

The Place and Importance of Cooperative Learning in the Globalizing World.

Ufuk Şimşek

Atatürk Üniversitesi
Kazım Karabekir Faculty of Education
Social Sciences Education

Ümit Şimşek

Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University
Faculty of Education Science Education

M.Fatih Esen

International Burch University,
Faculty of Education ,
English Language and Literature

Abstract:The aim of education in the globalising world is to cultivate individuals who believe in the supremacy of the law and democracy and can think freely, who possesses a sense of personal responsibility and who has developed his skills of utilizing the attained knowledge and competences all through his life. In order to equip the students with the implied knowledge and skills, educators are using various methods. Among these methods, the latest and the most perennial one is the cooperative learning method. In this article, ample information will be given on the method itself and its critical characteristics, and its role on ensuring social competence and democratic attitude will be discussed.

Key Words: cooperative learning, globalization, social competence, democratic attitude

Introduction

Like many others, the term globalization doesn't have a clear cut definition . Having said that, it is also a fact that the term globalization represents something. This term, which has become well known after M. McLuhan's work called *Understanding the media*, can be understood from economical, social, psychological, political even philosophical and further different points of view. Ulrich Beck, in the analysis of the term Globalization, distinguished three different terms which are globalisation, globalism and globality. According to this, globalisation is a multidimensional and international process. This process includes the formations in areas of ecology, culture, economy, politics and civil society side to side, but in an irreducible way to each other and it indicates that no longer the nation-states but international actors are in the foreground. Whereas the term globality describes that the countries are connected to each other through a network of multidimensional relationship within the framework of "world community" concept. And what is implied by "Globalism" is that it is an imposition to provide the content of the phenomenon of globalisation to be perceived within the framework of the world market economy (Saribay,2004:38).

Therefore, when globalization is discussed, not only a process led by international actors and the role of nation-states are undermined but also a political-ideological trend and a social formation, mentioned as " world community", which networks of mutual commitment of societies bring into existence, are described (Saribay,2004:38). Thus, it is obvious that globalisation can not be evaluated as impartially evolving and as a fact always yielding positive outcomes. Many globalisationists and neoliberal theoreticians claim that globalisation is a positive progress since it provides capital, business opportunities, political freedom and freedom of choice to the consumer. To the opposing opinion, on the other hand, it is a negative process breeding inequality and indigence (Sasaki,2004:72). Schaeffer argues that globalisation does not create a one-dimensional process or a more homogeneous world and thus different results drawn may be positive for some and negative for the others (Schaeffer,2003:11akt Sasaki,2004:72). The vast majority is in agreement with the inevitability of globalisation even though it is disputable whether it creates a homogeneity or not. One of these inevitable areas is education.

What is understood from globalisation of education is the education method, process and integration with the countries which are advanced in their government systems. However, this integration process in education is not competent to overcome the problems brought by globalisation. Education is a means to deal with not only the matters of adaptation or integration to globalisation but also the problems resulting from globalisation itself. Education will raise the type of individual who will overcome the globalisation issues. Societies and individuals are required to have the ability to take preventive measures against the possible consequences brought forth by globalisation and to benefit from the changes it brings (<http://yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/159/akcay.htm>, 2006).

The type of person that globalisation requires has changed. Not the person who stores information but who uses it has come forward now. Getting hold of information has become easier and cheaper in the globalising world, therefore, interpreting it has gained actual importance rather than just having it. (<http://yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/159/akcay.htm>, 2006).

It is essential for the teacher of this globalisation process to be qualified to educate the individual of this quality and to be well equipped with the parallel characteristics. It is important for the teachers to make learning available to students with various cultural backgrounds and weak social abilities, to help them to resolve existing conflicts through peaceful means, to respect each other's personalities and cultural backgrounds and to become citizens bearing social responsibility. It is possible to say that classical approaches on education are gradually losing their influence. There is a necessity of model implementations which will ensure the training of individuals who are sensitive about the lives of students which come from different social and cultural backgrounds, who believe in the continuity of learning, meaning that it is life long, who have tendency towards cooperation and groupwork, and who view learning as a deep personal activity (Yurdabakan, 2002:62).

