However, internationally, co-operative learning is one of the most researched pedagogical styles of recent times. The plethora of information about co-operative learning is testimony to its versatility and effectiveness (Killen 2000).

The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework of the study.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The overview of theories is an attempt to offer a context to understand pertinent features of the theoretical background within which this study is located. This exploration of selected theoretical postulations is aimed at providing answers to the key questions of this study.

3.2 THEORIES

This section examines the theories, which are applicable to the study. The general theoretical perspectives that have guided research on co-operative learning are:

- *Social Interdependance*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Behavioural*
- *Social Learning*
- *Ecosystemic*
- *Constructivism and Social Constructivism*

DEPENDANCE THEORY

The social interdependence perspective assumes that the way social interdependence is structured determines how individuals interact, which in turn, determines outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Thus, positive interdependence (co-operation) results in promotive interaction as individuals encourage and facilitate each other's efforts to learn, whereas negative interdependence (competition) results in oppositional interaction as individuals discourage and obstruct each other's efforts to achieve. The absence of interdependence is replaced by individualistic efforts, whereby there is no interaction as individuals work independently without any interchange with each other.

Co-operative learning is embedded within the realms of the social interdependence theory in that it promotes positive interdependence. Slavin (1990) proposed a two-element theory of co-operative learning and Johnson and Johnson (1991) proposed a five element theory of co-operative learning, both of which have positive interdependence as one of the elements of co-operative learning.

3.2.2 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THEORY

The cognitive development perspective is based on the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky. According to Piaget, when individuals cooperate with the environment, socio-cognitive conflict occurs, that creates cognitive disequilibrium, which in turn stimulates perspective talking ability and cognitive development. Piagetians argue that, during co-operative efforts participants will engage in discussions in which cognitive conflicts will occur and be resolved, and inadequate reasoning will be exposed and modified (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

d on the premise, that knowledge is socially,
ative efforts to learn, understand, and solve problems.

Group members exchange information and insights, discover weak points in each other's reasoning strategies, correct one another, and adjust their understanding on the basis of other's understanding (Ibid).

3.2.3 BEHAVIOURAL THEORY

The behavioural learning theory perspective focuses on the impact of group reinforcers and rewards for learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). This theory assumes that actions followed by extrinsic rewards are repeated. Skinner focused on group contingencies whilst Bandura focused on observation and imitation.

According to Skinner, all behaviours are accompanied by certain consequences, and these consequences strongly influence or determine whether or not these behaviours are repeated and at what level of intensity. The consequences that follow behaviour are either positive or negative. These consequences either increase or decrease the likelihood that preceding behaviour will recur under the same or similar circumstances (Biehler & Snowman, 1990).

Positive reinforcement is the strengthening of the behaviour that is increasing and maintaining the probability that a particular behaviour will be repeated by presenting a positive stimulus immediately after the desired behaviour has occurred. The positive stimulus could take the form of praise, candy, stars, etc. Thus, the goal of positive reinforcement is to increase the strength of a desired behaviour by supplying a positive stimulus. In this way, the learner is motivated to learn new behaviours in order to obtain the positive reinforcer (Ibid).

small groups are rewarded for their collective the behavioural perspective assumes that co-operative efforts are powered by intrinsic motivation to achieve group rewards. Achievement is a *öweö* thing and not a *ömeö* thing. Furthermore, it is a product of many heads and hands working together to accomplish a task (Johnson and Johnson 1994).

According to Johnson & Johnson (1994:52) the motivational system promoted within co-operative situations includes intrinsic motivation, high expectations for success, high incentive to achieve based on mutual benefit, high epistemic curiosity and continuing interest in achievement, high commitment to achieve and high persistence. Motivation is usually thought of as a combination of the perceived incentive for success. Thus, the greater the likelihood of success, the more important it is to succeed and the higher the motivation.

Cruickshank, Bainer and Metcalf (1995:211) state that co-operative learning is characterized by its unique system of rewards. Rather than a mark based on personal effort, the individual receives a mark based on the team's effort. Therefore, co-operative learning results in peer pressure to do well and to help others do well.

3.2.4. SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Social learning is also referred to as observational learning and is operative from the premise that one can learn a lot by watching. According to chief theorist, Bandura (1986) for observational learning to be effective, learners must attend to someone's behaviour, retain what they observed the *ömodelö* do, imitate or reproduce the behaviour they saw, and experience reinforcement or satisfaction as a consequence (Cruickshank, Bainer & Metcalf 1995:65). Although most observational learning is motivated by an expectation that correctly imitating the model will lead to reinforcement, it is also important to

seeing others reinforced or punished for engaging in (Bandura 1986). In a co-operative learning set up, learners observe behavioural patterns, achievement and rewards of the group, as well as individuals that make up the group. If a group is rewarded, they too, together with their group, observe and model that behaviour or task accomplishment to be rewarded too.

Bandura, like Skinner, acknowledges the motivational value of reinforcement and incorporates it into his theory (Biehler & Snowman 1990 :349). As part of observational learning, direct reinforcement occurs when an individual watches a model perform, imitates that behaviour, and is reinforced or punished by the model or some other individual.

3.2.5. AN ECOSYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE

The ecosystemic perspective has evolved from a blend of ecological and systems theories. This perspective illustrates how individuals and groups of different levels of the social context are linked in powerful, interdependent and interacting relationships.

3.2.5.1. ECOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

The ecological theory is based on the interdependence, as well as the relationships between different organisms and their physical environment. These relationships are seen as a whole, whereby each part is equally important in sustaining the cycles of birth and death, or regeneration and decay, which together ensure the survival of the whole system (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 1997).

DEPENDANCE

The ecological theory is synonymous with that of a spider's web. The spider's web represents the whole system. Anything that happens in any part of the web is felt in all other parts. For example, if a fly is caught in the threads of one part of the web, it is felt by all other parts of the web. The fly being caught, keeps the system going as it becomes the spider's feed. Furthermore, the fly's death affects other systems and so the cycle continues.

This whole concept of interdependence forms one of the significant elements of co-operative learning. Co-operative learning promotes positive interdependence, whereby all group members believe that they and all other members in the group, are essential for the success of the group. In co-operative learning, the group, like the spider web, is a whole system. Anything that happens in any part of the spider's web is felt in all other parts. Similarly, in a group, if anything happens to one member, it is felt by all members in the group. The group either swims together or sinks together. Thus, in a co-operative learning situation, learners not only perceive that their work benefits their group members, but also that the effort of their group members assist them (Ibid).

3.2.5.1.2. BALANCE

Sustenance of the whole system is maintained when relationships and cycles within the whole system are in balance. As in a piece of music, temporary changes in different sections are always occurring. Provided equilibrium is restored, the piece as a whole retains its harmony. When there is a major discord or disturbance, however, the relationships and interdependence may become so distorted that recovery as a whole is threatened.

Time is utilized in helping educators arrange appropriate and study materials like textbooks, reference books, worksheets, charts and curriculum programmes. Some time is utilized in how educators should react with learners, but no time is spent on the way learners should interact with each other. This strikes an imbalance and results in disequilibrium in the whole learning situation. This disturbance is a threat to the learning situation. Thus, there is mainly individualistic learning or, and competitive learning in schools today. Research has proven that these pedagogies rarely increase learner achievement and rarely accomplish instructional goals (Ibid).

Co-operative learning helps to restore and maintain this balance in a learning situation in that time is dedicated to the:

- *Interaction between learners and study material.*
- *Interaction between learners and educator.*
- *Interaction between learner and learner.*

Because co-operative learning restores this balance, learners' achievements and accomplishment of instructional goals are increased.

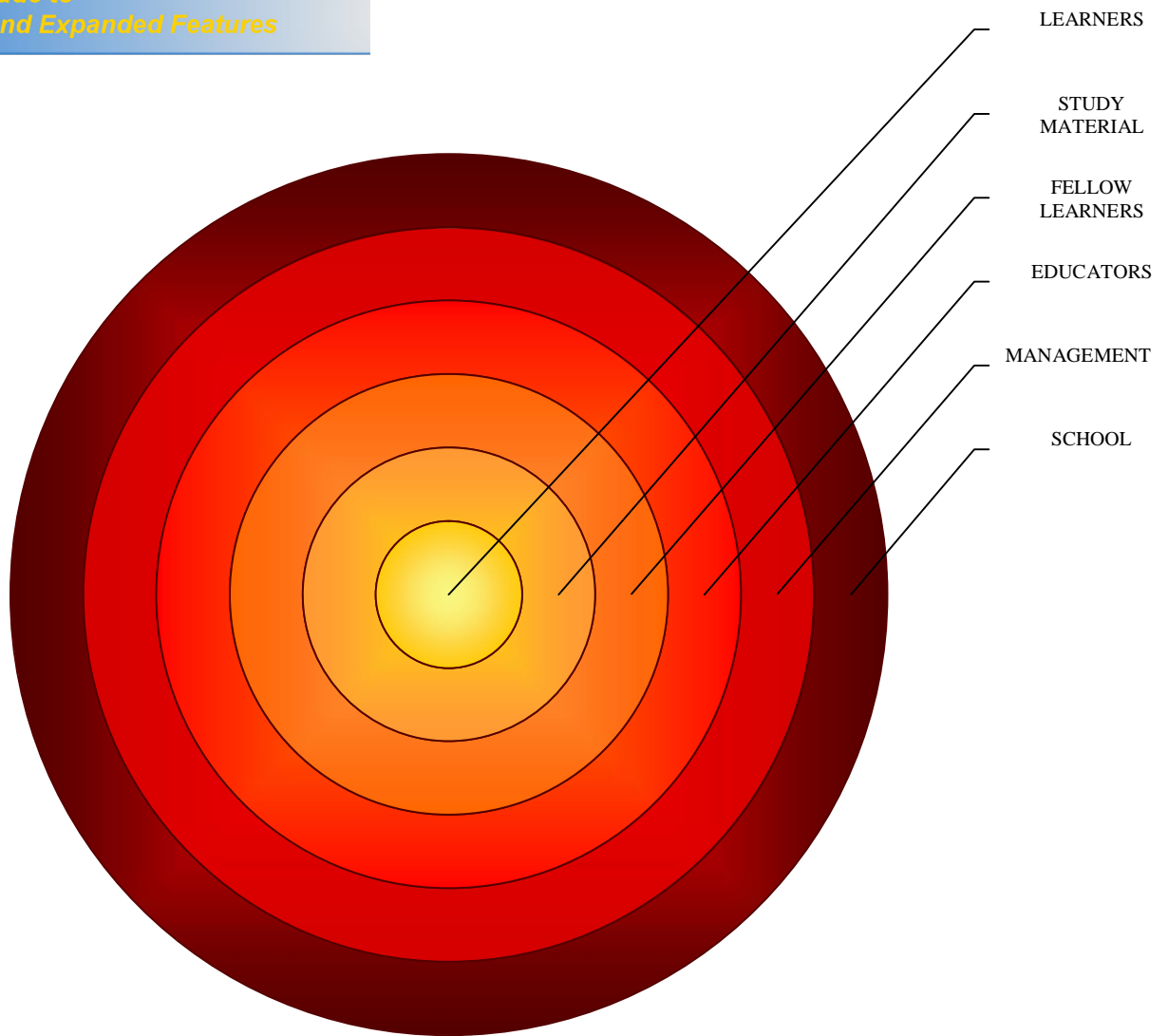


Figure 1

An Individual in an Interactive Relationship

Adapted from Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997).

