

Cooperative Approaches



#17. September 2023



Cooperating to Learn

Cooperative pedagogies in formal and non-formal education

"The only path offering humanity hope for a better future is one of cooperation and partnership."
Kofi Annan

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Cooperative Approaches, a quarterly journal, is published free of charge in digital format by the Association for the Promotion of Cooperative Approaches (APAC). APAC's mission is to promote cooperative approaches in key areas of social life: youth and adult education, social action, organizational management, economy and culture, citizen participation, international solidarity.

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Learning as a profoundly social phenomenon

By Dominique BENARD



In his book, *Communities of practice. Learning, meaning and identity*, Etienne WENGER¹ writes: "Our institutions, to the extent that they address issues of learning explicitly, are largely based on the assumption that learning is an individual process, that it has a beginning and an

1. WENGER E., *Communities of practice. Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge University Press, New York 1998.

end, that it is best separated from the rest of our activities, and that it is the result of teaching."

He believes that it is on this assumption that we have created school classrooms where students - free from the distractions of the outside world - can focus their attention on the teacher and the exercises he or she proposes. He also notes that this institutionalized approach to teaching is perceived by many as boring, tedious and irrelevant.

Wenger then poses the following questions: "... *What if we adopted a different perspective, one that placed learning in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world? What if we assumed that learning is as much a part of our human nature as eating or sleeping, that it is both life-sustaining and inevitable, and that - given a chance - we are quite good at it? And what if, in addition, we*

assumed that learning is, in its essence, a fundamentally social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as human beings capable of knowing? What kind of understanding would such a perspective yield on how learning takes place and on what is required to support it?... "

Moderne and the Office Central de Coopération à l'Ecole, on the one hand, and, on the other, to the main popular education organizations working outside of schools: the Francas, Scouting movements and the UCPA, with its American partner Project-Adventure.

These questions are at the heart of this issue of Cooperative Approaches, and in an attempt to answer them, we wanted to focus our attention on a phenomenon that is gaining momentum: the growing interest among teachers and trainers in cooperative pedagogies, precisely those that start from the premise that learning is fundamentally a social act.

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Yet these same cooperative pedagogies are also practiced within so-called popular education associations and youth movements. Is the boundary between formal and non-formal education shrinking? Could convergences be emerging between the school world and extracurricular educational organizations to effectively combat school failure and disengagement?

To explore this hypothesis, guided by teacher-researcher Sylvain Connac, a specialist in cooperative pedagogies, we decided to give voice to the organizations in France supporting cooperative pedagogy in schools: The Institut Coopératif pour l'Ecole

What is co-operative education?

By Dominique BENARD



Jean Piaget highlighted three concepts

The libertarian pedagogues who sought to promote cooperation in schools wanted to replace the teacher-student relationship with one of permanent co-learning, in which each individual would share what they knew with the others, and together seek what no one already knew. Co-operative pedagogies therefore appeared highly subversive from the outset, and even today they are

criticized for overlooking the essential and unsurpassable nature of transmission, for favoring education over instruction, for undermining the authority of the teacher, and so on.

Learning as a cooperative construct

However, the strength of cooperative pedagogies lies in the fact that they are based on a conception of learning that has been corroborated by recent discoveries in neuroscience.

Learners are not passive recipients of information; they actively construct their knowledge through interaction with their environment and the reorganization of their mental structures. The Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget highlighted three concepts that clearly explain this construction process which still holds relevance today: assimilation, cognitive conflict and, accommodation.



Assimilation is coping with a new situation on the basis of an existing "schema". For example, a toddler can assimilate a new ball into the "toys that can be thrown" schema;

Cognitive conflict arises if the new ball is too heavy to throw, the child can't use the usual schema, and enters a situation of cognitive conflict. Cognitive conflict is extremely useful for challenging habits of thought and developing new perspectives.

Accommodation occurs when the child realizes, through

experience, that they can roll the ball creating a new schema: "toys that can be rolled". This time, they used accommodation, i.e., the ability to cope with a new situation by modifying an existing schema or creating a new one.

Piaget helped advance 5 key elements which explain learning:

- Learners interact with their environment to better understand.
- Learning is an active process.
- Learners must relate their new experiences to their prior knowledge for meaningful learning to occur.
- They learn new ways of learning as they progress through the learning process.
- The focus must be on student activity, rather than teacher actions. Pedagogy must be student-centered.

A Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, complemented Piaget's discoveries. While Piaget emphasized the child's individual explorations, Vygotsky asserted that it is social interactions that enable the child to acquire new knowledge and abilities. Complex mental processes begin as collective, social activities, not individual ones.

The zone of proximal development

Children first perform more difficult tasks with the help of more competent people, then become capable of performing them individually and independently.

Lev Vygotsky defines three zones to describe the learning process:

1. **The breakdown or panic zone** includes all tasks that the learner is unable to perform, even with a lot of help.
2. **The zone of autonomy** or comfort zone includes all tasks that the learner can accomplish alone, autonomously, without any help.
3. **The zone of proximal development** or stretch zone lies between the first two zones. It includes all tasks that the learner cannot do alone, but can achieve with effort and often benefits by help from others. According to Vygotsky, this is the zone where instruction and guidance should be focused to facilitate learning.

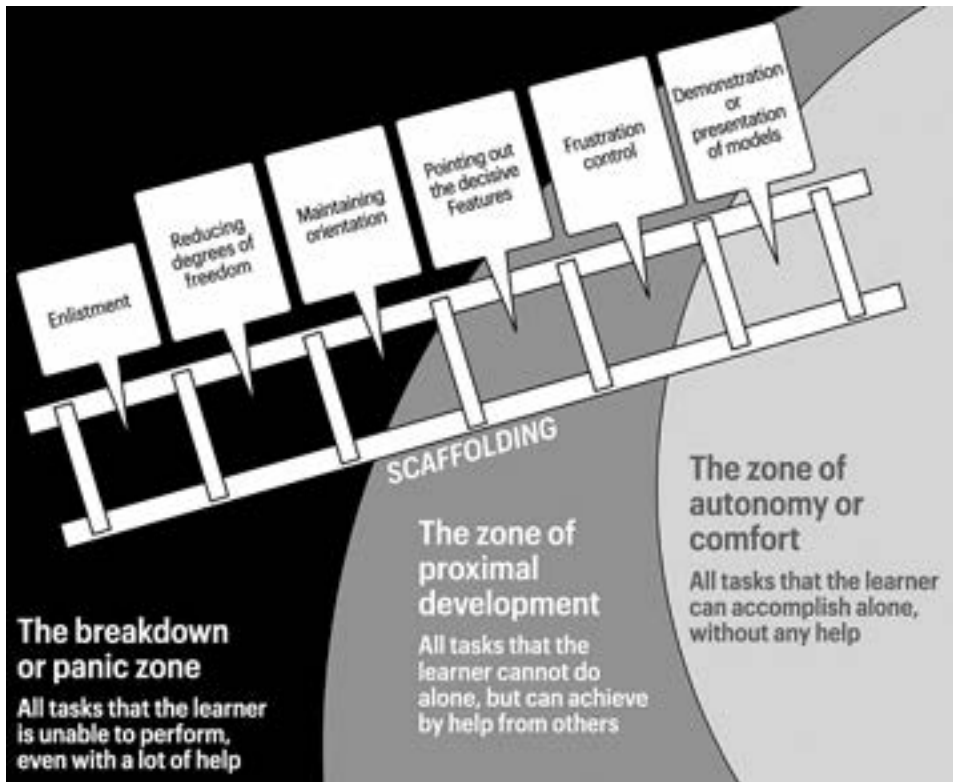
The American psychologist and educator Jerome Bruner, who in the 1960s developed a theory of learning known as discovery learning, extended Vygotsky's work by defining the concept of scaffolding

to guide the learner through the learning process.

According to **Bruner**, scaffolding has 6 functions that must be implemented by the learning tutor:

1. **Enlistment** involves developing the learner's interest in the demands of the task and securing their commitment.
2. **Reducing degrees of freedom** is simplifying the task to make it more accessible to the learner, by reducing the number of actions required to reach a solution.
3. **Maintaining orientation** prevents the learner from losing sight of the goal assigned by the task.
4. **Pointing out the decisive features** so that the gap between what the learner has produced and what the tutor considers to be a correct response is understood.
5. **Frustration control** to prevent errors from leading to a sense of failure and giving up.
6. **Finally, demonstration or presentation of models** is a condition in which the tutor not only shows the learner how to do it, but also endeavors to guide his or her learning by, for example, justifying a solution partially

The concept of scaffolding



"Vygotsky's Proximal Development Zone" and et "Brunner's Scaffolding"

executed by the learner and encouraging them to complete it.

Project and set of tools

Philippe MEIRIEU, a French specialist in educational sciences, insists that to properly define cooperative pedagogy, we need to emphasize that it is both a "project" and a set of "tools".

Project

In the introduction to Sylvain CONNAC's book *"Apprendre avec les pédagogies coopératives"* (learning through cooperative pedagogies), Jean Legal defines the cooperative class project as follows:

"Cooperative classes are educational spaces at the heart of which the players have the opportunity to learn through cooperation. Most often, this takes the form of self-help situations where, faced with a difficulty, each individual is free to ask a peer to help overcome it. It can also take the form of tutoring, a more elaborate and defined form of mutual aid. Children who have expressed a specific need are accompanied by another, recognized by the group as an expert and are responsible for the support requested... These cooperative practices at school break with ordinary teaching models, which place an adult in a position of mastery in front of children (or young people) identified by their ignorance in the specified field. Enabling children to take part in cooperative approaches means inviting them to invest in areas of freedom, and to practice an evolved form of democracy seen from the angle of tight affiliations."

Tools

The essential tool of cooperative pedagogy is the "council", which enables the teacher to enter into dialogue with the pupils and encourage a dynamic of communication and cooperation. ... Cooperative pedagogy, explains Philippe Meirieu, is also about, "group work techniques (surveys, projects, etc.)... but also personalized work techniques



It is essential that the adult does not abdicate anything

to ensure that everyone reaches the necessary level in all areas and can really participate in the work of the groups. The technique of "proficiency badges", derived from Scouting, so that evaluation is not primarily a means of confronting others in a competitive logic, but of surpassing oneself to put oneself at the service of the group...".