Knowing how to learn, learning how to learn, learning individually, learning as a team and as an organization are considered as the dominant elements of education. UNESCO Education Commission has added another element which is "learning together". Four principles are discussed in educational globalisation. These are; knowing to learn, learning to learn, individual learning, and learning how to live together (Doğan, 2002:91; Unesco, 1996'dan naklen).

Groupwork is a method which improves individual's ability to discuss, to agree, to convince and to communicate with the group and in relation to these it also supports and encourages individual's management skills.

1. Cooperative Learning

In order an effective teaching process to take place, today's concept of education brings against the educators the responsibility of determining the teaching method that will maximize learning and of implementing it. In addition to this, it is also known that most teachers, within the framework of textbooks in primary education institutions, are using the traditional teaching method which is based on the participation of the students as passive listeners. Some teachers, on the other hand, are using the printing method with which they suppose that they are activating the students (Şimşek, Doymuş, Kızıloğlu 2005). However, the students tend to adopt the "cooperative learning method" which provides the teaching-learning environments to be more effective, efficient and fast, in which the students can express personal opinions freely, discuss matters and listen to each other with mutual respect (Doolittle 1997).

1.1. Definition of the Cooperative Learning Method:

The cooperative learning method has been defined in various ways by different scholars of education. Cooperative learning method is student-centered rather than teacher-centered and defined as a method where the student undertakes the active role (Cooper and Mueck 1990), as a class learning method used to increase motivation and participation, to help students to develop a positive image related with themselves and their friends, to improve the power of problem solving and critical thinking and to encourage them in cooperation and social skills (Gömleksiz 1993)...as a class learning environment where students work in mixed small groups (Watson 1992)... as a learning approach according to which students, in a class environment, form mixed small groups having a shared purpose, to help each other learn on an academic subject and group success is awarded in different ways (Delen 1998)... as a method considered as the realization process of learning in which students work in small groups helping each other learn (Açıkgöz 2003)...as a learning method basing on cooperative work of students in mixed small groups helping each other learn (Johnson and Johnson 1992).

Cooperative learning as a concept includes teaching methods where students work in small groups, usually groups of 4-6, and the efficiency is awarded in different ways (Slavin 1988).

Taking into consideration the definitions above, cooperative learning can be defined as a learning approach according to which the students both in class and in other environments form mixed small groups, help each other learn on an academic subject through a common purpose, and by which self-confidence of individuals improves, their communicative skills develop, the competence of problem solving and critical thinking accelerates and the student takes part in learning-teaching process in the most active way. (Doymuş, Şimşek, Bayrakçeken 2004)

1.2 Critical Features of Cooperative Learning Methods

Here are the principles that distinguish the cooperative learning from the rest and its essential components:

- a. positive commitment
- b. face to face interaction
- c. individual responsibility
- d. social skills
- e. the evaluation of the group process

These principles of the cooperative learning method are considered to be the five basic elements which enable the understanding of cooperative learning and the formation of cooperation among the members (Sharan 1990; Johnson *et al.* 1998; Sharan 1999; Schultz 1999; Barken 2001) These five elements should be taken into consideration and rearranged while implementing the cooperative learning method.

1.3. Benefits of Cooperative Learning Method

Benefits of cooperative learning method are categorized as academic benefits and social benefits.