This representation is based on the idea of the individual in an interactive relationship with different levels of organization in the school context. Each level can be seen as interacting with the learner. Thus, the learner is influenced by all the levels.

Systems theory is an interdisciplinary field of science and its study encapsulates the nature of complex systems in nature, society and science. The systems theory is a framework by which one can analyze any group objects, in a single organism, organization or society, that work in concert to produce the same result. According to Littlejohn (1983:29) a system is a ÷set of objects or entities that interrelate with one another to form a wholeö.

In essence, this theory sees different levels and groupings of the social context as ÷systemsö where the functioning of the whole is dependant on the interaction between all parts.

As Littlejohn (1983:32) notes:

“An open system is a set of objects with attributes that interrelate in an environment. The system possesses qualities of wholeness, interdependence, hierarchy, self-regulation, environmental interchange, equilibrium, adaptability and equifinality”.

Open systems are designed towards growth and consists of the following ó

- *objects – (sub-systems)*
- *attributes – (qualities)*
- *relationships – (mutual effect and constraint)*
- *environment – (affected by surroundings)*

NETS OF SYSTEMS THEORY

A system can be defined by the following attributes í

➤ *NON – SUMMATIVITY*

The system is a separate entity which is greater than the mere sum of its parts. For example, if four learners write down possible solutions to a problem in seclusion, a group consisting of the same four learners will generate more and better solutions by group brainstorming.

➤ *INTERDEPENDENCE*

This is the phenomenon of every part of the system having an effect on every other part of the system. Thus, a change in one part of the system will result in a change in another part of the system.

➤ *HIERARCHY*

The quality of hierarchy says that any complex system is a sub -system of a higher order system. An individual learner is a sub-system of a group of four learners, which is a sub-system of the class, which is the sub-system of the school.

➤ *SELF-REGULATION AND CONTROL*

Systems are goal oriented and interact in feedback with the environment, in order to meet those goals.

➤ *INTERCHANGE WITH ENVIRONMENT*

The system affects the environment and is affected by the environment.

In order for a system to survive, it must maintain balance or homeostasis. To avoid entropy, the system must engage in regulation and control, as well as management of its position in the supra-system.

➤ *CHANGE AND ADAPTABILITY*

The system must be able to change and adapt, in order to survive in a changing environment. The group goes through three types of structural change, namely, progressive segregation, progressive systemization and progressive centralization.

➤ *EQUIFINALITY*

A system can get to the same goal from various different routes. Inputs can result in the same outputs, but by different processes. For example, if the group requested that you bring a book on discipline via input from the environment, for the next group session, you may pick up the book from the library and go with it (output), to the next session.

<http://www.bsu.edu/classes/flint/systems.html>).

To understand the system as a whole, we must examine the relationship between its different parts. As in the example of the spider's web, the dynamic interdependence between its parts form the system so that whatever happens in one part will affect all other parts. A school, for instance, is a system with different parts, consisting of its staff, its students, its curriculum, and its administration.



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the whole "learning system" is dependent upon
and educators, educators and colleagues, as well as

learners and learners. This relationship, between the different parts affects the "learning system" as a whole and therefore, whatever happens in one part, will affect all other parts.

Characteristically, systems have subsystems within them which interact with the entire system. The system also interacts with parallel or wider systems outside it. Management, administration, educators, learners, curriculum and pedagogy may be seen as subsystems within a school, while the school as a whole may interact with systems outside, such as other schools, clinics, social services, NGOs etc.

Co-operative learning has its roots in the systems theory, in that they both promote two way interaction within and between subsystems, as well as two way interaction between subsystems and wider systems and subsystems and parallel systems.

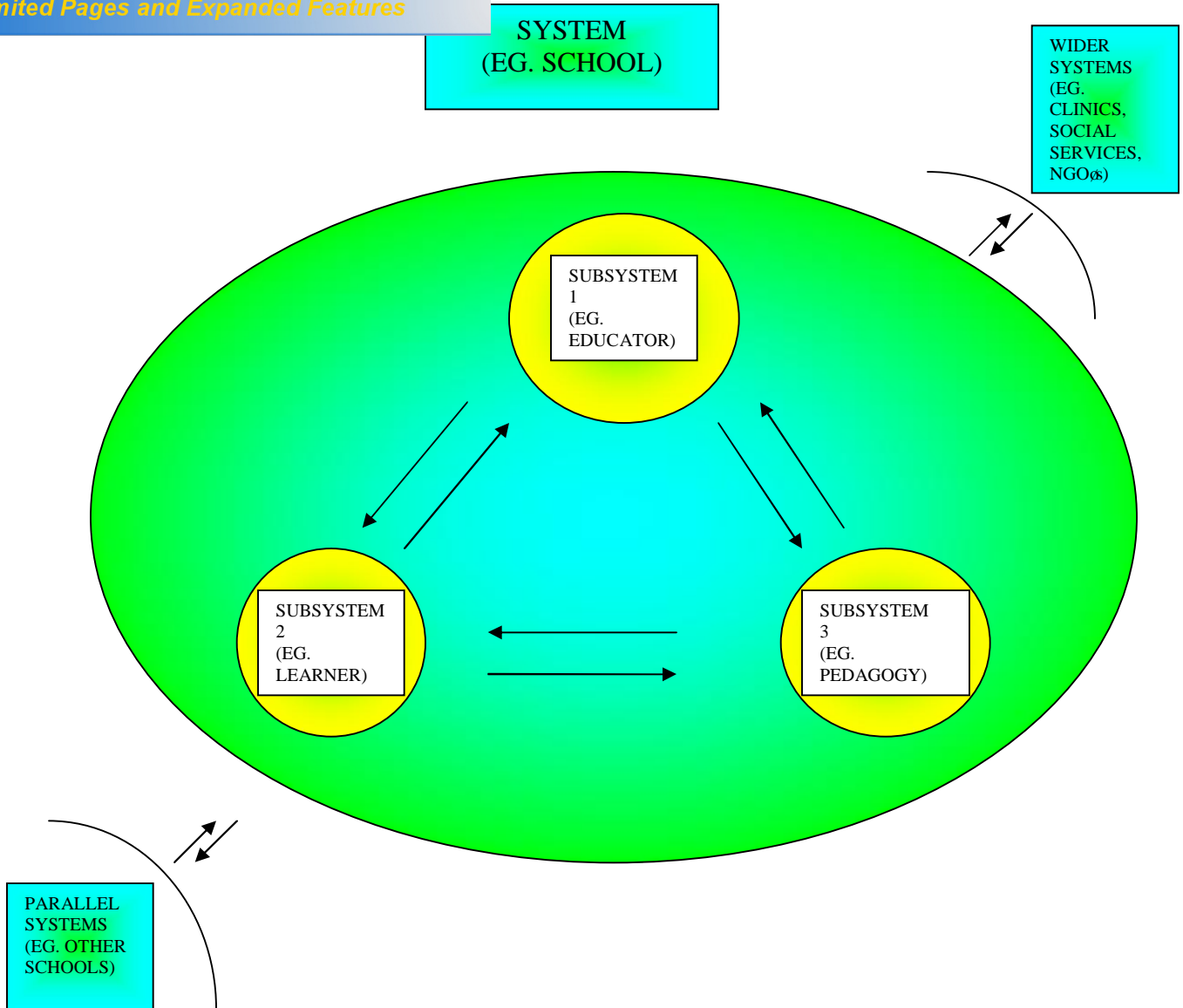


Figure 2

The Interactions of Systems with Subsystems, Parallel Systems and Wider Systems

Adapted from Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997:37).

fundamental principle is that the cause and effect
take place in one direction only, but are seen as
occurring in cycles. Thus, an action in one part of the system cannot be seen as the
cause of an action in another part in a simple one directional way. Actions are seen as
triggering and affecting one another in cyclical, repeated patterns. These repeated
patterns can come to be experienced as unwritten rules that govern the system as a
whole. These rules may bind the members to particular ways of relating to one
another (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 1997).

The ecosystemic perspective is an integration of both ecological and systemic
theoretical insights. Different levels of system in the social context are seen to
influence, and be influenced by one another in a continuous process of
balance, tension and interplay. Systems and subsystems interact with other
systems which may be above, below or next to them. Each level of system has
its own subsystem, which can be seen as functioning in a particular way
(Ibid).

3.2.6 CONSTRUCTIVISM AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

3.2.6.1. CONSTRUCTIVISM

Henson (1996) cited in Tan, Parsons, Hinson & Sardo-Brown (2003) state that
constructivism is a theory of how learning occurs. The constructivist theory
says that learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the
world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences.

Yager and Lutz (1994) and Fosnot (1996) cited in Tan, Parsons, Hinson and
Sardo-Brown (2003) state that the constructivist perspective emphasizes that

When learners actively engage their cognitive structures and experiences. When learners experience something new, they have to reconcile it with their previous ideas and experiences. This will lead to them either changing what they believe, or discarding new information as irrelevant. Thus, learners are active creators of their own knowledge.

When learners construct their own knowledge, they must ask questions, explore and assess what they know. Constructivism taps into and activates the learners innate curiosity about the world and how things work. According to Saunders (1992) cited in Tan, Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2003), learners respond to sensory experiences by building or constructing in their minds, schemas or cognitive structures which constitute the meaning and understanding of their world. Learners apply their knowledge and experiences, learn to hypothesize, test their theories and draw conclusions from their findings.

According to Tan, Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2003), from the constructivist perspective, learners try to make sense of the world by relying on their pre-existing schemas. Learning is aided by social interaction with peers and teachers and via real world experiences.

“Constructivism promotes social and communication skills by creating a classroom environment that emphasizes collaboration and exchange of ideas. Students must learn how to articulate their ideas clearly as well as to collaborate on tasks effectively by sharing in group projects. Students must therefore exchange ideas and so must learn to “negotiate” with others and to evaluate their contributions in a socially acceptable manner. This is essential to success in the real world, since they will always be exposed to a variety of experiences in which they will have to co-operate and navigate among the ideas of others.”

3.2.6.2. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The central concept in constructivism is that knowledge is not fixed, neither is it just given. It is shaped, constructed and re-constructed in different social contexts and at different times. As Bruner (1990) states, learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and past knowledge. The learner selects and transforms information, constructs hypotheses, and makes decisions, relying on a cognitive structure to do so.

õBakhtin, a contemporary of Vygotsky in the early 1900, contributed a different but currently important dimension to understanding the process of social interaction. He argued that knowledge is both constructed and passed on through different ÷voicesøthat people conventionally use within particular social contexts ö (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2002:104).

When learners speak, read, write and interact within a particular discourse, they internalize a particular way of thinking and of seeing the world. Bakhtin (1981) and Wertsch (1991) cited in Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) state that the language of social interaction shapes the way individuals think.

Co-operative learning has developed from the social constructivism perspective, in that co-operative learning and the social constructivism perspective promote social interaction and they set out to achieve academic as well as social outcomes. Furthermore, this theory and pedagogy believe that knowledge is moulded and constructed in different social settings and at different times.

This chapter has focused on the theories, which encapsulate co-operative learning. The various theories reviewed in this chapter provide a contextual framework for this study. It must be noted, that, the theories discussed do not only lend itself to co-operative learning, but form part of a wider and more comprehensive range of pedagogies. However, co-operative learning, is heavily embraced by all the theories discussed in this chapter.