To ensure the success of a cooperative approach, adds Philippe Meyrieu, it is essential that the adult does not abdicate anything :

"He or she organizes the most suitable work situations and embodies the demand for precision, accuracy and truth in every gesture. This requirement is fundamental, and is what gives

cooperative pedagogy its full value. Because the main drift of practices that claim to be cooperative and are not truly mastered is the division of labor. When you put five or six students to work - and this is true of adults too, of course! - and you give them a task to carry out together, they are quickly tempted to organize themselves into designers, executors, unemployed and troublemakers! In this way, they reproduce what they already know how to do, ratify cultural or social inequalities and learn very little!"

This is why the systematic rotation of roles and tasks is a decisive factor.



Cooperative pedagogies in non-formal education

Cooperative pedagogies are also practiced outside the school in educational associations that some refer to popular, non-formal or out-of-school education. In France examples included the associations of French Scouting, Franches et Franches Camarades and the UCPA, which agreed to contribute to this issue. As far back as 1919, Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, in introducing the "system of teams and councils" as one of the characteristic elements of the Scout method, wrote: "It is the system of teams that makes Scouting unity, and all Scouting for that matter, a genuine cooperative effort."

Scouting has sometimes drifted towards authoritarianism, but the

member associations of French Scouting, and first and foremost the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France, deserve credit for having revived and developed this essential characteristic of Scouting, notably with the introduction of coeducation and young people's participation in decision-making. We cannot fail to be struck by the great similarities between the Scout method and the principles of "institutional pedagogy" and "cooperative pedagogies" presented, for example, by Aïda Vasquez, Fernand Oury or Sylvain Connac.

Both these pedagogies and Scouting are based on the practice of :

- giving young people the opportunity to express themselves and take part in decision-making;
- group organization into small teams to enable sharing and rotation of roles, as well as the practice of mutual aid and tutoring;
- life contracts and the law, to enable young people to discover the fundamental human values proposed by adults, and to co-manage the group by adopting life rules proposed, discussed and decided by the council;
- learning through experience (experimental trial and error as advocated by Célestin Freinet);

Fighting against failure and disengagement at school, as well as strengthening education for democratic citizenship

- and finally, the insistence on personal progress through the practice of personal objectives and the system of competency certificates.

The similarities between cooperative pedagogies in schools and the practices of popular education associations could give rise to closer cooperation in the fight against failure and disengagement at school, as well as strengthening education for democratic citizenship. Popular education associations could benefit more from the work of educational science researchers to strengthen their educational methods and the training of their leaders. Many teachers are already involved on a voluntary basis in popular education associations, where they can find support and additional training in the practice of cooperative pedagogies.

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MEETING WITH SYLVAIN CONNAC

Cooperating to learn or learning to cooperate ?

Interview with Sylvain CONNAC, teacher-researcher, by Dominique BENARD

Sylvain CONNAC is a teacher-researcher in Education Sciences at Montpellier's Paul Valéry University. He is also a member of the teaching staff at Antoine Balard Cooperative School in Montpellier and regularly publishes training and research articles in many educational journals.

DB - Good morning, Mr. Connac, and thank you for agreeing to this interview. The first question I'd like to ask concerns the origins of cooperative pedagogies.

SC - I think the origins of cooperation in this context lie mainly in social experiments of the 19th century, such as those of Robert Owen or Etienne Cabet, the "self-managing fraternities", the "phalansteries" or "familistères", and also Proudhon's mutualist approach. All these studies had a major influence on all that followed in the field of education.

The story of Robert Owen's involvement clearly shows that there was a desire to find an alternative to capitalism. So there were social experiments in cooperative living, which then influenced a number of educators who thought it would be interesting to encourage people, through education,



Sylvain CONNAC

to adopt these alternative lifestyles.

There were even cooperative experiments that predated these political and social movements. The first forms of cooperation in educational contexts can be found in what were known as "élèves préfets" or "student officers", of which John Baptist de la Salle spoke at length. These involved students helping other students. In the 17th century, forms of cooperation can be found in what may be considered the first treatise on

And also what was called "self-government", or "children's republics".

pedagogy: Comenius' "Grande Didactique".

In the 18th century, there were the "participatory and reciprocal schools" for Paris orphans. We should also mention what is known as "l'enseignement mutuel", which has nothing to do, in my opinion, with the social and workers' movement, but rather structures within a reforming Catholic Church. Using a method involving student monitors, a single adult could teach several hundred children.

In fact, there were several influences: social revolutions, as you noted, pedagogical influences, mainly from religious sources, and also influences from what was called "self-government", or "children's republics". We haven't managed to explain why, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, we find these children's republics all over the world: In England with the famous Bedales school, founded by John H. Badley in 1893, in Poland with Janusz Korczack and the Dom Sierot orphanage, in Germany with Paul Geheeb's school, and the school cities in the United States, and then Francisco Ferrer Guardia's famous "Modern School", which is the basis of the name of the modern school. These children's republics experiments had a major influence on the "school cooperatives" that still exist



Francisco Ferrer Guardia

today in the Office Central de Coopération à l'Ecoler (OCCE) movement.

The three founders of the OCCE, Bathélémy Profit, Emile Bugnon and Célestin Freinet, drew a great deal of inspiration from practices within these children's republics for creating their school cooperatives, but not at all with the same objective. The aim, they agreed, was to educate children in the notion of mutualism but there were tensions between Profit and Bugnon from the outset. For Emile Bugnon, the aim of the school cooperative was to educate children in mutualism, whereas for Profit it was more a question of educating children in civic commitment.

Today, in the OCCE, we still find



Célestin Freinet

new representations whereby the construction process is facilitated by social relationships.

We can distinguish three groups of influence: those who originated the notion of socio-cognitive conflict, i.e. Perret-Clermont, Doise, Mugny, all these people, Lev Vygotsky, whose work took place long before the others, but who was later translated into English and French, and who proposed the notion of the zone of proximal development, i.e. the zone where we learn through interaction with others, This is perfectly compatible with Jérôme Bruner's notion of scaffolding - these are somewhat similar ideas - and then there's a third influence, all the work by Bandura, known as vicarious learning, which was taken up in France by a psychologist called Maurice Rochat, who explains that we can learn through the process of deconstruction-reconstruction, but also through another, social process, that of observation-imitation. This is what he called vicariance.

So there are many influences, and we don't know who really introduced cooperation into education, but the very notion of school is after all quite cooperative. Bringing several children together in the same place with a teacher is in itself a form of community based cooperation. The school is an

this tension around whether the aim is to bring cooperatives to life, or to educate children in alternative approaches to social life through cooperation? I was at their conference a few weeks ago and it was evident that they're still not clear on that.

Then there was the Freinet movement, the Institut Coopératif de l'Ecole Moderne (ICEM). Célestin Freinet talked about cooperation between children, referring a lot to children's republics and school cooperatives, but the Freinet movement was more an adult cooperative movement than a genuine cooperative pedagogy.

Then there is the work of neo-Piagetians attending to the social dimensions of the constructivist. In this context learning means constructing

Then there was the Freinet movement, the Institut Coopératif de l'Ecole Moderne (ICEM).



School cooperative council. Office Central de Coopération à l'École.

Institutional pedagogy is a very recent concept.

alternative to preceptorship. As soon as there were schools, the first forms of cooperation necessarily appeared.

DB - And how does institutional pedagogy fit into this picture? Are we still talking about institutional pedagogy today?

SC - Yes, we talk about it a lot. Unlike all the movements we've just talked about, institutional pedagogy is a very recent concept. It first appeared in 1963, when the Freinet movement split with the Oury brothers (Jean and Fernand), who parted ways for interpersonal misunderstandings not pedagogical disagreements. The theory became "institutional pedagogy" because it could no longer be called "Freinet pedagogy"; and because

Jean Oury's institutional psychotherapy already existed. Institutional pedagogy is a pedagogy of cooperation, since one of its pillars is the notion of the group. Much more than Freinet's pedagogy, institutional pedagogy has been influenced by the group dynamics of American psychologists.

It's a pedagogy that's very much alive and kicking. There are many groups in France, and there's actually more research on institutional pedagogy than on Freinet pedagogy. Freinet pedagogy is a bit special in the sense that the Freinet movement is currently facing a major collective problem, which is the tendency to define itself as a "natural method", presented as a kind of dogma, whereas dogmatic thinking is totally unsuited to a scientific approach. Freinet's pedagogy appears to be extremely closed, which is why there are so few researchers interested in it today. I'm not very optimistic about its future, in fact.

DB - To deepen our understanding of cooperative pedagogies, I'd like you to explain the difference, which you've emphasized in your writings, between cooperative behavior and collaborative organization.

SC - Well, this corresponds to much more recent work, because it's linked to the attention paid in recent years -



Photo Escola Nova

Both promote exchanges, and there is a combined action in both. But what's specific to collaboration is the fact of acting towards a common goal. We get together to try to be faster, more efficient, more effective in achieving a common goal. Yet, it's difficult to collaborate. It requires a lot of intelligence, organizations that are quite rigorous, and quite meticulous. Yet we don't always manage to maintain those qualities over time. That's why in the world of business or work in general, we don't always manage to organize collaborative structures.

Often it's just coordination, meaning that there's a somewhat vertical system with one person in charge of passing on information and organizing everyone's work. Coordination is a lot easier but not necessarily more efficient since you don't necessarily engage people's active participation, but it's a lot less risky.

Collaboration is more interesting in terms of mobilizing players, but precisely because you're trying to mobilize, human phenomena come into play often in the form of relational conflicts, making collaboration more difficult. The principle of collaboration is about working towards a common goal whereby everyone gives everything they've got to reach that goal, and it's achieved on the basis of a division of

Thanks mainly to the cognitive sciences, we now have a much better understanding of cognitive phenomena

it's very recent - to the notion of cognition. Thanks mainly to the cognitive sciences, we now have a much better understanding of cognitive phenomena, i.e. what goes on in the brain to describe what we call learning. There's one thing we all agree on when it comes to learning, and that's that we can only learn by ourselves. Learning is first and foremost the learner's activity.