1.3.1. Academic Benefits

In the process of application of cooperative learning method, as a result of numerous activities which are held either in the classroom or out of the classroom, various academic developments and changes take place. Researches carried out on cooperative learning method have put forward that; it cultivates student's thinking skills (Webb 1980; Smith *et al.* 1981; Slavin 1992), it encourages critical thinking and helps the students to express their opinions throughout the discussion sessions (Peterson and Swing 1985; Nelson-Legall 1992), it increases student's abilities and practical skills both in and out of the classroom and it improves their skills of processing information (Johnson *et al.* 1986; Webb *et al.* 1986; Male 1990; Brufee 1993; Tannenbergs 1995), it improves students' oral communication skills (Yager *et al.* 1985-b; Bershon 1992), discussions being held throughout learning activities help students remember the content of the context (Johnson and Johnson 1979; Ames and Murray 1982; Dansereau 1985), it increases the responsibility of learning and creates an efficient and exploratory environment (Slavin 1980; Baird and White 1984; Leikin and Zaslavsky 1997) it provides the teacher candidates with the training of effective teaching strategies (Johnson and Johnson 1990; Artut and Tarim 2007) it prevents the teachers from being seen as the only source of information (Felder 1997), it encourages the learning-based rather than race-based approach and it also improves the rate of attendance and the rate of researches carried out by the students (Janke 1980; Cooper 1984; Davis *et al.* 1990)

1.3.2 Social Benefits

The cooperative learning method provides a basis for the formation of social experiences of the individual and the increase of their courage for these experiences. Teacher, in order to form and improve social skills, plays an active role in students' interaction with each other and in facilitation of the process. Administrators, school personnel and families form the complementary components of the cooperative learning process. Through this formation, students who have economic and emotional problems and problems concerning the family are provided support (Kessler *et al.* 1985; Carpenter 2003). Cooperative learning, by means of social support systems and social interaction methods (Cooper 1984; Johnson *et al.* 1998; Doymuş vd 2004, 2005; Şimşek 2005) builds and environment that assures positive attitudes towards the solution of problems and resolution of controversies (Messick and Mackie 1989; Sherman 1991). This method, in the context of

interpersonal relations, improves students' responsibilities towards each other and helps to clear away misinterpretations (Bonoma *et al.* 1974; Webb 1980; Johnson and Johnson 1985; Stahle 1986; Johnson *et al.* 1998) strengthens empathising and enables viewing events from different perspectives (Swing and Peterson 1982; Slavin *et al.* 1984; Deutsch 1985; Yager *et al.* 1985-a; Hooper and Hannafin 1988; Felder 1997) while maintaining personal responsibility, it helps forming a team by actualising certain approaches to solve problems. In this process, students put into practice work and community models regarding the roles in their groups (Slavin 1983; Sandberg 1995; Johnson *et al.* 1998). Implementations of cooperative learning enhances the leadership skills for both male and female students (Bean 1996) This method makes it possible for the students both individually and in classroom environments to develop better communication skills and establish academic relations. (Tinto, 1997). Cooperative learning method, in connection with its above mentioned features, helps to attain a democratic attitude (Şimşek vd 2006;)