Co-operative learning can improve the effectiveness of a class programme significantly, as well as reduce the amount of time it takes for learners to achieve the learning outcomes. Co-operative learning, is a motivating technique and keeps learners on the task.

As Brookover, Erikson and McEvoy (1997) says,

“The motivational power of the peer group, and a co-operative learning model tends to “turn on” students who might not ordinarily be excited about academics. This makes co-operative learning an important method by which teachers can structure learning so that changes in student attitudes and academic motivation are likely to occur. It is also a potent tool for reducing behavioural problems within the classroom.”

The success of co-operative learning is based on the principle of *öchangeö* which depends, to a large extent, on the need for an education system to keep abreast with the developmental changes in the wider society. Consequently, schools need to relate to changes in their local communities derived from changing multi-cultural contexts.



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successful, it is imperative that educators and school
attitude to change and embrace co-operative learning. It
is incumbent on all personnel, managing pedagogy at schools, to understand the
theories discussed in this chapter. They must share in the task of becoming
knowledgeable on the models of co-operative learning, and implement strategies and
approaches to accommodate the paradigm shift that are effective in order to co-
ordinate and manage co-operative learning at the individual school level.

The next chapter discusses the research design of the study.

APTER FOUR

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is one of many different ways of knowing or understanding. It is different from other ways of knowing, such as insight, divine inspiration and acceptance of authoritative dictates, in that it is a process of systematic inquiry that is designed to collect, analyze, interpret, and use data to understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon or to empower individuals in such contexts (Martains 1996). Thus, research may be defined as a systematic process of collecting and logically analyzing information for some purpose.

Educational research has, to varying degrees, influenced many of our ideas and thoughts about education and the practices and processes we use to achieve our goals and objectives in education. According to Moodley (2001), it is a scientific and disciplined inquiry using quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Educators are constantly trying to discover and understand different and new pedagogical styles in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, thus enabling them to make professional decisions that have an immediate and long term effect on learners, educators, parents and ultimately on our community at large.

This dissertation includes a detailed literature survey and an investigation, incorporating qualitative techniques of research in an attempt to examine intermediate phase educators perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, with the intent of seeking to improve upon educational practices.

METHODOLOGY

According to Leedy (1993), the research methodology to be used in a research study is determined by both the nature of data to be used and the problem to be investigated. This data can either be verbal or numerical. When verbal data is used, the methodology tends to be qualitative and when numerical data is used, the methodology leans towards a quantitative approach. In a broader context, methodology refers to a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate the research problem (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:9).

This study utilizes both the qualitative methodology, as well as the quantitative methodology. It embraces the qualitative methodology to a larger extent, whilst still touching on the quantitative methodology.

4.2.1. QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

According to Martains (1996), qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific programme, practice or setting.

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials ó case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts ó that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individualø lives (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:2).

Qualitative research methodology is defined as an in-depth study of a human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports, detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. The researcher accepts the research setting as it is, and attempts to understand the situation without imposing his preconceived expectations on the study.

Qualitative research is a form of enquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses various methods to interpret, explain and bring meaning to them.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:3) define qualitative research as,

“multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter”. Thus, qualitative researchers, study things “in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.”

According to Pillay (2005) í

“Qualitative research utilizes many sources that contribute to its shape and substance. The multiple perspectives, differing theoretical positions, diverse methods of collecting, interpreting and analyzing data blend together to reveal a deep and rich form of research. It focuses on a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspection, life-story, interview, observation, historical, interactive, and visual texts. The quality of qualitative research is greatly enhanced by the multiple methods of collecting data. These range from the interview to observation, to analysis of artifacts, documents and cultural records, use of visual materials of personal experiences. If only one method is used, the findings may be significantly influenced by the limitations of the technique. This use of multiple



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attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the

The multi-method approach used for this research included the following techniques - observation and interview.

Qualitative research methodology allows events to be captured through the words of the subjects and the intention of this research methodology is to disclose and reveal, not merely to order and predict (Van Maanen 1982:256).

Sociologist John Lofland (cited in Patton 1980:36) claims that there are four elements in collecting qualitative data:

- *The qualitative methodologist must get close enough to the people and the situation being studied to be able to understand the depth and details of what goes on;*
- *The qualitative methodologist must aim at capturing what actually takes place and what people actually say: perceived facts;*
- *Qualitative data consist of a great deal of pure description of people, activities and interactions;*
- *Qualitative data consist of direct quotations from people, both what they speak and what they write down.*

The language of the subjects, in qualitative research methodology, is extremely important. Whatever the participants say during interviews, is imperative, since it allows the researcher to unravel whatever is significant and meaningful to the participants in the study. The researcher's discoveries are presented as the findings of the study. These findings are discussed and conclusions and recommendations are drawn up. This research is largely qualitative, in that it involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its

ore, the methods of collecting data for this research is and the interview, which are synonymous with qualitative research.

4.2.2 QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research is research that produces results that are obtained by statistical procedures or other methods of quantification. This form of research leads to the application of rigorous forms of measurement, such as mathematical, statistical and computer techniques, to analyse and classify data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000).

In this type of research, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is distant, and the research strategy is structured. The nature of data is hard and reliable. There is also confirmation in the relationship between theory and research. Thus quantitative research is structured, logical, measured and wide (Ibid).

4.3 THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sampling procedure comprises of drawing a representative sample which includes all the elements of the universe , which can be finite or infinite. According to Loubser (1996:251), a population or universe is the aggregate of all the elements, whilst the survey population is the aggregate of elements from which the sample is selected. A sample is a subset of the population, however, not all the elements of the population would form the sample (Seekaran 1992:226).

This study is based in the Chatsworth Circuit, of the Durban South Region in Kwa-Zulu Natal, as enumerated in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education and Culture, Education Management Information Services (EMIS)

in Region 2000-2001). This circuit was selected on the
time and financial constraints. The sample consisted of
ten percent of intermediate phase educators within a sub-zone of the
Chatsworth Circuit, in the Durban South Region.

According to Jinabhai (1998:248), the most important requirement of a good sample is that each unit in the target population should have an equal chance of being included in it.

4.3.1 NON-PROBABILITY SAMPLING

Loubser (1996:253) states that in non-probability sampling there is no way of estimating the probability that any element will be included in the sample. Therefore, there is no method of finding out whether the sample is representative of the population.

4.3.2 PROBABILITY SAMPLING

Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:88) state that probability sampling occurs when the probability of including each element of the population can be determined. It is possible to estimate the extent to which the findings based on the sample are likely to differ from what would have been found by studying the whole population, that is, the accuracy of the generalization from the sample to the population.

For the purpose of this study, the probability sampling procedure, using the simple random sampling technique was adopted.

IV SAMPLING

In simple random sampling, each member of the population, under study, has an equal chance of being selected, and the probability of a member of the population being selected is unaffected by the selection of other members of the population ie each selection is entirely independent of the next (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000:100). This method involves a random selection of the participants from the population for the sample.

My sample was drawn from a sub-zone which comprised of eight schools. The eight schools had twenty-five intermediate phase educators. I randomly selected ten percent of the population to be my sample. Therefore three intermediate phase educators, from three different schools within the sub-zone were interviewed for this study. (refer to table 1).

TABLE 1
INTERMEDIATE PHASE EDUCATORS WITHIN THE CROSSMOOR SUB-ZONE IN CHATSWORTH

SCHOOL	NO. OF MALE I.P.E.	NO. OF FEMALE I.P.E.	TOTAL NO. OF I.P.E.
A	1	3	4
B	2	2	4
C	-	3	3
D	1	2	3
E	2	1	3
F	2	1	3
G	2	2	4
H	1	2	3

Key : A ó H - Schools within a sub-zone

I.P.E. ó Intermediate Phase Educators

4.4. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Data collection is a method of obtaining information from a group of respondents by means of direct contact, personal interviews, self administered questionnaires and observations. According to Varkevisser (1991:142) in Pillay (2000), data collection techniques enable researchers to systematically collect information in order to answer questions in a conclusive way.

Qualitative data collection is a method of obtaining information from a group

of observation, interviews, examining of records and some combination of these methods.

The means that were adopted for this study was that of observation and a semi-structured interview.

4.4.1. OBSERVATION

Qualitative observation occurs in naturalistic settings. The researcher's interest is in observing people's behaviours as they naturally occur in terms that appear to be meaningful to the people involved. Observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000:305). According to Patton (1990) in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), the researcher is given the opportunity to look at what is taking place in situ rather than at second hand. This enables the researcher to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interviews, to move beyond perception-based data and to access personal knowledge.

Observations, it is argued, (Morrison 1993:80), enables the researcher to gather data on:

- *the physical setting (eg. the physical environment and its organization);*
- *the human setting (eg. the organization of people, the characteristics and make up of groups or individuals being observed, for instance gender, class);*
- *the interactional setting (eg. the interactions that are taking place, formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal, non-verbal etc.);*

(eg. the resources and their organization, pedagogic styles, curricula and their organization).

Thus, observation as a research technique, is imperative in this study as it creates a holistic setting embraced by precision in that the researcher experiences the setting rather than just hearing via a participant about it.

Morrison (1993:88) states that by,

“being immersed in a particular context over time, not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves but a more holistic view will be gathered of the interrelationships of factors.”

This kind of immersion facilitates the generation of vivid descriptions which lend themselves to accurate explanations and interpretations of events rather than relying on the researcher's own inferences.

After the sample was selected, I spent three days in these three educators classrooms, and observed the type of pedagogy being used. I needed to ascertain whether or not co-operative learning was taking place in these classrooms. The observation was important, because, I needed to know whether to go ahead with the interview, or to workshop co-operative learning prior to the interview.

4.4.1.1 OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

As indicative in the observation schedule, Class A arranged desks and chairs in groups of six. The classroom arrangement was misleading, in that on entry into this class, I was of the opinion that some form of co-operative learning

place in this classroom. However, later observations
co-operative learning was taking place in this class.

The educator taught for the entire day, and the learners listened, and supposedly learnt. There was only chalk and talk. The learners did not interact with each other as no group tasks were assigned to them. The learners were given individual tasks for the entire day, and the only person they interacted with, was the educator. A traditional form of pedagogy was used, whereby an educator views learners as 'empty vessels' which he fills up with knowledge. This took me back to the type of pedagogy that I received in school. Comparatively, nothing was different.

Class B was arranged in a linear fashion. The way I remember a classroom as a learner. There were five rows, and each row comprised of four double desks. I perceived this as a traditional classroom and later went on to find out that it was exactly that.

Here too, the educator taught and did not facilitate any activity. The educators taught and the learners learnt. Individual tasks were assigned and the most form of interaction was between learner and educator. The only time learners interacted with each other, was when they did paired reading, whereby one corrected the others mistake and so on.

Not a glimmer of co-operative learning was taking place in this classroom. Everything about this classroom was traditional – from the arrangement of the desks and chairs, to the pedagogy, to the interaction, to the tasks assigned.

Class C had a cluster arrangement of desks and chairs. The cluster comprised of three double desks and six chairs. There were eight such clusters. This class was no different from the other two classes, in that it was a traditional classroom. The chalk and talk method was used. The teacher taught for the

ers copied notes and were assigned individual tasks.
between learners. The only interaction that took
place was between the educator and learner.

