

## **Two Approaches for Promoting Student Centered Language Learning: Cooperative Learning and Positive Psychology**

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### **Abstract**

This article links two approaches to promoting less competitive, more positive, and more student centered learning environments for language learners: cooperative learning and positive psychology. The article begins by explaining each of these two approaches. First, the article provides background, including research support, for cooperative learning and explains eight cooperative learning principles: maximum peer interactions, equal opportunities to participate, individual accountability, positive interdependence, group autonomy, heterogeneous grouping, teaching collaborative skills, and cooperation as a value. Second, the article supplies similar background, including research support, for positive psychology (also known as positive education), including seven principles: relationships with others, Many adults and children see the world as a place dominated by competition, a place in which this competition often leads people to have negative feelings toward others and even toward themselves (Bregman, 2020). Fortunately, alternatives exist to competition and the resulting negativity. Two of these alternatives are cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2013) and positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Cooperative learning encourages students and others to work together toward common goals, and positive psychology encourages people to look for and build upon what is good in people and situations. This article begins by explaining cooperative learning and positive psychology, and how they overlap. The article then discusses how cooperative learning and positive psychology can be combined in language education, and illustrates this combination with two sample lessons.

### **Introduction**

#### **Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning (CL), also known as collaborative learning, is a theoretically

grounded, research-based approach that involves students learning together in small

groups (students in groups as few as two students are considered a group) to meet cognitive and affective goals. CL is consistent with various theories of learning. For instance, Socio-Cultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) posits that support from others can promote learning, and in CL contexts, students receive support not only from teachers and learning materials but also from peers, as well as providing support to others. Since about 1970, a great deal of research across age groups and subject areas has suggested that CL helps students achieve cognitive and affective goals (Ibáñez, García Rueda, Maroto, & Kloos, 2013; Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000; Slavin, 1991; Van Ryzin, Roseth, & Biglan, 2020).

Implementing CL requires preparation on the part of students, teachers, and others, as CL involves much more than students merely forming groups and sitting together or communicating via internet tools. In other words, CL is so much more than a seating arrangement, face-to-face or virtual. Instead, various principles have been developed to guide student-student interaction so as to promote active cooperation (Johnson & Johnson, 2013). One set of eight such CL principles was proposed by Jacobs and Kimura (2013). These principles (highlighted in bold) are briefly described below.

1. **Maximum Peer Interactions.** This principle has two meanings. First, activities are organised to promote peer interactions among multiple students at the same time, i.e., maximising the *quantity* of peer interactions. For instance, in a class of 50 students learning in groups of two, potentially 25 peer interactions take place simultaneously. Second, these interactions often involve the use of thinking skills and collaborative skills, thereby maximising the *quality* of peer interactions.

2. **Equal Opportunity to Participate.** The idea behind this principle is that all group members have opportunities to take part fully in group activities. One or two members do not dominate the group.

3. **Individual Accountability.** While Equal Opportunity to Participate strives to give all group members chances to take part, the principle of Individual Accountability encourages students to use those chances to do their fair share in the group.

4. **Positive Interdependence.** This principle provides guidance on how to encourage students to care about their groupmates' learning and socio-emotional outcomes, to see their groupmates' outcomes as positively correlated with their own. In other words, students feel that they sink or swim together in the "ocean" of language learning.

5. **Group Autonomy.** This principle looks at how to encourage students to seek support first from their own group members and then other students before turning to teachers and other resource people.

6. **Heterogeneous Grouping.** This principle encourages students to learn in mixed groups which represent the diversity existing within their class. Groups can be mixed on such variables as past achievement, age, gender, social class, and ethnicity.

7. **Teaching Collaborative Skills.** Working together is not easy. This principle draws attention to students' development and use of skills that promote effective group interaction. These skills include thanking others, praising others, giving reasons for their responses, and disagreeing politely.

8. **Cooperation as a Value.** Based on this principle students and teachers adopt a view of positive interdependence toward all their interactions, not only interactions within small classroom groups. For instance, this 'sink-or-swim together' perspective can be applied to interactions between community members, between countries, and between species.