References

- Açıkgöz, K.Ü., 2003. Aktif öğrenme, Eğitim Dünyası Yayınları, Kanyılmaz Matbaası, 172 s, İzmir.
- Ames, G.J. and Murray, F.B., 1982. When two wrongs make a right: promoting cognitive change by social conflict. *Developmental Psychology*, 18(6), 894-897
- Artut, P.D. and Tarim, K., 2007. The Effectiveness of Jigsaw II on prospective elementary school teachers. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(2), 129-141
- Aydın Mehmet S., "Küreselleşmeye Genel Bir Bakış", Siyasi, Ekonomik ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Küreselleşme, Ufuk Kitapları, İstanbul, 2002, s.11.
- Baird, J. and White, R., 1984. Improving learning through enhanced metacognition: a classroom study. Paper Presented at The Annual Meeting of The American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.
- Barken, J.E., 2001. The Use Cooperative Learning Techniques in a Community College Course. Master Thesis. Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.
- Bean, J., 1996. Engaging ideas, The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bershon, B.L., 1992. Cooperative Problem Solving: a Link to Inner Speech, in Hertz-Lazarowitz (eds.) *Interaction in Cooperative Learning*. 36-48, Ny: Cambridge Press.
- Bonoma, J., Tedeschi, J. and Helm, B., 1974. Some effects of target cooperation and reciprocated promises on conflict resolution. *Sociometry*, 37(2), 251-261.
- Brufee, K., 1993. *Collaborative Learning: Higher Education, Interdependence and the Authority of Knowledge*. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press. U.S.A.
- Carpenter, S.R., 2003. Incorporation of a cooperative learning technique in organic chemistry. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 80(3), 330-332.
- Cooper, J. and Mueck, R., 1990. Student involvement in learning: Cooperative learning and college instruction. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 1(1), 68-76.
- Cooper, J., Prescott, S., Cook, L., Smith, L., Mueck, R. and Cuseo, J., 1984. *Cooperative Learning and College Instruction- Effective Use of Student Learning Teams*. California State University Foundation Publication, 41-65.
- Dansereau, D.F., 1985. Learning Strategy Research, in Chipman and Glaser (Eds). *Thinking and Learning Skills: Relating Instruction to Basic Research*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Davis, R. B., Maher, C.A. and Noddings, N. (Eds.), 1990. *Constructivist Views on the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics*. Journal for Research in Mathematics Education by National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- Delen, H., 1998. Temel eğitim beşinci sınıf sosyal bilgiler dersinde kubaşık öğrenme yönteminin akademik başarıya etkisi, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Adana
- Doğan Elife, "Eğitimde Küreselleşme", Eğitim Araştırmaları, Sayı:6, Ocak 2002
- Doolittle P., 1997. "Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development as a Theoretical Foundation for Cooperative Learning", *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*; 8(1), 83-103.
- Doymuş, K., Şimşek, Ü., ve Bayrakçeken, S., 2004. İşbirlikçi öğrenme yönteminin fen bilgisi dersinde akademik başarı ve tutuma etkisi, *Türk Fen Eğitimi Dergisi*, 1(2), 103-115.
- Felder, R.M., 1997. e-mail Communication from Felder@eos.ncsu.edu www page <http://www.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/felder/public/rmf.html>
- Gömlüksiz, M., 1993. Kubaşık öğrenme yöntemi ile geleneksel yöntemin demokratik tutumlar ve erişimi etkisi, Doktora Tezi, Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Adana.
- Hooper, S. and Hannafin, M.J., 1988. Cooperative CBI: The effects of heterogeneous homogeneous grouping on the learning of progressively complex concepts. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 4(5), 413-424.

<http://yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/159/akcay.htm>, 2006

Janke, R., 1980. Computational errors of mentally-retarded students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 17(1), 30-32.

Johnson, D.W., and Johnson, R.T., 1992. Approaches to implementing cooperative learning in the social studies classroom, cooperative learning in the social studies classroom: An Invitation Social study ,R.J., Stahl and R.L., Vansicle Editor : Washington National Council for the social studies. Bulletin No: 87, 44-51.

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T. and Holubec, E., 1998. Cooperation in the Classroom. Interaction Book Company.100, Edina, Minnesota, USA.

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T. and Stanne, M., 1986. Comparison of computer assisted cooperative, competitive and individualistic learning. *American Educational Research Journal*, 23(3), 382-92.

Johnson, R.T. and Johnson, D, W., 1985. Relationships between black and white students in intergroup cooperation and competition. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 125(4), 421-428.

Johnson, R.T. and Johnson, D,W., 1990. Using Cooperative Learning in Math. Chapter in Cooperative Learning in Math, Ed Neil Davidson

Johnson, R.T. and Johnson, D. W., 1979. Conflict in the classroom: Controversy and learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 49(1), 51-70.

Kessler, R., Price, R. and Wortman, C., 1985. Social factors in psychopathology stress, social support and coping processes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 36, 351-372.

Leikin, R. and Zaslavsky, O., 1997. Facilitating student interactions in mathematics in a cooperative learning setting, 350. *Journal of Research in Mathematics Education*, 28(3), 331-359.

Masamichi Sasaki, "Globalization and National Identity in Japan", *International journal of Japanese Sociology*, 2004, Number:13, (69-87),p.70

Messick, D.M. and Mackie, D.M., 1989. Intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 40(1), 45-81.