From the observation schedule, it was clear, that co-operative learning was non-existent in these classrooms. At the end of each day, I had a brief discussion with the educator, to confirm whether they use co-operative learning in the classroom. All three educators had not used co-operative learning. Furthermore, they were not knowledgeable on this type of pedagogy.

4.4.2 WORKSHOP ON CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

I conducted a two-day workshop, on co-operative learning for the three educators. The workshop was conducted in the Governmental Studies Faculty Boardroom at the Durban University of Technology, and not in the respective schools due to safety, time-constraints and availability of the premises.

Co-operative learning was discussed under the following topics; namely definition, goals, elements, models, planning, implementation, advantages, disadvantages, limitations and criticisms.

A handout on all aspects about co-operative learning that were discussed, was given to each educator.

4.4.3. INTERVIEW

An interview involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals.

Cohen & Manion, 1994:252-253) defines interviews

“... in an interpersonal encounter, people are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, their feelings and values, than they would in a less human situation. At least for some purposes, it is necessary to generate a kind of conversation in which the “respondent” feels at ease. In other words, the distinctively human element in the interview is necessary to its “validity”.

According to Bogdan & Biklen (1992),

“An interview is a purposeful conversation between two people that is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret their world.”

Sharma (1995:137) states that when compared to mail surveys or telephone interviews, the personal interview enjoys advantages as listed below:

- *It is most accurate;*
- *It generates the most amount of data;*
- *It obtains the highest response rate;*

- *It is the most flexible method;*
- *It provides maximum control over sample respondents;*
- *There is an optimal return rate.*

Thus, the interview, as one of the research techniques was used to ascertain the intermediate phase educators perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning, as this technique will most accurately reflect this type of information.

educators used co-operative learning in their classrooms for
interviewed the three educators on an individual
basis. The interview revealed, intermediate phase educators' perceptions of co-
operative learning and the extent to which co-operative learning enhances
learning.

This flexible research technique will allow me to probe further into the
participants' responses, as well as clear up any misinterpretations on the part of
the interviewer, as well as the interviewee. Probing will generate more data
which will enhance clarity on the issue. Furthermore, I chose this research
technique, as it allows for additive responses in the form of facial expressions,
gestures, tone and voice modulation, all of which contribute largely to accuracy.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This study relied briefly on the quantitative method, and to a larger extent, on
the qualitative method for the analysis of its data.

This chapter has been devoted to a discussion of the research methodology.
The procedure and techniques that will be utilized in the study are discussed.

The next chapter encapsulates the findings, analysis and significance of the
study.

5. FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Educational reform envisages change in curriculum, as well as change in pedagogy. I believe that co-operative learning can be of paramount significance to educational reform, as it opens its doors to multicultural education and embraces diversity in totality.

The purpose of this study was to examine intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning.

The results are stated in this chapter, with the view to addressing the following critical questions of the study.

- *Are intermediate phase educators knowledgeable on co-operative learning?*
- *What are intermediate phase educators' perceptions of co-operative learning?*
- *To what extent does co-operative learning enhance learning?*

CHALLENGES IMPACTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

There are various challenges impacting on the implementation of co-operative learning in schools. The challenges are as follows:

- *Large number of learners per class.*
- *Lack of space in classrooms.*
- *Lack of resources, including furniture and technology.*
- *Mindset of management and educators.*

5.3 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.3.1 EDUCATOR INTERVIEW

In response to the critical question:

What are intermediate phase educators' perceptions and knowledge of co-operative learning? - The following findings are presented.

Question one, two, three and four, required responses on teaching experience, specialist field, the grades and learning areas been currently taught. The table indicates the response of educators to these questions.

TABLE 2
PROFILE OF SAMPLE

EDUCATOR	TEACHING EXP.	SPECIALIST FIELD	GR.	LEARNING AREA
A	20yrs.	MLMMS / NS	5	MLMMS / NS
B	14 yrs.	ENGLISH / SS	4	ENGLISH / SS / AC / EMS
C	15yrs.	ENGLISH / AFRIKAANS	6	AFRIKAANS / TECH / AC / ENGLISH

Questions five to eleven, required responses on the following:

- *Is your school multicultural?*
- *Does your school have multilingual learners?*
- *Are there learners with remedial education needs?*
- *Does the school have remedial education classes?*
- *Are there LSEN Learners?*
- *Does the school have LSEN Classes?*
- *Does your school use co-operative learning?*

educators to these questions.

TABLE 3
SCHOOL BACKGROUND SAMPLE

QUESTIONS	EDUCATORS		
	A	B	C
5. Is you school multicultural ?	Y	Y	Y
6. Does your school have multilingual learners ?	Y	Y	Y
7. Are there learners with remedial education needs ?	Y	Y	Y
8. Does the school have remedial education classes ?	N	N	N
9. Are there LSEN Learners ?	Y	Y	Y
10. Does the school have LSEN Classes ?	N	N	N
11. Does your school use Co-operative Learning ?	N	N	N

KEY: Y-YES / N ó NO

Numbers twelve to twenty seven had statements which indicate the benefits of co-operative learning. Educators had to indicate whether they agree with the statements, whether they are not sure, or whether they disagree with the statement. Thereafter, they could elaborate on why they agreed with the statement, or why they were not sure, or why they disagreed with the statement.

ng is beneficial to high, average and low

The majority of the respondents perceived co-operative learning as a pedagogy that benefits high, average and low achieving learners. They felt that co-operative learning caters for learners with different ability levels. According to Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998), *“Multiple factors contribute to the popularity of co-operative learning, starting with its potential for accommodating individual differences in the classroom.”* Johnson and Johnson (1986), Slavin (1990), Stevens and Slavin (1995) cited in Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998) state that, *“In co-operative learning, individual differences are exploited to promote learning.”*

13. *“Co-operative learning assists in the achievement of the RNCS learning outcomes”.*

All respondents were of the opinion that co-operative learning will assist in the achievement of Revised National Curriculum Statement Outcomes. They felt that this pedagogy advances learning to a great extent because it utilizes a wide range of models, is learner-centred and adopts an active process to learning. According to Killen (2000), Co-operative learning and RNCS move from traditional learning to authentic learning, which is underpinned by co-operation, knowledge construction, solving of problems collectively in groups and learning beyond school.

14. *“Co-operative learning is an effective pedagogical tool for having*

ange of academic outcomes, including enhance d

All respondents indicated that through co-operative learning, learners can achieve a range of academic outcomes. Antil, Jenkins, Wayne and Vadasy (1998) noted that, *“The appeal of co-operative learning is also enhanced by the possibilities it offers for achieving multiple educational goals.”*

According to Glass and Putnam (1995), *“They state that an interactive mode of learning such as that in a co-operative classroom minimizes surface learning and maximizes deep learning.”* The respondents felt that this pedagogy is flexible and invites lessons to be varied and interesting, which in turn motivates the learner to learn, resulting in the achievement of learning outcomes. The respondents also mentioned that motivation is a catalytic force that empowers learning. Gilbert, Macmillan and Leitz (1986) cited in Killen 2000 state that, *“The interactions that occur during co-operative learning help to motivate learners and stimulate their thinking.”* According to Henley (2004), *“By working co-operatively as a team, students get a flavour of real world application, through the application of social skills, higher level thinking skills, and communication skills.”*

15. *“Co-operative learning assists learners to achieve a range of social outcomes, including the improvement of ones’ self-esteem ”.*

The majority of the respondents perceive co-operative learning as a pedagogical device that helps learners to achieve social outcomes. Slavin (1991) cited in Whicker, Bol and Nunnery (1997) stated that, *“One benefit is the increase in social skills of students who participate in group work;”* The respondents felt that because co-operative learning adopts an interactive approach to learning whereby discussions are the keystone, it develops the

believed that when a learner is listened to, he feels that and he feels a sense of worth, thus improving his self-esteem. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), *“Learners will learn more effective social skills when co-operative learning is used.”*

16. *“ Co-operative learning assist learners in fostering positive interpersonal relationships with other learners ”.*

The majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the use of co-operative learning assist learners in fostering interpersonal relationships with fellow learners. They believed that this was one of the social outcomes that can be achieved via co-operative learning. They indicated that whilst learners co-operate with each other in a group, they learn about each other and develop a bond which could lead to friendship. They felt that, because learners help each other learn and become more reliant on each other than the educator, a sense of trust develops. This trust and communication in co-operative learning, helps to build positive interpersonal relationships with fellow learners. Johnson and Johnson (1994) state that, *“Students are more effective personally as a result of working co-operatively than when they work alone, competitively or individualistically. Students with co-operative experiences are more able to take the perspective of others, are more positive about taking part in controversy, have better developed interaction skills, and have a more positive expectation about working with others than students from competitive or individualistic settings”.*

17. *“ Co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school ”.*

According to most of the respondents, co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school. The respondents indicated that co-operative

in developing friendships, and this makes them feel it is an institution where they have friends. Learners' performances are enhanced using co-operative learning and this will create and build a positive attitude towards school. Augustine (1990), Good, Reys, Grouws and Mulryan (1990), Slavin (1990) and Wood (1987) cited in Whicker, Bol and Nunnery (1997), stated that, *“Co-operative learning has also been linked to increases in self-esteem, attendance, time on task, enjoyment of school and classes, and motivation to learn, as well as a decrease in dependence on the teacher.”*

18. *“ This pedagogical style stimulates thinking and creativity ”.*

All the respondents agreed that co-operative learning stimulates thinking, whilst majority of the respondents agreed that co-operative learning stimulates creativity as well. In co-operative learning, every learner is forced to think and contribute towards the task. Thus, this pedagogy allows learners to build on one another's ideas and it is this that acts as a catalyst for creativity. Co-operative learning demands lots of interaction which leads to more creativity. According to Baloch (1994) cited in Killen (2000), *“ Co-operative learning can be effective in developing learners' creativity and the ability to work co-operatively – two workplace qualities that are highly regarded by employers ”.*

19. *“ Co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to others points of view, share ideas and work as a team ”.*

All respondents agreed with the above statement. They said that every model of co-operative learning demands co-operation, whereby learners have to share ideas, listen to others' points of view and work as a team. When learners

a team, learning is greatly enhanced. According to (1994), *“The ability of all students to learn to work co-operatively with others is the keystone to building and maintaining stable marriages, families, careers and friendships”*.

20. *“Co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learners’ strengths and limitations and accept these differences”*.

According to all respondents, co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learners strengths and limitations and accept these differences. Learners learn to respect each other because every learner works towards a common goal and helps each other learn. They also accept each other’s strengths and limitations because they work hard towards group rewards. According to Augustine, Gruber and Hanson (1990) cited in Whicker, Bol and Nunnery (1997), *“By working together, students learn to be tactful, to manage conflicts effectively, and to respect the opinions of others.”* The respondents also mentioned that learners have no choice, but to respect and accept each other’s strengths and limitations, because they are a team, and if they disrespect each other conflict and discord will arise and this will impact negatively on completion of the task on hand.

21. *“This pedagogy allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn from other learners”*.

All respondents perceive co-operative learning as a teaching methodology that allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn from other learners. They felt that in co-operative learning, the educator is

l guides the entire process. The learner is guided on information and on how to extract the information, but the information will not be handed to him. He, together with his friends must extract the relevant information. Thus, he becomes less reliant on the educator and more reliant on himself, friends and other sources. Killen (2000) states that, *“Co-operative learning teaches learners to be less reliant on the teacher and more reliant on their own ability to think, to seek information from other sources and learn from other learners”*. Peer tutoring enhances learning to a great extent.