### Positive Psychology

Traditionally, psychology has focused on people's problems and negative experiences. In contrast, positive psychology (PP) is a branch of psychology which adopts a different approach. PP looks at what is going well in people's lives and seeks to build on that to enhance their lives and their impacts on others' lives. The roots of PP can be traced most clearly to Humanistic Psychology, such as Maslow's concept of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954) and Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of flow, i.e., optimal experience. Studies on PP suggest that a positive attitude is associated with greater success in many areas of life (Hogan, 2020; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, E., 2005; Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Various principles have been suggested for PP. Seven of these principles (highlighted in bold) are discussed below. Please note how these principles overlap with CL principles.

1. **Relationships with Others.** We humans beings are social animals. Positive associations with others provide us with emotional support and task assistance. Furthermore, bonds with others offer additional motivation, as people are motivated to do at least their fair share toward achieving goals shared with others (Coyne-Foresi & Nowicki, 2020).
2. **Responsibility.** Doing one's fair share links to the PP principle of responsibility. Yes, circumstances have a powerful impact on everyone's life and the lives of others. However, at the same time, everyone needs to maximise their own positive impact on their own life and others' lives. This is similar to the concept of internal locus of control (Sujadi, 2020).
3. **Gratitude.** Showing gratitude to others can encourage positive feelings and promote success for both those expressing gratitude and those receiving the expressions of gratitude (Collange & Guegan, 2020).
4. **Positivity.** Positive feels can arise from how people view their past, present, and future, as well as the other individuals in their lives. Optimism grounded in reality features prominently in positivity (Gierlinger & Barden, 2020).
5. **Strengths.** One principle of PP that fits well with positivity is a focus on strengths, strengths of others and strengths of oneself. Strengths include abilities, such as the ability to lead groups, as well as strengths of character, such as self-control (Ruch et al., 2020).
6. **Kindness.** A strength that forms another principle of PP is the strength of kindness. Kind acts can be planned or can occur at random. Otake, Shimai, Tanaka-Matsumi, Otsui, and Fredrickson (2006) reported that doing kind acts increased participants' happiness.
7. **Meaning.** Flowing from the PP principle of kindness is the principle of meaning, i.e., one way to feel our lives have meaning lies in doing kind act for others. In this way, our lives have meaning beyond our own selves (Seligman, 2020).

***Links Between Cooperative Learning and Positive Psychology.***

Many links exist between CL and PP, as can be seen by comparing the eight CL principles with the seven PP principles. Table 1 explores some of these links and how they might be implemented in classrooms.

First, it should be noted that the application of PP to education is frequently called positive education (Joseph, Murphy, & Holford, 2020).

**Table 1**

**Links between CL and PP with implementation ideas**

| <b>CL Principle</b>              | <b>Link with PP Principles</b> | <b>Implementation Ideas</b>  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Maximum Peer Interactions        | Relationships with Others      | Provide opportunities for students to collaborate with a range of people (peers and others)  |
| Equal Opportunity to Participate | Strengths                      | Help students see and develop the strengths in themselves and others   |
| Individual Accountability        | Responsibility                 | Encourage students to exercise and develop their strengths by doing their fair share in their groups                                     |
| Positive Interdependence         | Kindness                       | Facilitate the view among students that by helping others they are also helping themselves   |
| Group Autonomy                   | Positivity                     | Promote optimism among students so that they can learn via collaboration with peers and do not need to rely solely on teachers           |
| Heterogeneous Grouping           | Relationships with Others      | Help students appreciate the advantages of connecting with people different from themselves  |
| Teaching Collaborative Skills    | Gratitude                      | Encourage students to express gratitude for specific qualities and actions of groupmates   |
| Cooperation as a Value           | Meaning                        | Teach the view that cooperation bears the promise of not only greater individual success but also greater fulfilment from helping others |

**An Example of Linking Cooperative Learning and Positive Psychology Part 1.**

**Instructions**

This section of the article illustrates the points in Table 1 via a language classroom engaged in extensive reading. Extensive reading involves students in reading large quantities of material at a level of difficulty roughly equal to students' current reading levels (Extensive Reading Foundation, 2020). The eight CL principles will be used as the foundation for planning the lesson, with the seven PP principles used to enhance the lesson.

