**Tomorrow's Professor Msg.#237 YES VIRGINIA THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COOPERATIVE AND COLLABOR**

Folks;

Two of the "hot button" learning-centered paradigms currently in   
vogue are those of cooperative and collaborative learning. Yet, there   
is considerable confusion as to their similarities and differences.   
In the posting below, Dr. Theodore (Ted) Panitz of Cape Cod   
Community College, in Barnstable, MA, looks at the distinguishing   
features of these two paradigms. The posting is an excerpt from a   
longer article that can be found at:   
http://\_tedscooppage.homestead.com/index.html from here you will need   
to link to Teds coop page and then Teds articles; scroll down to the   
article on coop/collab definitions.

Regards,

Rick Reis  
reis@stanford.edu  
UP NEXT: Re-Envisioning the Ph.D. - Recommendations for Further Action

Tomorrow's Teaching and Learning

--------------- 1,293 words ----------------

YES VIRGINIA THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COOPERATIVE AND  
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PARADIGMS

By Dr. Theodore Panitz  
Cape Cod Community College

------------------------------------------------------------------------  
Author's note:

The following serves as an introduction for a longer more detailed  
comparison of the student centered learning paradigms, cooperative and  
collaborative learning. Over the years I have received many questions  
about the differences between these two paradigms. I have scoured the  
literature and extracted viewpoints from many of the key people who use  
and research these teaching/learning paradigms. In addition I have tried  
to present my interpretation based upon my own experiences in the  
classroom.

------------------------------------------------------------------------

Collaborative learning will be defined by comparing it's characteristics  
to those of cooperative learning paradigms. Each paradigm represents one  
end of a spectrum of teaching-learning which ranges from being highly  
structured by the teacher (cooperative) to one which places the  
responsibility for learning primarily with the student (collaborative).

The underlying premise for both collaborative and cooperative learning  
is founded in constructivist epistemology. Knowledge is discovered by  
students and transformed into concepts students can relate to. It is  
then reconstructed and expanded through new learning experiences.  
Learning consists of active participation by the student versus passive  
acceptance of information presented by an expert lecturer. Learning  
comes about through transactions among students and between faculty and  
students, in a social setting, as they construct a knowledge base.

Ken Bruffee (1995 "Sharing our toys- Cooperative learning versus  
collaborative learning". Change, Jan/Feb, 1995 pp12-18) identifies two  
causes for the differences between the two approaches. He states:  
"First, collaborative and cooperative learning were developed originally  
for educating people of different ages, experience and levels of mastery  
of the craft of interdependence. Second, when using one method or the  
other method, teachers tend to make different assumptions about the  
nature and authority of knowledge. The age or education levels as a  
distinction have become blurred over time as practitioners at all levels  
mix the two approaches. However, what determines which approach is used  
does depend upon the sophistication level of the students involved, with  
collaborative requiring more  
advanced student preparation working in groups." (p12)

Brufee sees education as a reacculturation process through constructive  
conversation. Students learn about the culture of the society they wish  
to join by developing the appropriate vocabulary of that society and by  
exploring that society's culture and norms (i.e. that of mathematician,  
historian, journalist, etc.). He identifies two types of knowledge as a  
basis for choosing an  
approach. Foundational knowledge is the basic knowledge represented by  
socially justified beliefs we all agree on. Correct spelling and  
grammar, mathematics procedures, history facts, a knowledge of the  
contents of the constitution, etc., would represent types of  
foundational knowledge. these are best learned using cooperative  
learning structures in the early grades

Nonfoundational knowledge is derived through reasoning and questioning  
versus rote memory. The other way in which nonfoundational education  
differs from foundational is that it encourages students not to take  
their teacher's authority for granted. Students should doubt answers and  
methods for arriving at answers provided by their professors, and  
perhaps more importantly they need to be helped to come to terms with  
their doubts by participating actively in the learning and inquiry  
process. Out of this process knew knowledge is often created, something  
not likely to occur when dealing with the facts and information  
associated with foundational knowledge. Collaborative learning shifts  
the responsibility for learning away from the teacher as expert to the  
student, and perhaps teacher, as learner.