22. *“Co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning and for the learning of their team mates”*.

All respondents believe that co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning and for the learning of their team mates. All respondents mentioned that co-operative learning requires learners to research a topic or extract pertinent information from texts, manuals, newspapers, journals, etc. In doing so, the learner is taking responsibility for his own learning, as well as the learning of his team mates. It is imperative to note that everyone's contribution benefits the entire group. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), *Co-operative efforts result in participants striving for mutual benefit so that all group members gain from each others' efforts, recognizing that all group members share a common fate, knowing that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's colleagues, and feeling proud and jointly celebrating when a group member is recognized for achievement”*.

23. *“This pedagogy fosters positive interdependence among learners, and*

...racial and cross-cultural friendships ”.

All the respondents agreed with this statement. They felt that because learners have to learn as a team, positive interdependence among learners is fostered. They also felt that it is this co-operation and interaction that promotes crossó racial and crossó cultural friendships. Team success depended on everyone in the group learning. This tutoring and helping each other learn, creates a bond of trust which promotes friendships between learners of different cultures and races. As Kagan and Slavin (cited in Coelho 1998:140) notes, *“Many studies have revealed that intergroup relations improve dramatically after co-operative learning experiences in heterogenous groups, whatever the content of those learning experiences, and that the improvement in race relations has long term effects.”* Augustine (1990), Madden and Slavin (1993), Slavin (1990), Stevens and Slavin (1990) cited in Whicker, Bol and Nunnery (1997) stated that, *“Perhaps one of the moat important benefits of co-operative learning has been more positive intergroup relations, improved race relations, as well as an increased acceptance of mainstreamed children.”*

24. *“ Co-operative learning will help remedial education le arners in mainstream classes, bridge the gaps in their learning ”.*

The majority of the respondents indicated that this statement does not hold true for them. They indicated that some learners will not feel comfortable with this pedagogy and that it may have negative repercussions on them.

Furthermore they felt that that remedial education is a specialist field and irrespective of whatever methodology is used, these learners will only bridge the gaps in their learning if they placed in a remedial class with a remedial education specialist. *Shachar and Shmuelewitz (1997:65) (cited in Killen 2000:106) found that, “Teachers who employed co-operative learning in their*

... significantly greater degree of efficacy in promoting the learning of special learners compared with teachers who ... did not employ co-operative learning in their classrooms at all. ”

25. “ *Co-operative learning will assist learners with special education needs cope in mainstream classes* ”.

Although all respondents indicated that co-operative learning will not assist learners with special education needs cope in mainstream classes, the majority of the respondents felt that co-operative learning will assist them in the education process.

26. “ *Co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate phase classrooms* ”.

All respondents perceived co-operative learning as a pedagogy that will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate phase classrooms. They indicated that co-operative learning develops the whole child. They also mentioned that research on co-operative learning indicates that this pedagogy has made a great impact on learners socially, as well as academically. Co-operative learning prepares a learner for the work force. It was mentioned that in the work force everyone works as a team, so why not learn as a team. According to Glass and Putnam (1989), *“In co-operative learning more students learn and remember material for longer periods of time, approach learning at higher cognitive levels, feel positive about themselves and the subject matter, and become more skilful in interacting with one another.”*

27. “ *Educators need to be trained in co-operative learning to be*

All respondents agreed that in order for educators to be competent in co-operative learning, they need to be trained. They felt that in order to reap the rewards of this approach, educators must be trained. They also mentioned that because this type of pedagogy is vast, having so many different types of models and having so much reading material to digest, there is a need for educators to be trained in this type of pedagogy.

28. *“Would you like to share any other information about co-operative learning?”*

All respondents felt very positively about cooperative learning. They indicated that co-operative learning is an excellent approach which has been tried and tested, and the write ups are phenomenal. Furthermore, they felt that cooperative learning will help learners to achieve the outcomes in RNCS. They also said that although, this is an excellent approach, it does not make it possible for the inclusion of remedial education learners, as well as LSEN. They felt that co-operative learning will assist them in their own remedial education class and LSEN Class. The respondents indicated that this approach will definitely change the face of the South-African Intermediate Class for the better.

Bruner (1986) cited in Glass and Putnam (1995) noted that, *“Co-operative learning classroom interactions exemplify constructivist epistemology.”* Dana and Floyd (1993) cited in Glass and Putnam (1995) postulates, *“Constructivists consider learning an interpretative process in which individuals engage in unique constructions of knowledge as they make sense of their experience.”*

The observation schedule revealed that co-operative learning was not taking place in the intermediate phase classrooms. Despite the paradigm shift to Outcomes Based Education, educators are still using the traditional method of pedagogy - õchalk and talkö.

My discussion with educators, at the end of the observation day, confirmed that co-operative learning was not been used in schools. The educators also revealed that they were not exposed to this pedagogy in teacher training colleges and have not read or heard about this pedagogy.

The interview revealed that all of these intermediate phase educators agreed that co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate phase classrooms. It can be said that they advocate co-operative learning for the intermediate phase, because of its magnitude of benefits.

It is clear, from the educators responses in the interview, that generally intermediate phase educators are enthusiastic about co-operative learning, as a teaching strategy, in that the whole school benefits.

It was also evident that educators are willing to work together in a collaborative effort, with cluster schools to empower themselves on co-operative learning and promote it. They further acknowledged, that co-operative learning emphasizes the responsibility of professional growth of individuals in the education fraternity.

Educators are in constant search for pedagogy that enhances academic and social development. Co-operative learning, is one of the widest researched



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arch that advocates the use of this dynamic pedagogy

The next chapter reveals the conclusion and recommendations emanating from the study.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Learners generally do not work co-operatively together in school, but they are expected to do so when they complete school and enter the work force. Thus, the social structure within schools, is out of synchrony with the social skill needs of our ever-changing world.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Educator A agreed with 94 % of the statements. Educator B agreed with 88 % of the statements and Educator C agreed with 63 % of the statements. The percentage of agreement, with these statements is very high. Therefore, it can be deduced that intermediate phase educators perceive co-operative learning in a positive light.

Educators believe that co-operative learning has a positive impact on academic, as well as social development, in that it assists learners to achieve a range of academic and social outcomes. These educators also believe that co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to others' views, share ideas and most importantly, work as a team. They also agreed that co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learners strengths and limitations and accept these differences. These intermediate phase educators also believe that co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning, and for the learning of their

...e that co-operative learning makes them less
...tor and more dependant on their own ability to get
information from the various sources. They also believe that co-operative
learning fosters positive interdependence among
learners and it can promote cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Leaders in the field of co-operative learning highly recommend the use of co-operative learning because it promotes academic achievement and fosters good interpersonal relationship skills.

Augustine, Gruber and Hanson (1989) stated that co-operative learning, promotes higher level thinking skills, whilst it allows students to develop better social skills. Most importantly, it places the responsibility for student learning where it should be ó the learner.

In this section, recommendations that have become imminent as a result of crystallizing the findings of research, as well as a review of the literature are presented.

These recommendations are categorized into four subsections, namely:

- *School Conferences*
- *Educators' Training (In-service training)*
- *Action Research*
- *Funding for Conferences / Workshops / Action Research*
- *Co-operative Learning in Teacher Training Institutions*

A conference is basically a meeting of people that confer about a particular topic. Furthermore, an academic conference could be seen as a formal function, whereby researchers present their results of their research.

Many educators consider the old paradigm of teaching as the only alternative. Teaching, while requiring learners to be passive, silent, isolated and in competition with each other, seems the only way to teach. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994:262) the tradition of the old paradigm is carried forward by sheer momentum, while almost everyone persists in the hollow pretense that all is well.

Teaching must change. Educators must make the paradigm shift by changing their pedagogical style. The old paradigm of teaching must be replaced by a new paradigm based on theory and research that have clear applications to instruction. Thus, the aim of school conferences should be to expose research and theory of co-operative learning and to empower educators to make a paradigm shift in pedagogy.

At these conferences, educators should be made to think of teaching in terms of the following principles:

- *Knowledge is constructed, discovered, transformed and extended by learners.*
- *Learners actively construct their own knowledge.*
- *Educator's efforts are aimed at developing learner's competencies and talents.*
- *Education is a personal transaction among learners and between the educators and learners as they work together.*

tioned, can only take place within a co-operative

- *Teaching is assumed to be a complex application of theory and research that requires considerable teacher training and continuous refinement of skills and procedures.*

Johnson and Johnson (1994:263) states í

“The primary means of achieving the new paradigm of teaching is to use co-operative learning. Co-operative learning provides the means of operationalizing the new paradigm of teaching and provides the context within which the development of student talent is encouraged. Carefully structured co-operative learning ensures that students are cognitively, physically, emotionally and psychologically actively involved in constructing their own knowledge and is an important step in changing the passive and impersonal character of many classrooms.”

The conferences should encourage and inspire educators to make the shift from the traditional pedagogy to co-operative learning. Furthermore, the dynamics of the conference should motivate educators to use co-operative learning in their classrooms. It should instill within them, a desire to use co-operative learning. These conferences should be dynamic, powerful and highly motivational. Educators should feel empowered to make the change to co-operative learning, to such a great extent, that there must be this extreme desire to want to get back into the classroom and õstep on itö.

A workshop can be defined as, a concise, intensive course or an educational seminar, whereby there is interaction and an exchange of information among a small number of participants.

Several workshops should be held to train educators on the different models of co-operative learning. Workshops could be conducted with cluster schools at the various teacher centres. This will ensure small numbers and will facilitate the use of hands on work.

The theoretical aspects of the different models should take the minimum amount of time. The majority of the time, at these workshops, should be devoted to hands on work of the different models of co-operative learning. The educator becomes the learner and the facilitator takes on the role of the educator. This approach will be more practical and will greatly assist educators in coming to grips with these new models of co-operative learning.

These workshops should also incorporate many success stories of co-operative learning. Support material, in the form of educator booklets, should be given to the educators. These booklets should have the theory of co-operative learning ie different models of co-operative learning. They should also consist of how to use these models and should have many practical examples. All in all, it should contain material on how to transform the traditional classroom into a co-operative learning classroom. This booklet should form part of the educator's reference. Other support reference material could be added to the booklet ie articles, books, journals, etc.

Educators must pause from time to time, and question their pedagogical approaches, in order to improve upon the culture of teaching and learning. A way forward will be, to embark upon action research projects pertaining to the different pedagogical styles and their success thereof. To support these projects, pedagogical forums could be created and used as a platform for discussion.

According to Moodley (2001) í

“Action Research allows educators to unpack the complexity of teaching and learning, and through discussions to develop insights into their own practice, which might influence future actions. Action Research may also concern wider issues, which cut across subject disciplines or issues involving the whole school. In this way the research is extended to more educators who may work as research teams.”

Educators could research aspects of their pedagogy and could present a paper of their findings of their work at education forums, or national education conferences. This will encourage more educators to embark upon Action Research Projects, which will inevitably lead to networking and sharing knowledge of the different pedagogical styles, which will ultimately result in the improvement of the quality of education.

Some educators may enjoy and find a sense of fulfillment in research, and may want to document their research findings, in the form of an article, to be published by an educational journal or an educational magazine. This will extend pedagogical knowledge to a wider community.