The teacher, trainer or educator can only be a facilitator of this learning process. This idea has led to an interest in the social dimension. What in a relationship is involved in cognition if we can only learn by ourselves? This question then led us to distinguish between the notion of cooperating and that of collaborating. Both are similar in that they belong to a broader group that we might call interaction or interrelation.



Photo Escola Nova

The division of labor often reinforces a students' innate talents v. encouraging them to explore new ones

labor which takes into account everyone's talents. Depending on the initial training, and skills and competencies of each individual, each person then contributes in his or her own way to the achievement of the common goal. So, this is what we might call collective intelligence... Collaboration is pretty interesting when you're trying to achieve something.

Cooperation, on the other hand, simply means acting with others. You don't necessarily act with someone else because you have a common goal. A situation involving communication is not necessarily a collaboration situation, but it is a cooperation situation. And so, we've realized that when we try to get students to work together to learn, there's a problem. The division of labor often reinforces a students' innate talents v. encouraging them to explore new ones..

This was Philippe Meirieu's initial thesis, and the work of the cooperative pedagogue Roger Cousinet. By organizing student work through collaboration, his students divided up tasks according to those who already know how to do them, and this division is profoundly unequal. Philippe Meirieu speaks of a distribution with "designers", "executors", "unemployed" and "troublemakers". And the only ones who can hope to learn something are the designers, because they're the only ones with any cognitive activity, and they become designers precisely because they're the most competent.

The difference between cooperating, acting with others, and collaborating, working with others, may be a little problematic because if we make students collaborate, we fall into a terrible pedagogical drift whereby none of the students learn anything, and what's more, we cause existing gaps in social inequalities to widen.

DB - Very interesting!

SC - The principle is to think of and examine cooperative pedagogies that are not collaborative, i.e. cooperative pedagogies that give children the opportunity to work with, by and for others, without forgetting and recognizing how in these instances the goal is individual. In other words, the aim of a cooperative pedagogy



Photo Escola Nova

The three main areas of cooperation

is not a common goal, but an individual one, and because it's an individual goal, it's perfectly compatible with the demands of cognition, because we can only learn by ourselves.

When we studied how cooperation can help students to learn, we identified three main areas:

1. The first is mutual support: when we have a task to perform, being able to count on potential help and support in our environment helps us to combat feelings of isolation and the temptation to give up.
2. The second aspect of cooperation is being able to obtain ideas from others that we would never have had on our own, and vice versa.

This is what we call the complementarity dimension. It's what makes some students say, "When I work with others, it's like having several brains!"

3. And the third idea, which is both the most worked on at the scientific level and the least understood at the pedagogical level, is cooperation around conflict, because the fact of disagreeing in a cooperative situation leads each disagreeing subject to re-examine the soundness of their own certainties, and thus to become more open to questioning and learning reconfiguration. Here we return to the work on the power of socio-cognitive conflict as a learning vector.

DB - That's really very interesting. I'd now like to move on to my next question: What do you think is the value of cooperative pedagogies as a response to the shortcomings within the French school system? In particular, the fact that it fails to reduce social inequalities. What is your opinion on this point?

SC - Well, as we've just seen, if we're not careful, cooperative pedagogies can increase social inequalities. And that's what Freinet's pedagogy has been criticized for, especially today, because it has trouble distinguishing between

An easy solution called the "consensus of complacency"

cooperating and collaborating, or conceiving cooperative activities as potentially asymmetrical. We observe, for example, that it's always the same people who help the others, it's always the same people who need help but don't ask for it... when put into groups, pupils do everything to avoid disagreement, adopting an easy solution that my colleague at Nanterre University, Marianne Dion, calls the "consensus of complacency". In other words, to identify who is the most competent, ask for their opinion and say "*It's okay, I agree with you*". In thirty seconds, you've done what you had to do, and you can talk about something else.

It's an effortless solution that's terrible in the classroom. These are huge traps that can very quickly transform cooperative organizations into vectors for accelerating inequalities.

DB - There's no differentiation?

SC - Oh yes, there is differentiation. I work with a Belgian colleague, Sabine Khan, who says that in this case, differentiation means seeing the best succeed and all the others stop working! That's a terrible differentiation! It's based on students' social and cultural origins!

So, how can cooperative organizations combat the furthering of these inequalities?

Well, we're working on it, but it's only a very recent concern. There are a number of benefits of course. The first of which is the full enrollment or engagement of students by giving them the opportunity to work with others often leads to their have less of a risk that they get into trouble on their own. Jerome Bruner's concept of enrollment is interesting in this respect.

A second advantage of cooperative pedagogies, in particular with precepts such as mutual aid and tutoring, is that they give students the possibility of initiating a request for help when they feel stuck, as a way of becoming unblocked. My colleague at Bordeaux University, Alain Maudry, has done a lot of work on this. Another interesting aspect of cooperation is the importance given to conflict.

In other words, we insist on the value of disagreement with our students. Indeed, what often happens when students are put into groups is the temptation to reach a consensus by complacency. But we've found that even if they use this avoidance strategy, it can give the whole class the opportunity to assess all the different ideas that have been put forward by the different groups, and then use this diversity of opinion to generate socio-cognitive conflict. There are many promising ways of



As long as we're not clear about this, we're bound to create cooperative systems that segregate the most vulnerable

organizing cooperation to combat inequality, but only if the educators who use these techniques are aware of the potential pitfalls and techniques to work around them. For example, they need to be clear about the difference between monitoring, as used in mutual teaching, and tutoring. In tutoring, anyone can help, not just the best. As long as we're not clear about this, we're bound to create cooperative systems that segregate the most vulnerable.

DB - Does this help explain the difficulty of promoting cooperative pedagogies in schools?

SC - In fact, the notion of cooperation is one on which politicians all agree. Everyone wants to see cooperation in schools. But not for the same

reasons. That is to say, the more progressive, left-wing political colorings militate in favor of cooperation as a source of social emancipation: cooperative pedagogies are an opportunity to make people aware of the importance of social policies, of caring for the most vulnerable.

DB - And acquire social skills?

SC - No, it's not so much about social skills, it's about listening and paying special attention to the most vulnerable. It's about the strongest making themselves available to the weakest. This is what lies at the heart of cooperation for left-wing parties.

Right-wing parties, or rather liberal parties, are also very much in favor of cooperative pedagogies, but for an entirely different reason. It's about developing social skills. It's about learning to work with others. Because if, thanks to school, students learn to work with others, they'll be much better and faster collaborators in the world of work. And this is clearly stated in the European Union Bologna Treaty, for example, which requires all education systems to implement cooperative pedagogies...

In fact, these are collaborative pedagogies, since the aim is to learn to work with others. The aim isn't necessarily to learn, it's to learn to take a back seat when you're not competent enough,

The only people who don't agree are the far-right, because they think that the only kind of education is one born of the adoration of a master

to learn to listen to what others are saying, to respect turns, and so on... So everyone agrees on cooperative teaching methods, but not for the same reasons.

The only people who don't agree are the far-right, because they think that the only kind of education is one born of the adoration of a master. That's the basis of true authority. In fact, it's authoritarianism. It's totally consistent with these political postures and, moreover, it's the reason why - I don't like it when I say this, but it's a historical fact - it's the reason why Mussolini didn't turn to Freinet, he turned to Montessori, he asked Montessori to turn his pedagogy into fascist pedagogy. Montessori's pedagogy is not at all a pedagogy of cooperation.

DB - So you think there's interest within the French education system in adopting cooperative pedagogies?

SC - Yes, there's enormous interest. But there's another reason or motivation, and that's the increasing heterogeneity of students in the classroom. In other words, today's teachers are increasingly being asked to "take into account the diversity of pupils". This is part of the 21st century teacher competency framework, which aims to ensure that all students master a diploma.

What we're asking teachers to do today is to do everything in their



power to prevent students from dropping out of school. In any class, there are diverse children, there's a lot of heterogeneity, so how can you think of applying a uniform pedagogy with such diverse children? That's where cooperative organizations come into their own, because the teacher is no longer the only resource person who can give students a helping hand. We offer students a time for partnering so this diversity becomes an asset rather than a constraint.

It's due to the social injunction to make all students succeed academically that cooperative pedagogies are recognized as interesting.

The problem is that while it attracts a lot of people, if they are not properly trained in cooperation, they will easily

**"Cooperative learning",
developed by two
American psychologists
and educators, the
Johnson brothers.**

confuse cooperation with collaboration. And then they'll quickly realize that it doesn't work. I've heard teachers say, *"But I've already tried group work... There's too much noise, it's always the same people working, and in the end, the most fragile students fall behind. So it doesn't work, I don't want to hear any more about it!"*

I tell them, "What you've set up isn't cooperative pedagogy, it's something else." - *"But that's what I was told in training!"* - The problem in France is that there aren't enough trained trainers.

DB - France is home to many pioneers of cooperative pedagogy, yet their experiences and research remain little used. Why is this?

SC - The work of French educators is well known in France. It's not necessarily widely used, but Freinet's pedagogy is very well known in France. Worldwide, there's a lot of talk about cooperation, but not with French influence. The influences are mainly American. In particular, what is known as "cooperative learning", developed by two American psychologists and educators, the Johnson brothers. It's a concept that is hegemonic worldwide, but little known in France.

In Spain, for example, I worked with a Catalan researcher who is an expert in cooperative learning, and who had never

heard of Freinet pedagogy or school cooperatives. He had never even heard of Francisco Ferrer Guardia, or only very vaguely. This can be explained by the fact that the world's research system is heavily influenced by liberal and neo-liberal policies. Cooperative learning means learning to cooperate...