Nelson-Legall, S., 1992. Children's Instrumental Help-Seeking. It's Role in the Social Acquisition and Construction of Knowledge. In Lazarowitz Ed. *Interaction In Cooperative Groups: Theoretical Anatomy of Group Learning*,120-141, NY,NY: Cambridge University Press

Peterson, P. and Swing, S., 1985. Students cognitions as mediators of the effectiveness of small-group learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77, 299-312

Robert K. Schaeffer, *Understanding Globalization: The Social Consequences of Political, Economic And Environmental Change*. Lanham, 2003,p.11

Sandberg, K.E., 1995. Affective and Cognitive Features of Collaborative Learning in Review of Research and Developmental Education. Gene Kierstons (Ed.) 6,4, *Appalachian State Univ*, Boone, NC.

Sarıbay Ali Yaşar, *Global Toplumda Din ve Türkiye*, Everest Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004, s.38

Schultz, S.E., 1999. To Group or Not to Group: Effects of Group Work on Students' Declarative and Procedural Knowledge in Science. Doctoral Dissertation, the Scholl of Education, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.

Sharan, Y., 1990. *Cooperative Learning Theory and Research*. Praeger Publishers, Westport, 20,USA.

Sharan, Y., 1999. *Handbook of Cooperative Learning Methods*. Praeger Publishers, Westport, 20,USA.

Sherman, L.W., 1991.Cooperative learning in post secondary education: implications from social psychology for active learning experiences. Presented At The Annual Meeting of The American Educational Research Association, Chicago, II, April 1991.

Slavin, R. E., 1980. Cooperative learning. *Review of Education Research*, 50(2), 315-342.

Slavin, R. E., 1983. When does cooperative learning increase student achievement? *Psychological Bulletin*, 94, 429-445

Slavin, R. E., Leavey, M.B. and Madden, N.A., 1984. Combining cooperative learning and individualized instructions: Effects of student mathematics achievement, attitudes and behaviors, *Elementary School Journal*, 84(4), 409-422 .

Slavin, R.E., 1988. *Small group methods*, The International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education, Oxford: Pergamon pres.

Smith, K., Johnson, D.W. and Johnson, R.T., 1981. Can conflict be constructive: Controversy versus concurrence seeking in learning groups. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 73, 651-663 .

Şimşek U., Doymuş K., Şimşek Ü., Özdemir Y., "Lise Düzeyinde Eğitim Gören Öğrencilerin Demokratik Tutumlarına İşbirlikçi Öğrenme Yönteminin Etkisinin İncelenmesi", Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Yıl:2006,Cilt.7, Sayı:1,s.165-173

Şimşek, Ü., 2005. İşbirlikli Öğrenme Yönteminin Fen Bilgisi Dersinin Akademik Başarı ve Tutumuna Etkisi. Yüksek Lisans Tezi , Erzurum.

Şimşek, Ü., Doymuş ,K. ve Kızıloğlu N., 2005. Lise düzeyinde öğrenim gören öğrencilere grupla öğrenme yönteminin kazandırdığı bilgi ve beceriler. *Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi*, 13(1), 67-80.

- Tannenberq, J., 1995. Using cooperative learning in the undergraduate computer science classroom. Proceedings of The Midwest Small College Computing Conference, Available <http://Phoenix.Isub.Edu/Josh/Coop/Papers/Mwscc95.Html>
- Tinto, V., 1997. Enhancing learning via community, thought and action. The NEA Higher Education Journal, 6(1), 53-54.
- Watson, S. B., 1992. The essential elements of cooperative learning, The American Biology Teacher, 54(2), 84-86.
- Webb, N. M., 1980. An analysis of group interaction and mathematical errors in heterogeneous ability groups. British Journal of Educational Psychology, 50(3), 266-276.
- Webb, N., Ender, P. and Lewis, S., 1986. Problem solving strategies and group process in small groups learning computer programming. American Education Research Journal, 23(3), 243-262.
- Yager, S., Johnson, R., Johnson, D.W. and Snider, B., 1985-b. The effect of cooperative and individualistic learning experiences on positive and negative cross-handicap relations contemporary. Educational Psychology, 10(2),127-138 .
- Yurdabakan İrfan, "Küreselleşme Konusundaki Yaklaşımlar ve Eğitimi", Eğitim Araştırmaları, Sayı:6, Ocak 2002