It is recommended that the South-African Education Department acknowledges the significance of co-operative learning in the South-African Classroom, and promotes this vibrant pedagogical style, by empowering its educators to transform the traditional classroom into a co-operative learning classroom.

The South-African Education Department, needs to equip educators with the tools of co-operative learning by having a series of school conferences, school forums and school workshops. Furthermore, it should encourage educators to embark upon action research by giving financial assistance.

Thus, the South-African Education Department should budget for these conferences, forums, workshops and action research projects. The money allocated for co-operative learning projects should be primarily used for upgrading the professional pedagogy and status of educators.

Due to budgetary constraints in education, the private sector and international funding schemes must be invited to assist with these co-operative learning projects. It will also be beneficial to establish collaborative schemes or forge links with other countries to secure funding for developmental programmes, like co-operative learning.

All in all, The South-African Education Department should devise a strategy to initiate and fund co-operative learning projects for at least two years in the country.

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING IN TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

All tertiary teacher training institutions should incorporate co-operative learning into their curriculum. Priority should be given to co-operative learning as a pedagogical style as opposed to the traditional pedagogical styles.

These institutions need to drive co-operative learning, so that they produce educators, competent in the field of co-operative learning. Student teaching practices should focus on co-operative learning. In this way trainee teachers will be given an opportunity to work *õhands onö* with co-operative learning models. This will empower them and give them greater expertise in the field, as the theoretical, as well as the practical aspects of co-operative learning are being catered for.

6.3.6 IN-SERVICE TRAINING IN TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

All teacher training institutions, together with the department of education, should devise a co-operative learning curriculum for teachers, on a full time basis, as well as on a part time basis. The department of education should fund this project and be committed to it. They should allocate structured time for the in-service training and make it compulsory for all teachers that have not had training in co-operative learning.

The in-service training curriculum of co-operative learning should draw parallels between the traditional method of pedagogy and co-operative learning. The various models of co-operative learning must be taught and

the opportunity to teach peers using the various
be on the practical aspect of co-operative learning.

6.4. CONCLUSION

Many research studies have established, that having learners work together co-operatively, is a powerful way for them to learn, and it has positive effects on the classroom atmosphere. This has been supported by educators from pre-school level through to high school level.

Co-operative learning groups in classrooms go beyond achievement, acceptance of differences, and positive attitudes. According to Johnson & Johnson, "The ability of all students to learn to work co-operatively with others is the keystone to building and maintaining stable marriages, families, careers and friendships". Being taught at school and having been able to perform technical skills such as speaking, listening, reading writing, computing and problem-solving are valuable. However, these very significant technical skills, are of little use, if a person cannot apply those skills in co-operative interaction with other people, in the family, work and community.

Thus, it is imperative to teach these technical skills within a co-operative framework, such as they will meet as members of society. Much time should be spent on learning these technical skills in co-operative relationships with their peers.

School practice needs to keep abreast with current research. Research suggests that a healthy portion of pedagogy should be co-operative.



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prepares a child,
not just for today,
not just for tomorrow.
Co-operative Learning,
prepares him for Life !*



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*“No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.”*

John Donne (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).

*“A human being is a part of the whole,
Called by us “Universe,”
A part limited in time and space.
He experiences himself,
His thoughts and feelings
As something separated from the rest –
A kind of optical delusion of consciousness.
This delusion is a kind of prison for us,
Restricting us to our personal desires
And to affection for a few persons nearest to us.
Our task must be to free ourselves
From this prison
By widening our circle of compassion
To embrace all living creatures
And the whole nature in its beauty.”*

Albert Einstein (cited in Johnson & Johnson 1994).



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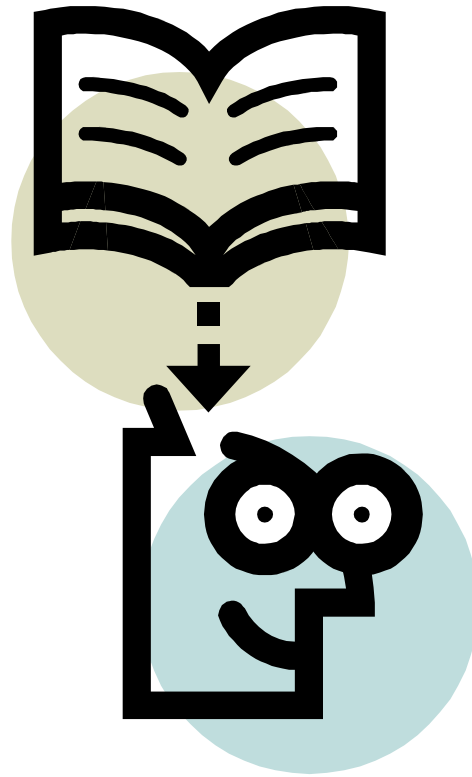
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NDICES



VIEW STATISTICS

NO.	EDUCATOR A	EDUCATOR B	EDUCATOR C
12.	A	A	NS
13.	A	A	A
14.	A	A	A
15.	A	A	NS
16.	A	A	NS
17.	A	A	NS
18.	A	A	A
19.	A	A	A
20.	A	A	A
21.	A	A	A
22.	A	A	A
23.	A	A	A
24.	DA	DA	DA
25.	DA	DA	DA
26.	A	A	A
27.	A	A	A

KEY: A ó Agree
 NS ó Not Sure
 DA ó Disagree

is beneficial to high, average and low achieving learners”.

With regards to this phrase, educator A and B agreed, but educator C was not sure as to whether co-operative learning is beneficial to all learners of varying abilities ie high, average and low achieving learners. She agreed that co-operative learning will benefit the high and average achieving learners, but was very sceptical as to whether it will benefit the low achieving learners. Educator C felt that these low achieving learners may òget lost in betweenö, meaning that these learners may become intimidated within a group, and will just be quiet and go with the flow, whether information is understood or not.

13. *“Co-operative learning assists in the achievement of the RNCS learning outcomes”.*

All educators were of the opinion that co-operative learning will assist in the achievement of Revised National Curriculum Statement Outcomes. Educator A, mentioned that the different models of co-operative learning, will òcreate roomö for educators to assist learners in achieving the different learning outcomes. Educator B said that the learning outcomes for the languages are, listening, speaking reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning and language structure and use. She went on to say that all these learning outcomes can be well achieved, as co-operative learning is learner-centred, and that the educator can build on the learnersøknowledge and experience. Educator C said that co-operative learning lends itself to more active learning, whereby learners are guided to find information by themselves, and it is this that helps them greatly to achieve the learning outcomes.

14. *“Co-operative learning is an effective pedagogical tool for having learners achieve a range of academic outcomes, including enhanced achievement ”.*

h this statement. Educator A said that co-operative
ns to be so varied and interesting, that this motivates
the learner to learn. Educator B said that because it is learner-centred, it
definitely helps the learners to achieve a range of academic outcomes.
Educator C mentioned that co-operative learning is active learning and it is
this active learning that makes it so remarkable for learners to achieve a range
of academic outcomes. She went on to say í
õSomeone once said, When I see, I forget,
When I read, I remember,
When I do, I understand !

15. *“ Co-operative learning assists learners to achieve a range of social outcomes,
including the improvement of ones’ self-esteem ”.*

Educator A and Educator B agreed with this statement. Educator A felt that,
because co-operative learning is greatly an interactive approach to learning, it
assists to develop the learner socially. Educator B mentioned that in co-
operative learning, a great deal of discussion takes place, whereby learners are
have to listen, as well as participate in discussions. This helps them to achieve
a range of social outcomes through constant interaction with peers in the
group. This constant interaction builds ones self-esteem, as one feels a sense
of worth, if one is listened to and their input is important. Educator C was not
sure about this statement. She felt that some learners may feel intimidated
being grouped into smaller groups because now there will be more pressure on
them to share their thoughts and ideas. She said that some learners may
become withdrawn, whilst those that are already withdrawn may begin to
develop negative attitudes towards school.

16. *“ Co-operative learning assist learners in fostering positive interpersonal
relationships with other learners ”.*

Educator B agreed with this, but Educator C was not sure. Educator C felt that this was one of the social outcomes that can be achieved via co-operative learning. She said that whilst learners co-operate with each other in a group, they learn about each other and develop a bond which could lead to friendship. Educator B felt that, because learners help each other learn and become more reliant on each other than the educator, a sense of trust develops. She said that, this trust and communication in co-operative learning, helps to build positive interpersonal relationships with fellow learners. Educator C felt that as much as this statement held true for many, there will be a few learners that this statement will not hold true for. She said that the quiet learner may not respond too well in a group and he may feel left out. Others in the group may try too hard to get him to respond. This may damage the relationship as he might think that they are being hard on him and too judgemental.

17. *“ Co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school ”.*

Educator A and Educator B agreed that co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school. Educator C was not sure. Educator A said that co-operative learning assists learners in developing friendships, and therefore learners will like school because he or she has friends there. She also said that, because co-operative learning is learner- centred, it assists the learner to perform better in school, and he will automatically have positive attitudes towards school. Educator B said that through co-operative learning, the learner will achieve better socially and academically and therefore he will feel good about himself and school. Furthermore, she said that the reward system will boost his self esteem when his group receives it and he will look forward towards going to school. Educator C felt that this does hold true for many learners, but not all. She said that if a learner felt uncomfortable with co-operative learning, he will not give off his best and it will make him have negative feelings towards school.

es thinking and creativity ”.

All educators agreed that co-operative learning stimulates thinking. Educator A and Educator C agreed that co-operative learning stimulates creativity, whilst Educator B was not sure. Educator A said that, because of group work, every learner is forced to think and contribute towards the task. She said that co-operative learning allows learners to build on one another's ideas and it is this that acts as a catalyst for creativity. Educator B agreed with the first part of the statement, but was not sure about the second part, because, she felt that creativity may be stimulated for some learners, whereas creativity may be stifled with others, as members in the group could be dominating and may steam roll their ideas and implement them. Educator C agreed with this statement and said that, because learners are working in groups, it is incumbent on them to do their bit by thinking and contributing to the task on hand. She said that, because there is so much of interaction, creativity is heightened.

19. *“ Co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to others points of view, share ideas and work as a team ”.*

All educators agreed with this statement. Educator A said that every model of co-operative learning demands co-operation, whereby learners have to share ideas, listen to other's points of view and work as a team. Educator B said that co-operation is of paramount importance in co-operative learning. She went on to say that every co-operative learning task lends itself to co-operation, whereby learners help each other learn and work as a team. Educator C said that, this whole concept of co-operative learning is covered by a wider umbrella of co-operation. She went on to say that, for co-operation to prevail, one has to listen to each other's ideas and work as a team.

helps learners to respect fellow learners' strengths and these differences ”.

All educators agreed with this statement. Educator A said that because every learner works towards a common goal and helps each other learn, they learn to respect each other. Because they work hard towards group rewards, they accept each other's strengths and limitations. Educator B said, because the end product is one group task etc., they work well together and respect and accept each other's strengths and limitations. Educator C said that the learners have no choice, but to respect and accept each other's strengths and limitations, because they are a team, or else conflict and discord will arise and this will impact negatively on completion of the task on hand.

21. *“ This pedagogy allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn from other learners ”.*

All educators agreed with this statement. All educators felt that in co-operative learning, the educator is merely the facilitator and guides the entire process. The learner is guided on where to look for information and on how to extract the information, but the information will not be handed to him. He, together with his friends must extract the relevant information. Thus, he becomes less reliant on the educator and more reliant on himself, friends and other sources.