The students' task is to create a short online advertisement for a book they read and enjoyed. The advertisement should contain both words and visuals. Each student has a partner who acts as their editor, and the editors are credited at the end of each advertisement. A rubric developed by the class guides the students in their editing of their partner's advertisement. Table 2 shows one possible rubric.

**Table 2**  
**One possible rubric for online advertisements of materials students used in their extensive reading**

| Characteristic  | Exceeds Expectations  | Meets or Approaches Expectations  |
|---|---|---|
| Plot summary  | The book's plot is clearly summarised in no more than 50 words  | A summary is provided, but one or more key elements of the plot may be missing or may be unclear      |
| Details about the book that assist others in locating it to read themselves | Title, author(s), date of publication, publisher and perhaps a url are provided                           | Some of the information may be missing  |
| Types of readers who might enjoy the book                                   | Ages, interests, favoured types of reading materials, reading level are provided                          | Some of the information may be missing  |
| Reasons to read the book  | Persuasive reasons are given to attract others to read this particular book                               | Reasons lack persuasiveness and elaboration   |
| Visual  | The visual is likely to draw viewers' attention, and the visual links to the reasons for reading the book | The visual could be more attractive and more closely linked to the reasons for reading the book       |
| Contact information for the creator of the advertisement                    | To promote dialogue, contact information via a safe channel has been provided                             | Contact information is not provided or the contact information could expose the creator to spam, etc. |

The class consists of 50 students. Using the CL principle of **Heterogeneous Grouping**, students form 12 groups of four students and one group of two students. While reading is usually a silent, individual activity, students can benefit from peer discussion of what they have read (Jacobs & Gallo, 2002). The groups of four divide themselves into heterogeneous pairs. While many factors can be used in forming heterogeneous groups and these factors can be used in combination, in this case, past achievement in reading will be used, such that the groups will be a mix of students who

are relatively high and low in past achievement in reading. It should be noted that past achievement (a relatively changeable factor) is not the same as ability (a relatively fixed variable).

The PP principle of **Relationships with Others** may help students appreciate the benefits of their mixed groups. For instance, the higher achievers can benefit from explaining language points with which their groupmates have difficulty (Webb et al., 2009), and they can extend their friendship circles by working together with students with whom they might not normally interact.

Lower achievers can benefit from the language help that higher achievers provide, and as this is a multiple ability task, the lower achievers might be able to return the favour by providing assistance with the artistic and/or the technological parts of the task (Cohen & Lotan, 2014).

As students edit their partner's advertisement, they operationalise the CL principles of **Group Autonomy** and **Teaching of Collaborative Skills**. The groups of two show autonomy, because rather than depending on the teacher as the sole arbiter of the quality of the advertisements, students consult their partner (the collaborative skill of asking for help) and the partner provides feedback with reasons (the collaborative skill of giving feedback with explanations). Furthermore, students can turn to the other pair in their group for additional consultation (maintaining the quantity aspect of **Maximum Peer Interactions**). Other peers who give feedback are also credited in the advertisement. Of course, the teacher remains ready to provide feedback, but the teacher is not the first option.

In offering feedback to their partners, students use the PP principle of **Positivity**, as they highlight aspects of the advertisements that fit the points in the rubric. Areas for improvement also receive attention, and students express their **Gratitude** for both the positive feedback and the constructive criticism. Both giving and receiving feedback require the use of collaborative skills, and teachers can aid students' acquisition and use of these skills, e.g., via a six-step procedure described in Johnson and Johnson (2013).

The extensive reading lesson promotes the CL principle of **Maximum Peer Interactions** in at least two ways. First, the quantity of peer interactions rises as the 50

students interact in pairs, i.e., 25 peer interactions potentially taking place at the same time, and even when students interact in foursomes, 12 interactions take place. High quality peer interactions are more likely to take place, as students use the rubrics the class developed, with the teacher's guidance, to give and explain feedback. Additional quality interaction potentially flows from students using collaborative skills as some of their feedback highlights strong points in the advertisement drafts and as students express gratitude for the feedback.