Brufee sees the two approaches as linear with collaborative learning  
being designed to pick up where cooperative learning leaves off. In  
effect, students learn basic information and processes for interacting  
socially in the primary grades and then extend their critical thinking  
and reasoning skills and  
understanding of social interactions as they become more involved and  
take control of the learning process through collaborative activities.  
This transition may be viewed as a continuum from a closely controlled,  
teacher-centered system to a student-centered system where the teacher  
and students share authority and control of learning.

The following definitions for collaboration and cooperation form the  
basis for their teaching paradigms.

Collaboration is a philosophy of interaction where individuals are  
responsible for their actions, including learning and respect the  
abilities and contributions of their peers. Collaborative learning is a  
personal philosophy, not just a classroom technique. In all situations  
where people come together in groups, it suggests a way of dealing with  
people which respects and highlights individual group members' abilities  
and contributions. There is a sharing of authority and acceptance of  
responsibility among group members for the groups actions. The  
underlying premise of collaborative learning is based upon consensus  
building through cooperation by group members. (T. Panitz , (1997),  
"Collaborative Versus Cooperative Learning: Comparing the Two  
Definitions Helps Understand the nature of Interactive learning"  
Cooperative Learning and College Teaching, V8, No. 2, Winter 1997,  
Panitz, T., and Panitz, P., (1998) "Encouraging the Use of  
Collaborative Learning in Higher Education." In J.J. Forest (ed.)  
Issues Facing International Education, June, 1998, NY, NY: Garland  
Publishing

Cooperation is a structure of interaction designed to facilitate the  
accomplishment of a specific end product or goal through people working  
together in groups. Cooperative learning is defined by a set of  
processes which help people interact together in order to accomplish a  
specific goal or develop an end product which is usually content  
specific. It is more directive than a collaborative system of governance  
and closely controlled by the teacher. While there are many mechanisms  
for group analysis and introspection the fundamental approach is teacher  
centered whereas collaborative learning is student centered. (Panitz  
1997, 1998) Spencer Kagan (1989, Educational Leadership (Dec/Jan  
1989/1990)) defines cooperative learning: "The structural approach to  
cooperative learning is based on the creation, analysis and systematic  
application of structures, or content-free ways of organizing social  
interaction in the classroom. Structures usually involve a series of  
steps, with proscribed behavior at each step. An important cornerstone  
of the approach is the distinction between "structures" and  
"activities". To illustrate, teachers can design many excellent  
cooperative activities, such as making a team mural or a quilt. Such  
activities almost always have a specific content-bound objective and  
thus cannot be used to deliver a range of academic content. Structures  
may be used repeatedly with almost any subject matter, at a wide range  
of grade levels and at various points in a lesson plan."

Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998, Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., Smith,  
K.A., Change, July/August) clarify theories which govern cooperative  
learning strategies. "Social interdependence theory assumes that  
cooperative efforts are based on intrinsic motivation generated by  
interpersonal factors and a joint aspiration to achieve a significant  
goal. Behavioral learning theory assumes that cooperative efforts are  
powered by extrinsic motivation to  
achieve rewards. Social interdependence theory focuses on relational  
concepts dealing with what happens among individuals, whereas the  
cognitive-development perspective focuses on what happens within a  
single person (p29).

Many of the elements of cooperative learning may be used in  
collaborative situations. For example students work in pairs together in  
a Think-Pair-Share procedure, where students consider a question  
individually, discuss their ideas with another student to form a  
consensus answer, and then share their results with the entire class. In  
the Jig Saw method (Aronson, E., Blaney, N., Stephan, C., Sikes, J.,  
Snapp, M. (1978) The Jigsaw Classroom, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage  
Publication), students become "experts" on a concept and are responsible  
for teaching it to the other group members. Slavin (1978, "Student  
Teams Achievement Divisions", Journal of Research and Development in  
Education, 12 (June), pp39-49) developed Student  
Teams-Achievement-Divisions where the teacher presents a lesson, then  
the students meet in teams of four or five members to complete a set of  
worksheets on the lesson. Each student then takes a quiz on the  
material. Bonus points are given to the team if any member's score  
improves according to a preset criteria. The highest scoring teams are  
recognized in a weekly class newsletter.