In Canada, for example, there are cooperative courses where students take part in exercises, participate in highly recreational, highly motivating experiences where the aim is not to learn history, science, English or mathematics, but to develop "cooperative skills". The best-known technique is Jigsaw. It's used all over the world, whatever the age of the children, even in vocational training, and it's starting to arrive in France. A lot of teachers use it because it motivates students, but it's not designed for them to learn what the teacher wants them to learn in terms of academic content. So the teacher sometimes feel stuck in the end.

DB - I find your analysis of the confusion between cooperation and collaboration, and the confusion between learning by cooperating and learning social skills, very interesting.

SC - Yes, it's learning to cooperate or cooperating to learn. Learning to cooperate is more in line with the liberal

The most important thing in a project-based pedagogy aimed at education is not that the project is completed, but that the project has given everyone the opportunity to grow



and neo-liberal approach to cooperation, and cooperating to learn is more in line with the democratization of educational success, and much more in line with progressive policies.

DB - You've shed a lot of light on this, and I'd like to ask you another question. I used to see a link between cooperative pedagogies in formal education and cooperative pedagogies in non-formal education, but now I have the impression that in non-formal education collaborative pedagogies are used more.

SC - Well, it depends on the priorities you give to project-based pedagogy. In the

philosophy of education, there's a distinction between poïésies and praxis. In project-based pedagogy, if the most important thing is for the project to be beautiful, and for people to be proud of this fine achievement, then we're looking to create a work of art (poïésies), which is the poïétique approach. And it's true that, for a long time, we thought that project-based pedagogy should lead to beautiful works, and that if the work was beautiful, necessarily those who had participated in this beautiful realization had benefited from it. We've backed off that idea to the notion that project-based teaching can also be based on the acquisition of skills through the experience that takes shape during the course of the project, whatever the quality of the final product.

DB - It's linked to the importance we give to the personal progress of participants.

SC - That's right. The most important thing in a project-based pedagogy aimed at education is not that the project is completed, but that the project has given everyone the opportunity to grow. This was already explained in the work of Philippe Perrenoud, among others, but it requires a great deal of support today, particularly in vocational high schools where project and masterpiece pedagogy have become central. We could refer



work. Today, on the other hand, there seems to be a growing separation between school on the one hand and extracurricular educational movements on the other. Between formal and non-formal education. What do you think about this? In educational research, are there any researchers interested in non-formal education?

SC - What you're describing isn't linked to a particular conception of education, it's linked to the disenchantment with the whole notion of civic engagement in society. There was a very rich French model, but it's tending to be erased by the consumer society, by the promotion of individualistic models, by the failure to transmit the idea that the priority in living beings is cooperation, not the quest for domination over others. In the world of teaching, this has resulted in the proletarianization of the profession. The fact that teachers are asked to be more executors than authors of education, to respect programs imposed by the ministry rather than being real educators with children.

So today, in schools and educational establishments, a teacher who would like to be an educational activist will be asked for an explanation, saying "*But what are you doing? You're doing more than what is asked of you! Can you explain to us whether what you're doing in addition to the others is worth doing?*"

Teachers are asked to be more executors than authors of education, to respect programs imposed by the ministry rather than being real educators with children

to a famous poem by Antonio Machado: "Traveler, the path is the tracks of your footsteps. That's all; traveler, there is no path, the path is made by walking". In other words, the most important thing in project-based pedagogy isn't the project itself, it's what the young people can develop in terms of skills, self-confidence and motivation, through the project experience.

DB - I have another question I'd like to ask you. When I was in CM2, in 1952, I remember that our teacher gave a presentation on the *Francs et Franches Camarades* to the class, encouraging us to join. I think that at the time, after the war, there was quite a strong relationship between formal and non-formal education in France. Many teachers were involved in extracurricular educational movements as a complement to their educational

There's nothing in the organization of the French Ministry of Education to encourage teaching professionals to become educational activists

And so, the most motivated and the most committed, it requires a lot more work from them, they take a lot more risks and after a while they say "*What's the point?*" And so they commit themselves elsewhere and differently than in the field of education, or to causes that may be educational but with barriers between their world of civic commitment and their world of professional commitment.

Today, there's nothing in the organization of the French Ministry of Education to encourage teaching professionals to become educational activists, and if anything, they're discouraged from doing so. However, there are reasons to hope that it will become important again, particularly where citizenship is concerned. There's one thing that the school and non-school worlds have in common, and that's what's known as participatory pedagogy.

In other words, both in and out of school, children, whatever their age, are considered valid interlocutors, and are involved in the decisions that concern them. Not just by making them believe that they have a say, when the decisions have already been taken elsewhere. Thinking about how decisions are made, for example... The French specialist in this kind of question is Jean Le Gal from the University of Nantes, who has worked on children's rights... The

fact, for example, of prohibiting oneself from using voting to make a decision, because voting is the act of imposing the voice of the majority on all minorities. And we can see what this has done for us as citizens, i.e. the practice of voting at national level... There was no malpractice in the last presidential elections, but we did get a democratically elected president thanks to the votes of people who didn't want his competitor. And then we end up with a highly contested reform like the pension reform, with arguments that are inevitably seen as provocation by a president who says "But I don't know why you don't agree with me, I had put this reform in my program." Forgetting that he was elected thanks to people who didn't agree with his program, but who didn't want his opponent to have access to power. Faced with the excesses of democratic organizations that we collectively suffer, we could propose alternatives to bring them to life for children in and out of school, for example by setting up children's councils and paying very close attention to what children have to say.

This doesn't mean treating children as kings who can decide whatever comes into their heads - that's not it at all. This requires resources for adult training, in the training of vacation center leaders, in non-profits and teacher training. But this requires political impetus.



Photo Escola Nova

The challenge is to provide support for teachers so that they don't make mistakes.

DB - I've done a lot of work in cooperation within African countries, and schools are not in very good shape in those countries. Do you think that cooperative pedagogies could improve the situation?

SC - But what kind of cooperative teaching methods? It's a bit like in France... If we ask teachers to implement cooperation it won't be any better if it turns out to be either a happy mess or collaborative structures.

So, once again, the challenge is to provide support for teachers so that they don't make mistakes. The question I can't answer today is whether it's better to leave the school as it is, or to impose a form of collaboration that risks having

the opposite effects to those expected. I've been in classes where teachers say they're implementing cooperation, and the pupils say, "It's catastrophic! We're not learning anything, and what's more, it's a mess in class!" Internationally, I don't know. I don't have any experience in such contexts...

DB - When you have, for example, a teacher facing a class of 70 students or more, what to do?

SC - I have a few PhD students from these countries who describe such situations, and I tell them, for example, that mutual teaching could be great. As long as people are trained and supported. If not it could be worse rather than better. This is where there is a need to maintain a diplomatic weave between pedagogy, education and politics because emancipatory and democratic education can never be implemented and disseminated without the help of politicians except when experimenting in a private schools where too often there is just a culture of self-interest with no real impact except in history textbooks.

DB - Listen, thank you very much for your time. Do you have anything else to say in conclusion?

SC - Well, thank you very much for what you do. I think it's essential to have forums like the

one you run, where people are reminded that what's normal in human terms is relationships and cooperation, and what's exceptional and marginal is the quest for superiority over others.

So, we need to remind ourselves of what was obvious only a few years ago, but has been completely erased by our consumer society.

What's normal in human terms is relationships and cooperation, and what's exceptional and marginal is the quest for superiority over others

When I work with teachers and ask what's more important in society: cooperation or striving to be better than others, there are plenty who say most important is to be better than others, that is the best way to survive! And I tell them no, not at all! Most agree this is not the solution yet our Western lifestyles would have us believe otherwise.

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Teaching the principles and virtues of cooperation

By Catherine HUEBER, national education coordinator



It works in partnership with the Ministry under a Multi-Year Objectives Agreement to develop citizenship and academic success

The origins of the OCCE : the Social and Solidarity Economy

The Office Central de la Coopération à l'École (OCCE) was created in 1928, under the impetus of members of the teaching profession and cooperative activists. They had a conviction that once a child started in school it was essential they be taught the principles and virtues of cooperation based on the OCCE's work around the social and solidarity economy.

OCCE's first president was renowned educator Emile Bugnon (1880-1963) who, a pioneer of school cooperation, later joined the OCCE initiative. Célestin Freinet, convinced of the value of school cooperatives as a basis for a new pedagogy, joined the OCCE board of directors in the 1950s. Nevertheless, Barthélémy Profit remains the founder of school cooperatives.

An association recognized for operating in the public interest since 1968

The OCCE is an association under the law of 1901, recognized as being of public utility, and approved by the French Ministry of Education as a complementary school association. It operates during school hours on subject-specific and cross-curricular themes in line with national school curricula guidelines. It works in partnership with the Ministry under a Multi-Year Objectives Agreement to develop citizenship and academic success for all with a particular focus on arts, culture and school climate.

An educational movement at the service of school cooperatives

The Office Central de la Coopération à l'École (OCCE) is a federation of regional and departmental associations of affiliated school cooperatives.



Photo OCCE

A popular education and new education movement that encourages and supports cooperation as a core value in schools

The OCCE brings together some 5 million cooperative members, young people and adults in classes, schools and establishments, from kindergarten to high school.

The OCCE is a popular education and new education movement that encourages and supports cooperation as a core value in schools, and campaigns for the practice of cooperation, citizen participation and democratic development of social life within the field of education.

OCCE's three main objectives

1. Management of school cooperatives, hostels and MDLs (Maisons des lycéens) with emphasis on providing them with technical and pedagogical

support throughout France.

2. Training in cooperative pedagogies on site at schools or through centralized open enrollment thematic courses which bring together teachers from different sites. OCCE offers hundreds of training courses a year for teachers and other education professionals... They focus on the fundamentals of the cooperative classroom and the evolution of professional practices. These include:

The fundamentals of the cooperative classroom, running cooperative councils, project management, cooperative management and learning methods.

Teaching practices which foster a calm and positive school climate conducive to developing: self-esteem, non-violent conflict resolution, peer mediation, team strategies and empathy.

Cooperative approaches through specific projects which involve civics, writing and reading, arts and culture, science and math, media education, and sustainable development.