Students highlighting strong points in the peers' work fits with the PP principle of **Strengths**. The hope is that this focus on strengths builds students' self-confidence, as well as their appreciation of the value of working with others. **Strengths** bolsters the twin CL principles of **Equal Opportunity to Participate** and **Individual Accountability**. It is only when students believe that their peers possess, or at least can develop, strengths that all group members are likely to receive equal opportunities to take part in group activities. Furthermore, it is only when students take **Responsibility** and use these opportunities, in this case the opportunities to work on their own advertisement and to give feedback on others' work, that they can develop and display their strengths. In other words, students need to exercise **Individual Accountability**.

**Positive Interdependence** links with the PP principle of **Kindness**. The students sink or swim together, because both group members have their names on each other's work, and if students provide feedback to classmates outside of their own twosome, and such interaction is promoted by the principle of **Maximum Peer Interactions**, their names also go in the credits section of the advertisement. Thus, they share a common goal of creating effective

advertisements, and this may encourage students to be kind to each other as they work on their advertisements and respond to each other's work.

The hope is that kindness creates an environment in which students can experiment and step outside their comfort zones, achieving something along the lines of what Maslow (1954) called self-actualisation, what Csikszentmihalyi (1990) called flow, and what Seligman (2012) called flourishing. However, some advocates of extensive reading, e.g., Krashen (2007), have warned against asking students to do anything after reading a book other than finding something else to read. Perhaps, the **Positivity** generated by the CL principles and the PP principles will result in the advertisement task being an engaging and successful experience for students, one that will encourage them to read more and to think more deeply as they read, and Krashen (personal correspondence) has acknowl-

edged that group activities could have a positive impact on students' reading.

The eighth CL principle, **Cooperation as a Value**, potentially builds on this **Positivity**, as students may see their online advertisements promoting a dialogic reading culture beyond their class, school, even country, thereby generating **Meaning** for students, transforming reading from a solely individual activity that people do just for themselves into a collective activity that benefits oneself and others by promoting a reading and lifelong learning culture (Martin, 2019). In such a reading culture, people read more, regardless of the medium (electronic or hard copy) in which they read. Furthermore, reading becomes a more cooperative experience, as people share about what they read. Taking this collaboration, a step further, readers and writers can interact, and, as in the case of the students' online advertisements, readers can become producers of texts.

### **How Cooperative Learning and Positive Psychology Promote Student Centeredness**

Student centered learning, also known as learner centered, may best be seen as a continuum in which students have an increasingly large degree of input as to what and how they learn, a greater involvement in assessment, and a higher level of overt activity. Many overlapping approaches in education promote student centeredness, e.g., critical thinking, problem-based learning, self-directed learning, service learning, and cross-cultural skills. Indeed, student centeredness can be seen as part of a larger paradigm shift in society in which the citizenry are more knowledgeable and more involved in shaping society's future for the benefit of all.

Cooperative learning fits readily with student centeredness, as in cooperative learning, students are more obviously active as they communicate and play a variety of roles within their groups. In a teacher centered class, often only one person at a time, usually the teacher, speaks, whereas in a class of 50 students studying in groups of two, potentially 25 people speak at the same time. Also, in a teacher centered class, teachers play such roles as facilitator, understanding checker, timekeeper, encourager, and devil's advocate. In contrast, when the class does cooperative learning, students have opportunities to play all those roles and more, alongside the teacher.

Furthermore, with cooperative learning, groups need to exercise some degree of autonomy, and each member is held individually accountable for the learning of everyone in their group.

Positive psychology does much to create an atmosphere where student centeredness can thrive. To fully utilize the opportunities that student centeredness offers, students need to feel they can take risks, express their

feelings, express gratitude for how others contribute to the learning of all, be proud of their strengths as they understand, seek help with, and work on their weaknesses, and create an overall culture of positivity among the class members and beyond. Cooperative learning also promotes such an environment, especially with its emphasis on positive interdependence, cooperative skills, and equal opportunity to participate.