22. *“ Co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning and for the learning of their team mates ”.*

All educators agreed with this statement. All educators mentioned that co-operative learning requires learners to research a topic or extract pertinent information from texts, manuals, newspapers, journals, etc. In doing so, the

ability for his own learning, as well as the learning of
Educator C put it very aptly when she said,

“ Everyone’s contribution benefits the entire group ”.

23. “ *This pedagogy fosters positive interdependence among learners, and it can promote cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships* ”.

All educators agreed with this statement. Educator A felt that because learners have to learn as a team, positive interdependence among learners is fostered. She also felt that it is this co-operation and interaction that promotes cross racial and cross cultural friendships. Educator B and Educator C said that team success depended on everyone in the group learning. This tutoring and helping each other learn, creates a bond of trust which promotes friendships between learners of different cultures and races.

24. “ *Co-operative learning will help remedial education learners in mainstream classes, bridge the gaps in their learning* ”.

Educator A said that co-operative learning will not bridge the gaps in remedial education learners, but it will narrow these gaps. Educator B said that although this may hold true for some learners, it, on the other hand may have negative repercussions, for some that are not comfortable with this pedagogy. Educator C disagreed with this statement and went on to say that remedial education learners need specialist remedial education educators to assist them bridge the gaps in their learning, irrespective of whatever pedagogy is used.

25. “ *Co-operative learning will assist learners with special education needs cope in mainstream classes* ”.

with this statement. Educator A and Educator C learning will assist LSEN Learners in learning, but will not be able to make them cope in mainstream classes. Educator B said that no pedagogy will assist LSEN Learners cope in mainstream classes.

26. *“ Co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate phase classrooms ”.*

All educators agreed with this statement. Educator A said that co-operative learning develops the whole child. Educator B said that research on co-operative learning indicates that this pedagogy has made a great impact on learners socially, as well as academically. Educator C said that co-operative work prepares a learner for the workforce. It was mentioned that in the workforce, everyone works as a team, so why not learn as a team.

27. *“ Educators need to be trained in co-operative learning to be competent ”.*

All educators agreed with this statement. Educator A felt that in order to reap the rewards of this approach, educators must be trained. Educator B mentioned that this type of pedagogy is vast and there are so many different types of models. Educator B also said that educators must be trained in this pedagogy, as it is different from the passive chalk and talk method. Educator C said that educators must be trained, as there is too much reading material to digest.

28. *“ Would you like to share any other information about co-operative learning ? ”*

All educators felt very positively about cooperative learning. Educator A said that this is an excellent approach, and it has been tried and tested, and the write ups are phenomenal. Educator A also said that this approach will definitely change the face of the South-African Intermediate Class for the

that cooperative learning will help to achieve the
educator C said that this was an excellent approach for
learning. However, this educator said that this approach does not make it
possible for the inclusion of remedial education learners, as well as LSEN.
The educator said that this approach will assist them in their own remedial
education class and LSEN Class.

All educators agreed with most of these statements. Educator A agreed with
all statements, except statement number twenty-five. This educator disagreed
with statement number twenty-five. Educator B agreed with all statements,
except statement numbers eighteen and twenty-five. This educator was not
sure about statement number eighteen and disagreed with statement number
twenty-five. Educator C was not sure about statement numbers one, fifteen,
sixteen, seventeen and twenty-four. This educator disagreed with statement
number twenty-five and agreed with the rest of the statements.

INTERVIEW

EDUCATOR A

Goodafternoon Mr. A.

Goodafternoon.

How are you this afternoon ?

Very well, thank you and how are you ?

Well thanks.

Mr. A., once again I want to thank you for participating in this research and I also want to ensure

you, that confidentiality will always be maintained. Okay, lets begin

1. How many years have you been teaching for ?

This is my twentieth year of teaching.

2. What is your specialist field ?

My specialist field is Maths and Science.

3. What grades are you presently teaching ?

I teach grade six.

4. What learning areas are you teaching ?

I teach Maths and Science.

5. Is your school multicultural ?

Yes, it is. We have children from the Christian, Moslem and Hindu Culture.

... bilingual learners ?

Yes we do. We have children from various linguistic backgrounds. English, Zulu, Xhosa, Suthu –

... Ja, that's about it.

7. Are there learners with remedial education needs ?

Yes. Mmn... Actually I will say that there are quite a few children in school that are in need of

remedial education.

8. Does the school have remedial education classes ?

No. Mmn... About ten years ago, we did have remedial education classes, but department took that a way.

And I must tell you, that we are more in need of remedial education classes now, than we ever were in

the past.

9. Are there learners with special education needs ?

Yes, there's those children. Here too, we have tried to get these children into a special school, but many

of them are just on the waiting list for these schools.

10. Does your school have LSEN Classes ?

No. That is why we have tried to place these children in special schools.

11. Does your school use co-operative learning ?

No. If you take a walk and ask any other educator about co-operative learning – they'll ask you,

what's that. I didn't know about this type of instruction, until the workshop, we had with you.

Okay, for the next section, I am going to read out statements about co-operative learning. You must

tell me whether you agree with the statement, whether you are not sure, or whether you disagree

with the statement.

12. Co-operative learning is beneficial to high, average and low-achieving learners.

I agree. Co-operative learning is designed in such a way, that it caters for all ability groups.

13. Co-operative learning assists in the achievement of RNCS Learning Outcomes.

Ja, I agree. In co-operative learning, there is flexibility and the various models create room for educators

to assist learners in achieving the different learning outcomes.

14. Co-operative learning is an effective pedagogical tool for having learners achieve a

range of academic outcomes, including enhanced achievement.

I agree. Because lessons can be so varied and made so much more interesting, it motivates the learner

to learn.

15. Co-operative learning assists learners to achieve a range of social outcomes, including

the improvement of one's self-esteem.

Most certainly ! Co-operative learning is to a great extent interactive. Learners in the group are always interacting with each other towards achieving a common goal, for example, completion of a

project. This interaction helps to develop the learner socially.

16. Co-operative learning assists learners in fostering positive interpersonal relationships

with other learners.

I agree. This is actually one of the social outcomes that can be achieved by co-operative learning.

Whilst learners co-operate with each other in a group, they learn about each other and develop a bond

which most certainly could lead to friendship.

17. Co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school.

Ja, I agree, because co-operative learning assists the learner to create and build friendships. Then automatically the learner is going to like school because he has lots of friends there. Also, because co-

operative learning makes learning learner friendly and assists the learner to do better academically, he

will like school.

18. This pedagogical style stimulates thinking and creativity.

Certainly ! Every learner in the group has to contribute towards the task. This forces every learner to

think and come up with new ideas or find new bits of information. Co-operative learning allows learners to build on one another's ideas and it is this that acts as a catalyst for creativity.

19. Co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to others

points of view, share ideas and work as a team.

I agree with this statement. Every model of co-operative learning demands co-operation, whereby

learners have to share ideas, listen to others points of view and work as a team.

20. Co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learners' strengths and limitations and accept these differences.

Ja, I agree. Working together, means listening and talking to each other. Because every learner works

towards a common goal and helps each other learn, they learn to respect each other. Because they work

hard towards group rewards, they accept each others strengths and limitations and move on.

21. This pedagogy allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn

from other learners.

Agree. The educator is a mere facilitator and guides the entire process. The learner will be guided on

how to search and extract information from, for example, a text, but the information will not be

handed to him. He will have to do the work with his friends. Thus, he becomes less reliant on the

educator and more reliant on himself and friends and other sources.

22. Co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own

learning and for the learning of their team mates.

I agree. Because the information is not handed to him, he has to together with his friends in the group

go and search and extract information. This makes him take responsibility for his learning and for the

learning of his team-mates.

positive interdependence among learners, and it can

promote

cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships.

Ja, I agree. In co-operative learning, the learners are not just required to do something as a team, but they

are also required to learn something as a team. This fosters positive interdependence among the learners. Mmn... Co-operation among team members promotes friendship. The group will comprise of

different ability levels, races and cultures, and therefore co-operative learning will promote cross-racial

and cross cultural friendships.

24. Co-operative learning will help remedial education learners in mainstream classes,

bridge the gaps in their learning.

Mmn... I do not think that co-operative learning will bridge the gaps in rem. ed. learners. Ja, it will

narrow the gaps, but not bridge it. The interaction, communication and hands on work will greatly assist rem. ed. learners to narrow the gaps in their learning.

25. Co-operative learning will assist learners with special education needs cope in mainstream classes.

No. I disagree with that. Co-operative learning will assist in the learning of LSEN, but no ways will it make them cope in mainstream classes. No. Err... The academic range is too big a discrepancy.

26. Co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate phase

Certainly! Co-operative learning as an approach, will assist to develop the “whole child”. It focuses on the holistic development of the child.

27. Educators need to be trained in co-operative learning to be competent.

Ja, I agree. To reap the benefits of this phenomenal approach to COLTS, educators must be trained in

this type of teaching.

28. Would you like to share any other information about co-operative learning ?

Ja. I just think that it is an excellent approach to teaching and learning. It has been tried and tested in

other countries and the write ups about this approach is phenomenal. I think, if we embark on this type

of approach, it will definitely change the face of the South-African Intermediate Phase Classrooms.

We have now come to the end of the interview, and I'll just like to say that I really do appreciate you taking time off from your busy schedule, to participate in this research. Thank you !

INTERVIEW

EDUCATOR B

Goodafternoon, Mrs. B.

Goodafternoon, Mam.

How are you, today ?

Fine !

Mrs. B., thanks so much for participating in this research. As I've told all the participants before -

confidentiality will be maintained at all times. With that in mind, let's begin with the interview.

1. How many years have you been teaching for ?

Fourteen years.

2. What is your specialist field ?

English and History.

3. What grades are you presently teaching ?

Grade five.

4. What learning areas are you teaching ?

English, SS, AC and EMS.

5. Is your school multicultural ?

Yes. There are learners from various different cultures.

6. Does your school have multilingual learners ?

Yes. There are learners from different language backgrounds, but we have mainly Zulu Speaking Learners.

7. Are there learners with remedial education needs ?

Yes. There are many learners that need remedial education.

8. Does your school have remedial education classes ?

No. Unfortunately we don't.

9. Are there learners with special education needs ?

Yes. There are many learners. No matter how hard you try to teach them, they just cannot grasp basic concepts.

10. Does the school have LSEN Classes ?

No.

11. Does your school use co-operative learning ?

No. Only I have used it, after the workshop with you.

Thank you. Okay, the next part of the interview will take the form, where I read statements about

Co- operative Learning, and you tell me whether you agree with the statement, whether you're not sure,

or whether you disagree with the statement.

12. Co-operative learning is beneficial to high, average and low achieving learners.

Yes. I do think that some ability levels will benefit more than others, but all in all, I believe that co-operative learning will benefit all learners.

13. Co-operative learning assists in the achievement of the RNCS Learning Outcomes.

Yes. You see, in co-operative learning, the educator merely facilitates the lesson and guides the learners

to find information about a particular aspect, etc. And ... this finding of information helps in the

achievement of the RNCS Outcomes.

14. Co-operative Learning is an effective pedagogical tool for having learners achieve a

range of academic outcomes, including enhanced achievement.

Yes. As I've said earlier, it is learner-centred and therefore allows for the achievement of these outcomes.