3. Facilitation of cooperative projects specifically builds on the training and involves:

Establishing nationwide and regional projects, aligned with school curricula and common core skills, around themes such as children's rights, the



Cooperative Council.. Photo Sud-Ouest

Support for individual teacher initiatives through the "Project Kit"

environment, science, arts and literary culture, reading and writing, and citizenship

A set of cooperative tools such as cooperative diaries, cooperative games, teaching kits, action sheets, etc.

Support for individual teacher initiatives through the "Project Kit" which is a participatory funding platform dedicated to providing technical support and financial backing for classroom-based projects.

The relationship between young people and adults

OCCE is a national educational movement that promotes the values of cooperation within the French national education system. At the heart of cooperative classes

is an educational philosophy applied through national and departmental initiatives such as projects, forums, conferences, summer programs at universities, and publications. All are characterized by the values of solidarity, respect for identities, sharing of knowledge and responsibilities, and the effective exercise of democracy practices within the school setting.

Throughout the country, more than a hundred facilitators and volunteers train and support primary and secondary school teachers in putting this emancipatory pedagogy into practice.

This is why our training courses alternate the theoretical and practical while using homomorphic devices which help teachers analyze and experience situations similar to those they will apply with their students. For implementation the OCCE has a national pedagogical center and every year, teacher training courses and are offered on Journées d'Etudes Fédérales (Federal Study Days).

Cooperative institutions

Since its creation, the OCCE has been campaigning and training teachers to enable children and young people in schools to take responsibility for matters that concern them, their school cooperative and its board



Photo OCCE

Collaboration fosters solidarity and interdependence

which regulates school life, builds a legislative framework and organizes projects. The OCCE also provides training in other activities, such as workshops on learning theory, welcoming routines with time for sharing, knowledge markets and cooperative games all of which help build self-esteem and develop positive relationships.

Cooperative or collaborative functioning?

Collaboration fosters solidarity and interdependence through the sharing which naturally occurs while working on the same project since it implies a division of tasks and each person remaining within their own area of competence. At school, however, the aim is to raise everyone's skill level and encourage sharing. One must

learn from others to better learn oneself. Cooperation is therefore a more powerful lever than collaboration, and goes beyond the success of any single project. Much more than collaboration through solidarity, cooperation calls for reciprocal generosity, and this is what we at the OCCE stand for.

Formal and non-formal education

The educational coordinators at the departmental levels ensure the promotion of cooperative practices and values notably through training courses within the framework of a Convention Pluriannuelle d'Objectifs (C.P.O) signed with the Ministry of National Education and its decentralized services.

The task is complex and the questions numerous: How can we be consistent with our values while working within the Education Nationale institution? What are the risks of promoting a transformative approach for teachers themselves and their students? What approaches should be favored when dealing with teachers? Training teachers to cooperate requires a strong commitment on the part of the trainer, who will not only lead them to decentralize and question their own attitudes and beliefs, but also to question their previous training in methods that are essentially transmissive in nature and within a societal context characterized by



Recognizing the right of children and young people to be consulted and to participate in decisions that concern them

individualism, liberalism and competition. This requires time, support, testing, trial and error, theoretical input and many practical tools.

Cooperative values

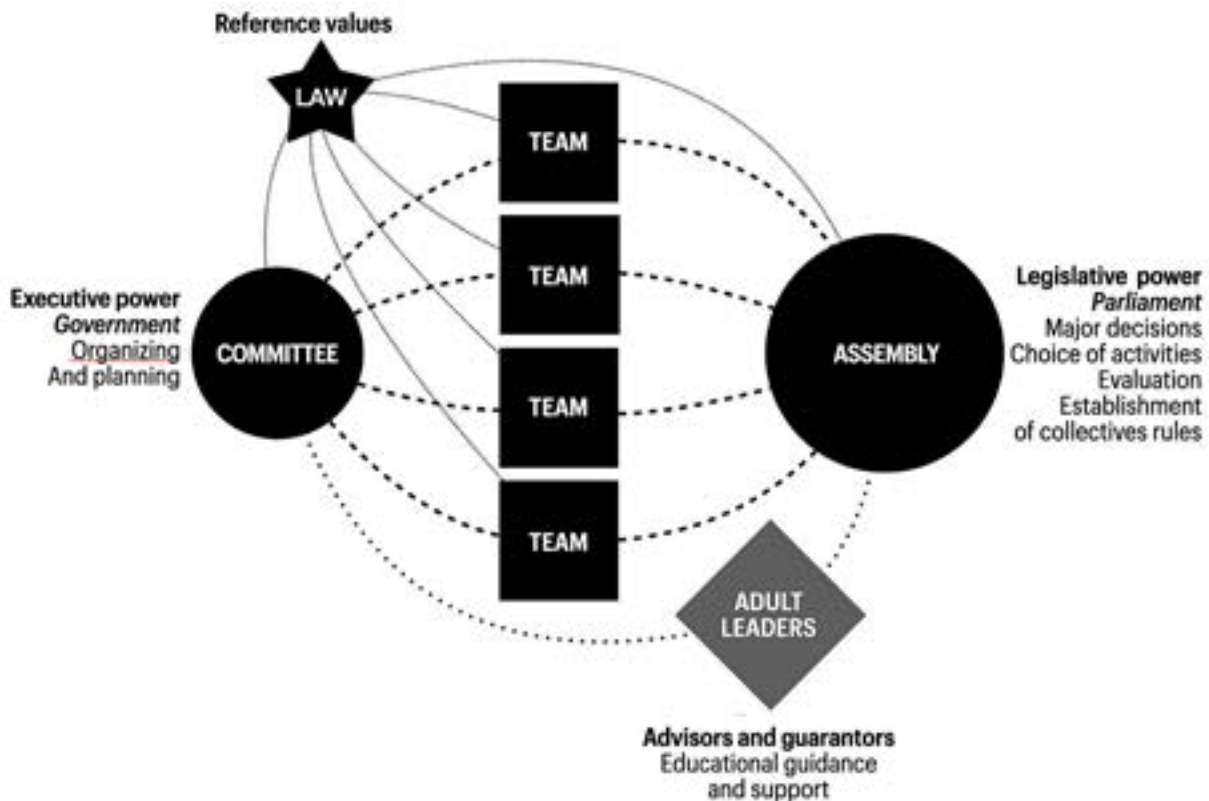
One of the values of cooperative pedagogy is recognizing the right of children and young people to be consulted and to participate in decisions that concern them. It also means listening to and paying special attention to the most vulnerable. How do you integrate this approach to transmission of such values to those you train and support such that they can put them into practice in their own educational settings?

The OCCE's is informed by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, a

supra-constitutional text that affirms the best interests of the child. Our support and training is based on active learning around exercising children's rights and democratic practices. For the OCCE, it's fundamentally a question of developing or restoring the educational mission of school cooperatives so as to engage students and their teachers in a more cooperative, supportive and humane society that fosters individual and collective emancipation.

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A young people's republic



Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, devised a system of self-governance he called the patrol or team system, which can be summarized as follows:

- Young people are invited to organize themselves into **small teams** of 5 to 8 members, depending on their affinities. Each team is

invited to appoint a leader from among its members, whose task is to facilitate cooperation within the team and act as its spokesperson.

- Important decisions are taken at an **assembly** of all young people which is prepared during the small team meetings. Each team then brings its proposals or

recommendations to the assembly.

An **executive committee**, composed of representatives from each team and adult leaders, is responsible for implementing the assembly's decisions.

A "**law**" setting out fundamental human values is presented to the group. Collective life is regularly evaluated in light of this law, and young people are invited to adopt specific rules for living together.

Baden-Powell described Scouting as "*a truly cooperative effort*". When properly understood, the team system enables the creation of a small "republic of young people" with its own living communities (the teams), its own parliament (the assembly of all young people), its own government (the executive committee) and its own foundational law. It's a concrete form of education in democratic citizenship and the foundation of a cooperative pedagogy.

Unfortunately, over time and with its geographic expansion, Scouting has suffered from a number of deviations. One of these is to consider the team system as a system of supervision and control of the group, organized and directed in a hierarchical manner by adults with the help of "team leaders" playing a kind of non-commissioned officer role. It has

thus become more authoritarian than cooperative.

In France, the Fédération du Scoutisme Français is the only organization recognized by the world's scouting and guides movements: World Organization of the Scout Movement and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. Securing respect for the essential cooperative aspect of the Scouting method, it groups together 6 associations: the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France (secular association), the Scouts et Guides de France (Catholic association), the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs et Unionistes (Protestant-inspired), the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs Israélites, the Scouts Musulmans de France and the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de la Nature (Buddhist-inspired).

In the following pages, we've given the floor to Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France to talk about how cooperative pedagogy is practiced within Scouting.

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Approaches to cooperation at Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs in France

Interview with Pascal PERON, Director of Education and Training at EEDF, by Roland DAVAL



The Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France (EEDF) was created in 1964 from the merger of the Eclaireurs de France (EDF), the first scouting association created in 1911 which is secular and open to girls and boys since 1947 - and the Fédération Française des Eclaireuses (FFE), a secular, Protestant women's scouting movement created in 1921. Les Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France is recognized as an official affiliate to the national school system by the French Ministry of Education. With over 200 local branches, EEDF has some 15,000 members throughout France.

RD - What is the relationship between young people and adults like at EEDF?

PP - The adult-young people relationship is undoubtedly the most distinctive aspect of the Scouting method, after the notion of commitment. Adult leaders, in a voluntary and unpaid capacity, give their time and attention to accompany young people on a gradual journey towards autonomy from a young age and until they are able to

make a positive contribution to society as committed citizens. This is illustrated by the age progressions and varied approaches taken by the different branches:

- **Lutins - Lutines** - Between the ages of 6 and 8, a privileged time in one's life for discovery: We explore our environment through outings in nature and the city, our first weekends in tents and evening gatherings around the campfire. We discover collective life through outdoor games, singing, dancing and team-centered crafts.
- **Louveteaux - Louvettes** - Between the ages of 8 and 11, towards paths of the imagination: We build our personalities through large group games, discovering nature, sporting challenges, sharing collective life... The imagination, cultivated within



Photo EEDF

The adult maintains the appropriate conditions for young people's emancipation

lived experience and stories, supports all of the games and activities.