### A Student Centered Activity for Teaching Cohesion

The above extensive reading lesson models how cooperative learning and positive psychology can be integrated into teaching, and, of course, that lesson also embodies student centeredness. The following lesson can be characterized as an intensive reading lesson. Intensive reading, in contrast with extensive reading, involves shorter texts at students instructional, not independent, reading level. Teachers organize intensive reading lessons to highlight particular reading skills that students can later employ in their extensive reading and in the reading, they might do in their content area reading, e.g., in mathematics class.

Cohesion (Halliday & Hassan, 2014) is one way to unify texts. Table 3 shows some cohesive devices in English. Language works a bit like a jigsaw puzzle, with many pieces that need to fit together, and cohesion provides one of the tools people use so that all the pieces of the texts they create and all the texts they hear, read, and view from others fit together. Thus, learning about cohesive devices can be fun, just like playing with a jigsaw puzzle. All languages have various devices for unifying spoken, written, and visual texts. The present article contains a sample lesson plan involving cohesion in English.

**Table 3**  
**Selected cohesive devices in English**

| <b>Cohesive Device</b> | <b>Non-Technical Explanation</b>   | <b>Example</b>  |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Repetition             | A word or another form of the word is repeated. In the example, 'salad' is repeated, and 'enjoy' appears as 'enjoyment.'   | Yesterday, one of my housemates and I prepared a big <b>salad</b> and shared it with everyone. The other housemates <b>enjoyed</b> our <b>salad</b> . Their <b>enjoyment</b> made us happy. |
| Conjunctions           | Words used to connect other words. Well-known conjunctions are 'and,' 'but,' 'however,' and 'also.' Different conjunctions have different meanings.              | Some people enjoy eating meat, <b>but</b> meat is bad for health, the environment, the animals, <b>and</b> pandemics.   |
| Reference              | We can only understand a word or word in the text by referring to another word or words. In the example, to understand 'it,' we need to refer to 'Beyond Words.' | I enjoy reading the journal <b>Beyond Words</b> . In every issue, <b>it</b> has many useful articles.   |



### A Sample Lesson Plan

This section of the article illustrates the points in Table 1 via a language classroom engaged in an intensive reading lesson. The eight CL principles form a foundation for designing the lesson, and the seven PP principles enhance the lesson. It should be noted that different educators have different

lists of CL and PP principles. The students' task is to identify some of the cohesive devices in a short text. Each student has a partner with whom they take turns to go about the task. Box 1 contains *the text* and *the Part 1 task instructions*, followed by the answer key and *the Part 2 Discussion*.

#### Part 1. Instructions

*Work alone to read the text "We Are All Scientists." Check with your partner or online if anything is not clear. Then, take turns with your partner to do the 17 underlined items with superscript numbers. Identify the word(s) that each item connects*

*back to. #1, "For example<sup>1</sup>" refers back to "Science has done much to improve the lives of humans" and #2, "scientists<sup>2</sup> refers back to "Science." One of you will have the answer key for the odd-number items, and the other will have the answer key for the even-number items.*

#### We Are All Scientists

Science has done much to improve the lives of humans. For example<sup>1</sup>, scientists<sup>2</sup> have developed ways to clean the water that we<sup>3</sup> drink. Everyone can be a scientist, not just professional scientists. One area of science is sociology. This science<sup>4</sup> studies how people connect with others<sup>5</sup>. Whenever we do something with other people, we can be sociologists, and we can do sociology experiments.

Here is an example of a sociology experiment<sup>6</sup> that we can try with our<sup>7</sup> family or friends. The next time someone does something we like, for example, the person helps someone, we can praise them<sup>8</sup>. Our experiment can be about how we feel when we praise others. To measure the results of our experiment, after we praise, we can do a measurement<sup>9</sup> of how we feel on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as not happy and 5 as very happy.