15. Co-operative learning assists learners to achieve a range of social outcomes, including

the improvement of one's self-esteem.

Yes. Co-operative learning does allow learners to achieve a range of social outcomes. And ... you see ...

it is an active form of learning. Err... learners are constantly sharing and exchanging ideas etc., and

there's lots of discussion. There's also lots of speaking and listening. Learners have to listen and

stant interaction helps them to achieve a range of social

Do you think then, it helps learners improve their self-esteem.

Yes it does. When learners in the group listen to you, when you speak, you feel important and you feel

this sense of worth...and yes ... this will boost one's self-esteem.

16. Co-operative learning assists learners in fostering positive interpersonal relationships

with other learners.

Yes. You must know that learners come from diverse backgrounds, in terms of socio-economic status,

race, culture etc. You see, in co-operative learning, learners help each other to learn and because they

are more reliant on each other, rather than the educator, a sense of trust develops. Er... and there's also

a lot of communication. Yes ... you see, it is this trust and lots of communication that helps to build

positive interpersonal relationships with fellow learners.

17. Co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school.

Yes, it stands to reason. If co-operative learning helps a learner in achieving better socially, as well

as academically, then the learner will feel good about himself and school. This achievement will also help

to boost his self-esteem. And ...

Do you like to share something else ?

...the reward system, used in co-operative learning, will also

create positive attitudes towards school.

Okay, thank you for that.

18. This pedagogical style stimulates thinking and creativity.

Could you repeat that.

Yes, sure.

This pedagogical style stimulates thinking and creativity.

Eer... Yes, I agree with the first part of the statement, but eer... I'm not sure about the second part.

Would you like to elaborate on that.

You see, for some learners, creativity may be stimulated because of group work, whereas for some learners

creativity will be stifled. Eer... Some learners maybe dominating and steam roll their ideas and implement them.


Thank you. Let's go on to the next statement.

19. Co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to others

points of view, share ideas and work as a team.

YES. YES. YES. Co-operation is of paramount importance in co-operative learning. Every co-operative

learning task lends itself to co-operation, whereby learners help each other to learn and they work as a



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20. Co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learners' strengths and limitations and accept these differences.

Yes ! This is true.

Would you like to elaborate on this.

You see, because the end product is one group task, they work well together and respect each other's

strengths and limitations, ... and accept it.

Thank you. Okay let's go to the next statement.

21. This pedagogy allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn from other learners.

Yes, co-operative learning does allow learners to be less dependant on the educator and more dependant

on themselves ... and other sources, of course.

Would you like to elaborate on this ?

You see, in co-operative learning, the educator is merely the facilitator and facilitates the process by

providing the learners with reference books, tapes, films, web sites etc. The learners will have to go

questions,

on. Furthermore, if learners go to the educator and ask

he will not do their work, but rather guide them on how to go about getting the information, etc.

22. Co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own

learning and for the learning of their team mates.

Yes, this is true. If the learner has to research a topic with his fellow learners, then co-operative learning

is empowering him to take greater responsibility for his own learning and the learning of his team-mates.

23. This pedagogy fosters positive interdependence among learners, and it can promote

cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships.

Yes, co-operative learning does foster positive interdependence among learners. In this approach, team

success depends on all learners learning. I believe that it is important for learners to tutor each other,

rather than simply share ideas and information. You see, helping each other learn, creates a bond of trust

which promotes friendships between learners of different cultures and races.

24. Co-operative learning will help remedial education learners in mainstream classes,

bridge the gaps in their learning.

Eer... Yes, for a certain group of remedial education learners, it may bridge the gaps in

their learning, but it could have negative repercussions for others that are not comfortable

In which way do you think it may have negative repercussions for some ?

I think that the learners that do not like this approach, may not benefit from it.

Thank you.

25. Co-operative learning will assist learners with special education needs cope in mainstream classes.

NO. NO. NO. This does not hold true for me.

Why does this statement not hold true for you ?

You see, I do not think that any type of approach to teaching, be it co-operative learning

or any other approach, will assist special education learners cope in mainstream classes.

These learners will just not cope in mainstream classes. Errí They require a highly

specialized environment with special education educators and therapists.

26. Co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in intermediate

phase classrooms.

Yes, I agree. The research on co-operative learning— you remember the readings you gave us at the workshop ...

Yes, I do.

All the research shows the great impact that this pedagogy has made on learners socially and academically.

27. Educators need to be trained in co-operative learning to be competent.

Yes. To drive this pedagogy, one has to be knowledgeable on it. There are so many different models.

Yes, educators need to be trained in co-operative learning.

28. Would you like to share any other information about co-operative learning ?

Err... I think it is important to keep up with the current trends in education, and one of the current

trends is moving to a more active, transformational method of teaching as in co-operative learning.

That brings us to the end of this interview. Thank you so much. I really appreciate you taking time off

to be part of this research.

VIEW SCHEDULE

EDUCATOR C

Good morning, Mrs. C.

Goodmorning, Mrs. Pillay.

How are you ?

Well thanks and how are you ?

I'm very well thank you.

Mrs. C, before we begin, I'll briefly tell you about the format of this interview. The interview will

comprise of three sections. The first part comprises of straight forward questions, pertaining to your

profile. The second part, comprises of straight forward questions, pertaining to your school and the

third and final part, comprises of statements, in respect of co-operative learning, in which you'll agree, be not sure of, or disagree with them. Let's begin.

1. How many years have you been teaching for ?

Fifteen years.

2. What is your specialist field ?

English and Afrikaans.

3. What grades are you presently teaching ?

I have a grade five class.

4. What learning areas are you teaching ?

I'm teaching English, Afrikaans, Technology and Arts and Culture.

5. Is your school multicultural ?

Yes, it isn't

6. Does your school have multilingual learners ?

Yes, it does. They talk various languages, like English, Zulu, Xhosa and so on.

7. Are there learners with remedial education needs ?

Yes. There are many learners like that. But to be honest, their needs are not being met.

8. Does the school have remedial education classes ?

No. The school did have a remedial education class, years ago. But the department has taken this away

from schools because of financial constraints.

9. Are there learners with special education needs ?

Yes, there are quite a few learners like this.

10. Does the school have LSEN Classes ?

No. Even in the past, we didn't have LSEN Classes. There are schools that cater for these children,

but the waiting list is so long and most of our children that we try to get to these schools don't even get place. ... These children are therefore just left in our schools.

11. Does your school use co-operative learning ?

e of this approach after the workshop. The other educators do

not

know about this approach, as they were never exposed to it.

Okay, the next aspect of the interview takes on the following format. I'll read a statement about

co-operative learning and you must tell me whether you agree with the statement, whether you're

not sure, or whether you disagree with the statement.

12. Co-operative learning is beneficial to high, average and low achieving learners.

Well, ... I'm not sure. I do agree that co-operative learning will benefit high and average learners,

but, I'm not sure as to whether it will be beneficial to low achieving learners. I think that low achieving

learners, need individual attention from the educator.

13. Co-operative learning assists in the achievement of the RNCS learning outcomes.

I agree. This approach is one of active learning. The learners are guided to find information for themselves and this assists in the achievement of the learning outcomes.

14. Co-operative learning is an effective pedagogical tool for having learners achieve a

range of academic outcomes, including enhanced achievement.

I agree. Co-operative learning is active learning. Somebody once said...

When I see, I forget,

When I read, I remember,

When I do I understand.

ists learners to achieve a range of social outcomes,

including

the improvement of one's self esteem.

No. ... I'm not sure about that. I ... think this may hold true for some learners and may not hold true

for some. Okay, you see, some learners may feel intimidated being grouped, because now the pressure is on

them to share their thoughts and ideas. It may just have an adverse effect on them and make them withdrawn.

16. Co-operative learning assists learners in fostering positive interpersonal relationships

with other learners.

I'm sorry. Could you repeat the statement.

Sure, not a problem. Co-operative learning assists learners in fostering positive interpersonal relationships with other learners.

Here to, I'm not sure. This approach could assist learners in building interpersonal relationships with

other learners or it could have the opposite effect, for a few. The quiet learner in the group may not

respond too well in the group and may feel left out. I think, if other learners may try to help these

individuals, this could damage their relationship as they may think that these learners are being judgemental.

17. Co-operative learning creates and builds positive attitudes towards school.

Here too, I'm not sure. I think that although this may hold true for some learners, it may not hold true

uncomfortable with co-operative learning, he will not give off his

it will make him have negative feelings towards school as a whole.

18. This pedagogical style stimulates thinking and creativity.

I agree. I think... because learners are working in small groups, it is incumbent on every learner to do

his bit, by thinking and contributing to the task on hand. ... Because there is so much interaction,

creativity is heightened.

19. Co-operative learning teaches learners to co-operate with each other, listen to other's

points of view, share ideas and work as a team.

I agree. This whole concept of co-operative learning is covered under a wider umbrella of co-operation.

And for co-operation to prevail, one has to listen to each other's ideas and work as a team.

20. Co-operative learning helps learners to respect fellow learner's strengths and limitations and accept these differences.

I agree with that statement. They have no choice, but to respect and accept each other's strengths and

limitations. They are a team and if they do not respect and accept each other's strengths and limitations,

conflict and discord will arise and in the end, everyone will fall short in terms of completion of a task.

21. This pedagogy allows learners to be less dependant on their educator and more dependant on their own ability to think, get information from other sources and to learn

I agree. Co-operative learning stresses that educators must build on learners' experiences and knowledge.

You take the cue from your learners. You then guide them to useful information from books, internet etc.

They, as a group, research the topic. Thus, they become more dependant on the various sources and their

fellow team mates.

22. Co-operative learning empowers learners to take greater responsibility for their own

learning and for the learning of their team mates.

I agree. When a group of learners are searching for information through books, magazines and doing

internet searches, they are taking more responsibility for their own learning and that of the group.

Everyone's contribution, benefits the entire group.

23. This pedagogy fosters positive interdependence among learners, and it can promote

cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships.

I agree. ... Everyone in the group has to help everyone learn. Group success depends on the success

of everyone in the group. This fosters positive interdependence. ... Constant communication and ... interaction with different members in the group, promote cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships.

24. Co-operative learning will help remedial education learners in mainstream classes,

bridge the gaps in their learning ?

remedial education learners need specialist remedial education
educators to assist them to bridge the gaps, irrespective of whatever approach to teaching is
used.

25. Co-operative learning will assist learners with special education needs cope in
mainstream classes.

*I disagree. ... Learners with special education needs will benefit from co-operative learning in
the LSEN Classroom with a special needs educator, but ... co-operative learning will in no way
assist these learners cope in mainstream classes.*

26. Co-operative learning will improve the culture of learning and teaching in
intermediate

phase classrooms.

*I agree. I like the idea of group work. This prepares the child for the work force. In the work
force, no*

one works in isolation, everybody has to work as a team. So why not learn as a team in school.

27. Educators need to be trained in co-operative learning to be competent.

I agree with this statement. It's quite a bit to digest by just reading.

28. Would you like to share any other information about co-operative learning ?

*Well, ... I must say it's an excellent approach for the culture of learning and teaching.
However,*

*I must say ... this approach does not make it possible for the inclusion of remedial education
learners*

*or LSEN. This approach will assist them in their own remedial education or special education
classrooms.*

*We have come to the end of our interview. Once again, thank you for your time and
participation in this research. I really appreciate it. Thank you !*



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