- **Eclaireurs - Eclaireuses** - Between the ages of 11 and 15, it's time to take on greater responsibilities: Coordinating the crew, managing the kitchen, learning first aid, handling cash flow to organizing group life. Always guided by the leaders, we explore new activities and imaginative games that open up to the world.
- **Seniors** - Between the ages of 15 and 18, you're in charge of your own projects: this is the time to ask questions, meet new people and challenge yourself. This is the time to put your desires into action in the form of projects, such as building a wind turbine, putting on a play or organizing a bike

tour. The possibilities are endless, and depend solely on the values, choices and motivation of each individual.

- **Young adults** - A useful and fulfilling commitment: Whether you're a leader, a civic service volunteer or a member of a host team at an EEDF center, the JAE program brings together young people aged 18 to 25 who are committed to our scouting movement. The adventure is never over!

Meanwhile the adult is the person in the group who maintains appropriate conditions for young people's emancipation, i.e. offering them opportunities to express themselves, take responsibility and participate in decision-making. They are an integral part of the group, with a special place and responsibility. Acquiring this educational posture requires training complemented by practical experience in the field through activities, projects, weekends and gatherings. It is all grounded by the good company of other adults in relationships with young people.

RD - One of the hallmarks of cooperative pedagogy is the establishment of group process methodology, also referred to as institutional pedagogy. In your practice, how do you assure that young people express themselves freely, while being

The council is the place to learn how to express themselves, listen, respect opinions and speak up

listened to and respected by others?

PP - The council, along with review periods, is the main forum for expression, and forms part of a pedagogical continuum from age 6 to 18 with the round council (6-8 years), the circle council for 8-12 year-olds, the crew council (12-15 years) and, the clan council (15-18 years). Continuity across ages is supported by a focus on the development of social skills. For 6-8 and 8-11 year-olds, the council is the place to learn how to express themselves, listen, respect opinions and speak up, with the attentive help of adults. For 11-15 and 15-18 year-olds, the council becomes a space for expressing dreams and expectations with a view to building a collective project. The project becomes a self-managed space where, with the support of adults, they learn skills of leadership and self-regulation.

"Spiritual times" or forums provide a complementary forum for debate and exchange on current affairs and social issues, helping students develop critical thinking skills and form their own opinions. This space can be run by young people with the help of adults. It's a place for everyone to share their individual opinions and experiences. In this way, young people gradually learn to become active citizens within EEDF. From the age of 16, every member has the right to

become actively involved in the life of the organization giving a voice to children from an early age. In our adult leader training courses, adults learn to listen to the expectations and concerns of younger people, and above all to give them constructive feedback.

RD - According to Sylvain CORNAC - teacher-researcher at the University of Montpellier and recognized specialist in cooperative pedagogy - the aim of a collaborative pedagogy is to learn to cooperate, whereas the aim of a cooperative pedagogy is to cooperate in order to learn. At EEDF, how do you experience this distinction and what in your mind is most important?

PP - The acquisition of autonomy while carrying out a project is a fundamental experience for all young people, from the age of 12-15. This autonomy, built up during the preparation phase of the project, and supported by an atmosphere of help and trust on the part of adults, can only be achieved if the young people who venture into it are able to cooperate with each other, without adult intervention. The real experience, because it puts young people at the heart of their project with others, invites cooperation. Responsibilities are distributed so as to facilitate cooperation. There is no "leader", rather a coordinator.

If cooperative pedagogy is

Education in scouting as complementary to public education has a long history

what makes the most sense, it goes hand in hand with collaborative pedagogy, which coexists more widely in the pedagogical practices of 6-8 and 8-12 year-olds. Cooperation and collaboration are two complementary tools at the service of personal and collective progress towards autonomy.

RD - The EEDF is one of the associations recognized as an official partner organization to the national public education system. What are the realities and practices today in relation to schools and public education in general?

PP - Education in scouting as complementary to public education has a long history, and the EEDF is the only secular scouting movement whose history has been built on the commitment of teachers. This complementarity still exists and remains relevant today. As evidence we see how the association's volunteers continuously interpret and adapt common core skills for schools to scout pedagogy and projects for the "learning vacation". This complementary approach is natural and obvious. In terms of scope by 2022 there were 60 camps, 350 supervisors, 2,200 participants.

However, the way the institutions operate does not make it easy to translate nor obvious, Even when mutually

desired, bringing synergies into practical application is challenging. The main stumbling block remains the conditions under which volunteers can work, with its limitations when faced with the demands of their regular daily work lives and availability.

We are looking for complementarity between formal and non-formal education, in a new approach to relationships and mutual recognition. Cooperation between schools and educational associations involves mobilizing skills in a variety of environments. Outdoor classes and summer camps provide opportunities for new experiences that help consolidate learning at school.

RD - What projects have the EEDF developed for young people in difficulty?

PP - Since 2018, the association has been developing scouting activities in the form of tailor-made inclusion courses for children, teenagers and young adults with special needs. Thanks to a passionate teaching team trained in inclusion, with a network of actors from the medical-social sector, the "Step Walk" approach offers support towards then engaging in the regular EEDF activities which best align with their desires, needs and abilities.

Vacations - a time of



Photo EEDF

The program is dedicated to people with mental disabilities or psychological illnesses

possibilities: EEDF's Adapted Holiday Services organize holiday stays for children and teenagers aged 6 to 17, as well as vacations for adults (aged 18 to 60 and over). The program is dedicated to people with mental disabilities or psychological illnesses. Every year, some 90 stays are offered.

Specific stays are also organized for children and teenagers with behavioral disorders but no associated intellectual deficiency. These group stays for minors with accommodation needs are part of an adapted but non-specialized program.

In this way, the association develops and offers an educational framework for all while extending the educational intervention of the public school system into these out-of-school activities.

RD - One of the values of cooperative pedagogy is to recognize the right of children and young people to be consulted and to participate in decision-making around matters that concerns them. It also means listening to and paying special attention to the most vulnerable. As a scouting association, how do you integrate this approach and transmit these values to those you train? How do you enable their application within their own educational practices?

PP - The association's mission is to help build a better world by training committed citizens who are aware of the challenges facing their society and committed to meeting them through the Scout method.

An educational movement based on the action of volunteers, the EEDF builds and implements its project around five founding values:

By affirming fundamental respect for human beings in all their diversity, and to fight against all forms of discrimination and intolerance, we make the choice of secularism.

By educating each other through each other, by educating girls and boys together, we affirm coeducation.

By opting for egalitarian relationships, by allowing each individual to participate in



Photo EEDF

We are committed to being a school of democracy

the development of common projects and to take on responsibilities, modeling citizenship, we are committed to being a school of democracy.

By being open to the world and to others, by developing a spirit of exchange, of sharing, of listening, of building things together, we are promoting openness and solidarity.

By learning to know and understand the world, by acting to protect and respect balance and harmony, this is our eco-citizen commitment.

The young people's program is a program that regularly (every 5 years) reexamines the relevance of the educational project and the educational adventures by age group in relation to society. Then with progress objectives, the necessary training and

activities are implemented. This program is developed BY young people, not FOR young people.

This is what we have been doing for the past 3 years, involving children and young people at all levels. This has required a new and evolving system and training that we have gradually managed to put in place, even though COVID slowed down the process a bit.

What are the initial results? A new text which defines the educational contribution of 18-year-olds: training happy citizens, capable of making their own choices, committed, critical thinkers... and developments to be taken into account: the role of digital technology, the fight against violence, commitment to the planet.... And, above all, to learn how to live through the life of a project in an autonomous, cooperative and self-managed manner.

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Learning together through adventure

By Larry CHILDS



Larry CHILDS

The FVC is a powerful adventure-learning tool

Adventure can appear as a spontaneous and intuitive approach to learning, yet it is grounded in a set of operating principles and facilitation strategies that have developed over decades.

Current Project Adventure trainers and consultants benefit from the wisdom and creativity of their predecessors over the half-century of PA experience. As one veteran teacher recently remarked, PA was 'ahead of its time.' The evidence, she said, is that these very techniques, elaborated in books from 35 years ago are still relevant, fresh, and incredibly effective today. They have not only stood the test of time, they travel well to new social and cultural settings.

PA Foundational Concepts The Full Value Contract (FVC)

The FVC is a powerful adventure-learning tool and distinctive Project Adventure approach

for establishing and living out values and behavioral norms in a group setting. In this context, norms and values refer to the ways members of a 'community of learners' desire and agree to treat one another within their group or team. Effectively, they commit to co-create and maintain their own positive, safe, and productive culture. In such an environment members are better able to understand, value, and express healthy, pro-social behaviors. Since as humans we are learning and growing in our social competencies at all stages of our lives, this method is as effective for school-age children as it is for teachers and senior administrators.

The Full Value Contract, now often referred to as 'Commitment', is a participatory, thoughtful, and fun method for developing social norms for any group. It is fun because the agreements emerge in part from engaging in and reflecting



Photo PROJECT ADVENTURE

Challenge by Choice

PA coined this widely embraced term as an adaptation of Choice Theory. It helps a community to build commitment and trust by extending to every participant the right to choose their own level of engagement, while the choices made by each member are respected. This practice shifts a certain amount of power and responsibility from teacher/leader, who is intentionally less directive or coercive, to the student/participant. The results for students are increased agency, sense of belonging, and ultimately competence.

Challenge by Choice asks that participants challenge themselves and participate fully in the experience. Recognizing that any experience or goal may pose a different level and type of challenge for each group member and that authentic personal change comes from within, Challenge by Choice creates an environment where participants are asked to search for opportunities to stretch and grow. Determining what kind of participation represents an optimal learning opportunity is the responsibility of each group member. All are asked to add value to the group experience by finding a way to contribute to the group's efforts, while also finding value in the experience for themselves as individuals.

Challenge by Choice does not suggest that participants

They should also attempt to integrate any values and language that broader community

on shared community-building activities. Identified norms are those to which all agree, practice, and assume collective responsibility for maintaining over time. If there are leaders, whether a teacher, instructor, or manager, they are part of the group when developing a FVC and are fully expected to share norms they also feel are important.