Maybe we can try praising other people five times, and each time after we do<sup>10</sup>, we can record how happy we feel. Next, we add our scores together. The total<sup>11</sup> can be between 5 and 25. Then, we think about and discuss with others the impact of praising on our<sup>12</sup> feelings. Did praising make us happier? Did some ways of praising make us happier than other ways of doing it<sup>13</sup>? Maybe this latter question<sup>14</sup> can be the focus of another experiment.

Science is all around us. It<sup>15</sup> can improve our lives in many ways. Therefore, the world needs many scientists. Fortunately, there are many different sciences<sup>16</sup>. So, please be a scientist every day, please do many experiments, and please share their<sup>17</sup> results with others. Thank you.

**Students' Task**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Science has done much to improve the lives of humans | 10. |
| 2. Science  | 11. |
| 3.  | 12. |
| 4.  | 13. |
| 5.  | 14. |
| 6.  | 15. |
| 7.  | 16. |
| 8.  | 17. |
| 9.  |     |

**Answer Key**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Science has done much to improve the lives of humans | 10. praise other people five times                           |
| 2. Science  | 11. the total of our scores                                  |
| 3. humans   | 12. the feelings of ourselves and the people we discuss with |
| 4. sociology  | 13. praising   |
| 5. people   | 14. Did some ways of praising make us happier?               |
| 6. sociology experiment                                 | 15. science  |
| 7. we   | 16. scientists   |
| 8. the person who helps someone                         | 17. the experiment   |
| 9. measure  | 9. measure   |

**Part 2 - Discussion Questions**

*Instructions:* In your groups of four, each member chooses a question, 1, 2, or 3, and shares their answer to that question with the group. The group works together to answer the questions in #4.

9. The reading passage said that clean water was one way that science improved our lives. What is another way that we benefit from science?

10. Do you like people to praise you?

11. Do you sometimes praise your teachers?

The class, as in the previous example lesson, consists of 50 students. Using the CL principle of **Heterogeneous Grouping**, students form 12 groups of four students and one group of two students, with each group of four divided into pairs. Pairs provide the greatest quantity of peer interactions. Past achievement in reading will be the main variable used in forming these 25 groups of two, such that the groups will be a mix of

The PP principle of **Relationships with Others** can come to life, as people who might not otherwise communicate now have a need to interact. The hope is that students from different backgrounds can come to appreciate each other by working together toward a common goal (Aronson, 2020); thereby students can increase their friendship circles, with the result being less of a tendency for divisive cliques to form among the class members.

Students have the answer key, thereby promoting the CL principle of **Group Autonomy**, because they have less need to check with the teacher, although the teacher and the other pair in their foursome are available in the case of questions and doubts. Because teachers spend less time providing

12. What is something that you want to know about? How could you do research about your question? Do you know anyone who might like to do the experiment with you, or who might like to know the result of your research?

**Bonus task:** Do a role play in which the words in a paragraph show how they connect with each other. For example, one person can be “it” and form a pair with the person who is a word to which “it” refers.

student who are relatively high and low in past achievement. In this way, relatively weaker readers can receive more assistance, and their peers have more opportunities to learn by teaching. Duran (2017) reviewed research on students learning by teaching peers and found that more complex teaching activities provided students with greater openings for learning by teaching peers.

answers, they are able to spend more time observing how students interact, e.g., observing the peer teaching and thinking how to guide students to enjoy more effective peer teaching in the future.

The active cohesive devices provide scope for the CL principle of **Teaching of Collaborative Skills**. Any interaction involves multiple collaborative skills. One such skill that students can work on is waiting patiently. Opportunities to use this skill might arise when the higher achiever waits for the lower achiever to try alone to do one of the items. Too often, students become impatient and answer for their partner. Waiting patiently operationalizes the PP principle of **Kindness**, as it shows kindness

when students who need more time are not pressured to rush.

The CL principle of **Maximum Peer Interactions** comes into play in two ways. First, as students mostly are in groups of two or four, the quantity of peer interactions can be high. Second, the quality of peer interactions can also be high, as students discuss their answers and as they use the collaborative skill of waiting patiently. Students may need guidance both on how to have in depth discussions and how to wait patiently.