They should also attempt to integrate any values and language that the broader community or organization has embraced. For example: *"Be Here, Be safe, Be Honest, Care for Others, Let Go & Move On, Set Goals"* - are common values that can help define organizations, including classrooms and schools, which have been found to be both powerful and actionable.

Once an activity has been completed, a period of reflection helps students to draw relevance from the experience

should disengage or simply walk away from the group. Rather, if feeling disinclined to participate directly in a manner that the activity suggests, participants are encouraged to seek alternative ways to engage and add value. Most activities have a variety of ways individuals can support the group at a level they are prepared and willing to undertake.

Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC)

David Kolb's brain-based theory of optimal learning process offers a scaffolding facilitation structure that is inquiry-based and sequenced. It assists participants to engage in an experience, then reflect upon it, make meaning or conceptualize, and finally imagine how to transfer their learning experiences to the situation at hand and/or to other settings.

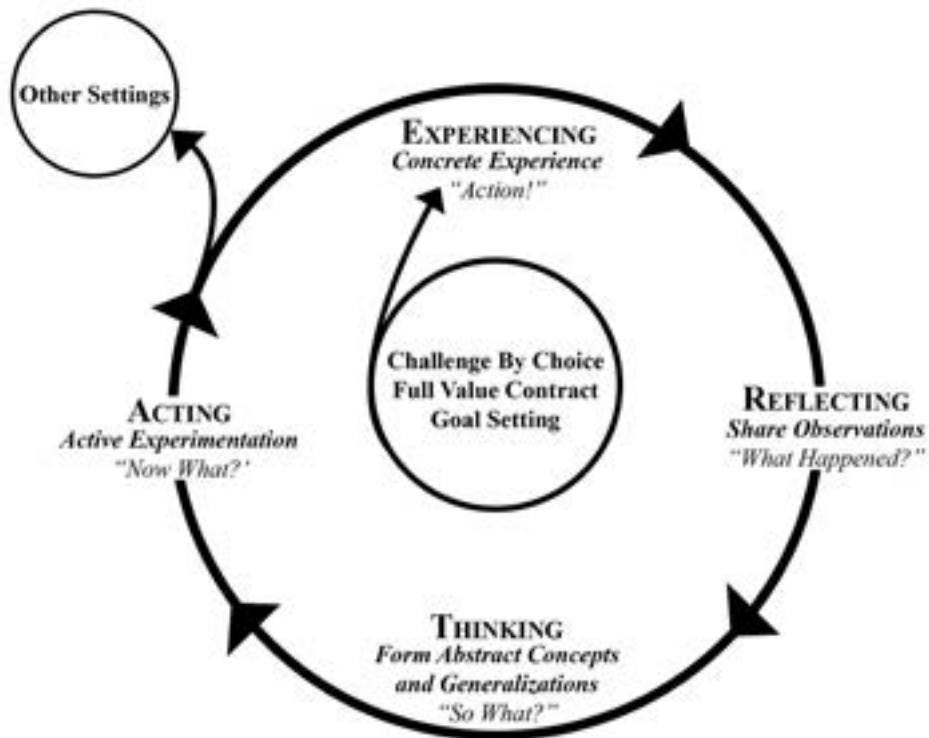
Once an activity has been completed, a period of reflection (or Debriefing) helps students to draw relevance from the experience. Connecting the present experience to past experiences also enhances learning. In this curriculum, the Debrief comes in many forms. During this phase, the simple questions, "What happened in the activity?" "So, what can we learn from what occurred?" and, finally, "Now what can we do with this information?" or "How can we apply what we've learned to other areas of our lives?" provide the structure.

This Debrief period can be active and involve action-oriented experiences, or it can be discussion-based. If no reflection period is provided, we limit the potential learning opportunities for our students and ourselves. A trained facilitator learns how to do this effectively without manipulating or imposing his or her desired outcomes. In many groups leaders emerge within the group who encourage and guide their fellow participants in the process.

Setting Goals

Adventure proposes a common process and model for discerning intentions based on which academic and social/emotional goals are defined, pursued, and achieved or adjusted as needed. Goal setting is also a critical life skill that helps students define where they want to go and figure out how to get there. For some participants getting very specific and measurable is important. For others a better approach involves setting strong, yet general intentions and having a sense of direction.

In any case a community of learners helps the participants to discern how to balance areas such as individual versus group goals, or academic versus behavioral outcomes. The reflection and dialog emerging from the adventure group process is essential for rendering goal pursuit a meaningful and



Dr. David Kolb's ELC informs the PA lesson design and facilitation processes.

effective activity for personal growth. Too often the process of goal setting focuses on individual achievement without a strong commitment to community, common interests, or service to others. As such, an individualistic focus risks distracting the student from the group and along paths of self-obsession, lofty ambitions, missed opportunities, or shallow achievements.

PA Group Facilitation Methods

- **GRABBSS:** This convenient acronym is used to help a facilitator assess a group such that their development needs are met in areas from lesson design to in-the-

moment adjustments. The acronym stands for Goals, Readiness, Affect, Behavior, Body, Setting and Stage of group development.

- **Adventure Wave:** The facilitator offers a sequence of learning experiences that progressively build on each other through repeated application of the ELC (Experiential Learning Cycle). A wave is evident in that there is a well-structured and natural segue connecting experiences, applying lessons, and thereby accelerating growth.
- **Calling Group/Quick Class:** Initially a teacher-guided process; 'Calling Group' (aka 'Quick Class') provides a proscribed forum for students to discuss positive and problematic interactions that occur in structured and non-structured school settings. It is a structure and method for helping students practice positive relationships and productive communication. When 'group' is called, all the participants stand or sit in a circle to address a specific topic, which can range from informational or for celebration to a concerning challenge, or in some cases conflict. Students learn to listen and to communicate feelings in a manner that



Photo Project Adventure

12 criteria helping one assess the extent to which adventure principles are indeed being put in practice

describes, rather than attacks or defends. In time the students themselves may call and facilitate group as well as determine action steps or consequences.

- **Control to Empowerment:** Over time students are intentionally provided opportunities to assume increasing responsibility. Groups/ classes thereby move from strong teacher control to empowerment, whereby students increasingly take the lead. This dynamic is carefully managed through the use of assessment tools. It honors the human need for power, and diminishes unproductive conflict.

Teacher preparation: A PA workshop and then what?

Once one has participated in a PA workshop, experienced the methods, and perused published material, there is generally a desire to apply the techniques back in one's home instructional setting. This could be in a traditional school-based classroom with four walls or an outdoor expedition. The following criteria can help one assess the extent to which adventure principles are indeed being put in practice.

1. **Co-create social norms and common language** – Group operates in the context of a social contract or shared agreement defining desired behavioral norms.
2. **Inclusive structures** – Learning and engagement for all is a goal, expectation, and reality. This is achieved through facilitation and physical organization of space and student positioning.
3. **Evidence of 'Challenge-by-Choice'** – Looks like students are feeling safe enough to enter their stretch zone; taking academic and social risks, while supporting one another in the process.
4. **Relevant, meaningful, and conceptually coherent** – Participants perceive the work as useful and



Photo Project Adventure

connected to their lives and the wider world.

- 5. Play and fun** – Activities are structured, facilitated, and valued for their intrinsic emotional power to motivate, inspire, create, and connect.
- 6. Movement** - Physical activity is generally structured and connected to learning outcomes, while operating within safety guidelines.
- 7. Noise and interaction** – There is bustle and group engagement as in any productive work site from office or production studio to farm or factory.
- 8. Elements of surprise** – There are unexpected outcomes both with successes as well as failures. Regardless, the associated learning is valued.

9. Embrace the unknown - Instructors and participants are reminded that often the uncertainty of a journey leads to openness to outcomes, increased self-awareness, and the development of a well-grounded self-confidence.

10. Spark interest - Participants are so engaged that there is uncontrolled learning. They just can't help themselves!

11. Dedicate to active reflection - **Groups explore what** happened, the significance or bigger meaning, and finally the applications or relevance. Common themes are group process, personal performance, new goals and intentions, and academic connections.

12. 'Control to empowerment' - Instructors are not just doing all the leading and teaching. They develop a trusting environment and participant competence such that a gradual transfer of responsibility occurs and participants practice positive social relations, while acquiring skills for teaching, leading, and following their peers.

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Exploring cooperation over competition in outdoor and adventure sports

Interview with Guillaume LEGAUT, General Manager of UCPA, by Dominique BENARD

DB - Hello Guillaume, could you explain how a cooperative approach is practiced at UCPA?

GL - In our association, we use the term "collective" more frequently, but behind this term lies cooperation.

Four basic principles

In UCPA's pedagogy, there are four basic principles: autonomy, social ties and cooperation, relationship with the environment and well-being. Through a process of solidarity, self-confidence, voluntary commitment, mutual aid and collaboration, everyone can learn and progress, mainly in the context of sporting activities, but also in the dimension of community life. In summer camps, for children and teenagers, collective life is almost as important as the dimension of the sporting activity itself.

We welcome 250,000 young people and adults to our camps every year, generally for 7-day



Guillaume LEGAUT

periods. UCPA's educational endeavors are also applied within our sports facilities in 62 cities and towns where the schedule mainly involves attending activities on a weekly basis and in one-hour blocks. IN these settings we serve around a million people annually.