Because students each have half of the answer key, even the less proficient readers will be able to offer feedback to their partners. This provides students opportunities to use the PP principle of **Positivity**, as they praise their partners for correct answers and for trying again if their initial answer was labelled wrong. Also, please notice the positive theme of the reading passage. Indeed, the topics of the texts used in class offer an additional avenue for raising values, thereby being in concord with the CL principle of **Cooperation as a Value**. Also, expressions of gratitude links with the PP principle of **Meaning**, as when student express and receive gratitude as part of an activity, the importance of an activity increases, i.e., by participating in the activity, students are not just moving 30 minutes nearer to the end of the school day; they are also helping others and themselves and building bonds with those around them.

At the end of the lesson or before the class moves on to the discussion questions, students can enact the PP principle of expressing **Gratitude**. This gratitude could be expressed for ideas shared, for time spent waiting patiently, for answers provided and explained, etc. Gratitude can be expressed in words or by visuals, e.g., various emojis can be used, as well as hand signs, such as

thumbs up. Furthermore, teachers can express gratitude to the entire class, a particular group, or particular students for contributing to the success of the lesson.

Students praising their peers' fits with the PP principle of **Strengths**. Focusing on strengths bolsters individual students' self-confidence, along with giving students confidence that group activities are not a case of the lost leading each other to be even more lost. This focus on **Strengths** encourages students that they can successfully take **Responsibility** to do their fair share in their group, i.e., to live up to their **Individual Accountability**. Seeing their peers' greater confidence and responsibility, plus knowing that their partners possess half the answer key, makes it more likely that all group members will be afforded **Equal Opportunity to Participate**, in accordance with CL principles.

Many ways exist of mobilizing the CL principle of **Positive Interdependence**. Two of the ways used in the cohesion activity are Resource Positive Interdependence and Role Positive Interdependence. Each member of each pair has a unique resource, as they each have one half of the answer key. They need to share this resource in order to check their group's understanding of cohesion. They each have the rotating role of Answerer as they take turns to try first to do the items in the activity. Please remember that positive interdependence is about everyone in the group needing to learn, not about the group as a whole completing a task. If the best reader in the group does all the items, the group could very likely finish the task quicker, but by giving each member an **Equal Opportunity to Participate**, the resulting role positive interdependence increases the likelihood that everyone will indeed learn as a result of the activity, rather than being a bystander.

Last but not least, this lesson promotes student centered learning in a number of ways. For example, students need to be very involved as they rotate roles to do the cohesion activity. Also, the reading passage was designed to connect to students' lives.

The discussion questions that follow the reading passage encourage students to use their thinking skills as they think of their own examples and work together to design an experiment that addresses a question of their own creation based on their own lives

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has explained CL and PP, proposed links between the two, suggested the CL and PP fit well in the overall framework of student centered learning, and provided two example lesson plans that illustrate CL and PP in action together. In combination, the whole–CL and PP together–becomes greater than the sum of its parts in two ways.

*One*, the interaction promoted by CL provides a foundation for the principles of PP:

1. relationships with others as students learn and enjoy together in groups;
2. responsibility for doing one's fair share in the group;

3. gratitude as students and teachers help each other accomplish shared goals;

4. positivity as students and teachers see what they can accomplish together;

5. strengths as students appreciate what each other bring to the group and how all develop via their collaboration;

6. kindness as students and teachers build a cooperative environment;

7. meaning derived from doing activities that are useful for self and others.

*Two*, the magic of CL lies in students' interaction as they scaffold (Zarei & Alipour, 2020) for each other, and PP gives students and teachers a new set of tools for enabling collective scaffolding.

**George M. Jacobs, Ph.D.** has many years' experience teaching language and education to students from many countries and sharing about his teaching with fellow educators. Among his favorite topics are student-centered education, language variation, and humane education. He has more than 300 publications, and his favorite journal is *Beyond Words*.

**Meng Huat Chau, Ph.D.** began his career as an English language teacher and has taught students across all levels at different schools and institutions before he joined Universiti Malaya in 2010. Among his favorite topics in language education are student and teacher agency. He has a feeling that *Beyond Words* is going to be one of his favorite journals soon

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