Photo UCPA

Three areas of cooperation

There are several areas where cooperation is explored :

1. There's the group in which the child or young people find themselves and generally comprise 4 or 6 people. Activity groups vary in size depending on the activity, but these generally involve 8 to 12 young people. In highly technical activities, such as mountaineering, the number will be reduced to 4 or 5, while in others we can have as many as 15 members. So the young people live together for the whole week, with an instructor who accompanies them and takes them through the activities and debriefing which is so important to our teaching methods. So these aspects represent the first circle.
2. The second circle is the physical center or camp base where the young people live together and which generally comprises 50 to 400 young people. This larger group setting is important because it enables a great deal of cooperation and mutual support, even between several smaller circles. Different activity groups will meet up and exchange views on how the activities were carried out, reflect on best practices, etc.
3. And then, there's a third circle, perhaps more complex and difficult to perceive, but which for us is very important. It's the notion that young people who have had a prior UCPA experience, when they come across other young

"Nomadic sociability" and companionship

people who have had similar experience, are better able to connect due to the shared experience. We became aware of this when a team of researchers which worked with us for some time called this phenomenon "nomadic sociability". This is the notion that a young person's UCPA stay or activity experience tends to enable them to acquire values, life skills and interpersonal capacities that can be recognized and affirmed when meeting other young people who have had the same experience. The result is what researchers call "companionship". In effect, this is an affinity logic where a sense of common identity is established between these people. And this is a real lever for cooperation, because it establishes a higher level of a-priori trust and empathy. For us, discovering this "**nomadic sociability**" and the "**companionship**" dimension was something of a revelation, because it's effectively the simplest way of describing the cooperation experienced within UCPA. People recognize each other as peers having had similar experiences, helping each other to overcome similar challenges and then passing on knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills.

DB - So, at UCPA, it seems that cooperation takes place on the one hand, within the framework of sporting activities, and on the other, in the sharing of daily life... In terms of collective life, do you involve young people in decision-making and evaluation?

GL - This exists at all 3 levels of sociability. Within the small activity group, the instructor builds a program with the young people aligned with the specific sport activity. Of course, young people can't decide everything since there's a framework imposed by the very nature of activity itself.

For instance a program in skiing, rafting or horse-riding each have their own inherent rules. On the other hand, the instructor must constantly adapt the way the activity is experienced and to the expectations and needs of the young people. The first step is allowing young people to express their expectations and assess their abilities. As the activity is sporting related, he or she needs to know the participants' level of mastery of the given activity and the environment in which it is to be practiced, their ability to measure risks, and their aptitude for living and working within a group.

The first activity session is an opportunity for the instructors to ask the young people to describe the skills they want to acquire and how progress may be assessed.



UCPA / THIBAULT Fabien

Later in the week roles are also often shifted to facilitate greater participation and mutual assistance.

Take mountaineering, for example. UCPA is the only organization to organize autonomous roped parties, albeit under the responsibility of the guide. In other words, a single guide is responsible for several roped parties. Each rope will be led by a young person who has been given the role of "leader" because they are a little more competent and has demonstrated leadership skills. The guide will then take those participants needing more support in their own group and at the same time give the leader role to other young people, while accompanying and supervising them.

DB - Do young people also take responsibility for community life?

GL - In terms of collective life, it's more limited, but responsibility is there all the same: One serves at the table, clear the table at mealtimes, and clean your room. There are rules for collective life which we set at the beginning of the week. These are of course adapted to the age group and include wake-up time, meal times, rules for going out for a walk and groups of 3 or 4, informing the monitors of their intended departure and return times as relevant. There are also safety rules to be followed, for example, when carrying out specific sport related activities.

Take mountaineering, for example. UCPA is the only organization to organize autonomous roped parties

At the end of this first dimension adjustments are often made to the second circle of sociability, the center or camp itself, and the activity groups.

For example, if a young person enrolled in a beginner's ski course already has a good command of skiing, the instructor will suggest that he or she be transferred to a higher-level group. Conversely, if a young person has enrolled in a group that does not correspond to his or her skills, and in which they are likely to encounter difficulties, the instructor will suggest they be transferred to a better suited group.

Young people can even be transferred to a group focused on a different activity if they discover there is a better match for their expectations. So, after the start of the stay, we often rearrange the groups.



UCPA / COLIN Vincent

There is always a meeting with the whole group to ensure that the decision is understood by all concerned

DB - What happens if someone breaks the rules? Is it just the instructor who intervenes, or is it an opportunity for a group discussion to sanction negative behavior and clarify the rules?

GL - It all depends on the level of rule breaking. When it comes to young people who are a little too unruly and refuse to play the collective game, the problem is dealt with by the group. In more serious cases, such as drug use or aggressive behavior, it's more likely to be the management team which intervenes directly with those involved. That said, even in such cases, the participatory dimension is very important. For example, if an accident or an act of violence has occurred which could lead to a decision to expel someone from the stay, there is always a meeting with the whole group

to ensure that the decision is understood by all concerned. This is very important to us. We don't want those on a stay to suddenly discover that someone is no longer there, without their having received any explanation.

I'd like to add that in stays aimed at children and teenagers, the question of rules and their management is much more formalized. At the start of the stay, the group's rules are discussed and written down in a completely cooperative way. The young people themselves define all the rules and norms of group life. They write them down on a posted document that serves as a reference.

In a certain number of camps - it's not systematic, but it's fairly widespread - there's even a council at the end of the day with the leaders and delegates from each room to debrief the activities and group life. The delegates return to their rooms with information on what has been decided for the evening or the following day. There is therefore a high degree of cooperation, since the themes of the evening events and the content of the free time between 5 and 7 pm after sports activities are decided with the participants. Councils are less formalized than in Scouting, for example, but they do exist. They are well structured, part of the pedagogy, and leaders are trained to implement

Concerning individual progress, we identify four key attributes

this cooperative approach which takes place in a variety of formats. It's very much present in stays for children and teenagers, and a little less formal in stays for young adults between 18 and 35 in part because they are on vacation...

It's called "debriefing", and it's the same as the council, i.e. the time when, at the end of the day, the leader gives the floor to all the participants so they can express their feelings about the day's activities and community life, and their expectations for the following days. This debriefing time, which may be short, is an integral aspect of the UCPA's teaching methodologies. The organizer schedules this time at the end of each day, and a longer one at the end of the week to capitalize on all the week's learning.

In the 2nd and 3rd circles of cooperation (center or camp and the whole association), we systematically question all young people on their assessment of the stays and activities, presenting questions which reflect the various aspects of the program design.

This cooperative process, supported by digital tools, enables the teams to enrich, adapt or further develop specific activities or components for future groups.

DB - Do you pay any attention to participants' personal progress in acquiring sport specific skills? Are participants called upon to cooperate within the group so as to learn more personally?

GL - Yes, individual progress is one of our objectives. In our pedagogy, we identify four key attributes:

1. "the individual at the center of our daily attention";
2. "the energy of the collective at the heart of our pedagogy";
3. "action at the center of our experience";
4. and "progress for all and success for everyone". This progression approach is clearly the compass that guides our instructors.

Progression in sports, the process of moving towards a more advanced state in skill or technique, often takes place in relation to the specific sporting culture in which we are immersed. Many sports federations have formalized progression according to a competitive rating system so some young people who come to practice these sports with us ask how what they have learned at UCPA can be recognized back in systems formalized by competitive sports federations. Depending on the activity, there is more or less permeability

Our approach is fundamentally one of cooperation, not competition

and integration of these systems. For example, on the ski trips we organize, we offer an opportunity to take tests at the end of the week and earn their star or chamois - and this is done on a voluntary basis. The same goes for diving and horseback-riding. Sailing, on the other hand, is less formalized. We do, however, give young people a booklet recognized by the sailing federation, enabling them to validate their progress.

But we don't consider any of this to be our reference framework, rather we do it to meet the expressed needs of young people. On the other hand, our basic frame of reference is that everyone should progress according to their own level of development.

So our approach is fundamentally one of cooperation, not competition. Our concern is to help young people help each other to progress. In climbing, for example, if you already know how to tie a knot, you can show others how to do it, but you may have to learn from someone else how to shift your balance between two holds to get through a difficult passage. When we say that an activity is collective, we mean that we create an opportunity within the group for young people to help each other acquire know-how and skills.

DB - Do you go so far as to give certain young people the role of tutor?

GL - Rarely in a formal way. We don't generally identify participants as tutors; it's more a question of mutual aid roles that take place in a shifting manner and in a context of various activity sequences. Also, given the number and diversity of the young people we take on, it would be difficult to identify young people's abilities in advance and assign them a tutoring role. There are, however, certain special programs where tutoring is clearly an organized component. For example, the "One bus, one campus" stays are organized along with young people as tutors who bring together scholarship students on the tutors' campus who is responsible for accompanying the group during their stay.

DB - If we compare UCPA to sports federations, how do you see yourself in terms of cooperation and competition?

GL - At the UCPA, we don't compete on the basis of selection and elitism, nor on the basis of competition and emulation, as is the case with multi-sport federations. That doesn't mean, for example, that you can't do a slalom and say, "the first person to the bottom wins". It's more of a game than a real competition in the sense of sports federations. There's no selection, and there's always the



Photo UCPA

We welcome everyone, whatever their level, and we make sure they progress

idea that everyone can progress, whereas in a competition-selection logic, some people are eliminated as they go along. At UCPA, everyone progresses! A 45-year-old woman who came to UCPA to ski for the first time said of her experience: "It's extraordinary, I progressed all week without feeling discriminated against because I was a beginner".

We welcome everyone, whatever their level, and we make sure they progress. We're going to build their confidence, we're going to help them discover that they can have fun in the activity, that it's not going to be a pain to advance in skill. Skiing, for example, can be a real pain for beginners: they fall all the time. Well, in our teaching method,

we help people to discover the postures and movements they need to avoid falling too much, and to immediately experience a feeling of pleasure and well-being.

To achieve this, we've built up a wealth of teaching know-how that enables us to proceed in a different manner from traditional ski schools. It's the same with sailing: young people new to the activity have no ability to identify and control the wind. So we build a course with buoys and markers to get young people to experiment with wind direction. Once they've got the hang of it, they're able to progress more easily. At the moment, to address the question of recognition we're thinking of proposing a system of badges to reward progress and soft skills.

DB - One last question, if you don't mind. I know you're doing something for disadvantaged young people. Could you tell me about this, and specifically how the activities you offer these young people can contribute to their academic success and social integration?

GL - This year, 51% of our participants are people who receive financial assistance with vacation stays. We don't manage to measure such a proportion among the people we welcome on recreational programs, but there is also a high proportion, particularly concerning disabled young people and young people



Photo UCPA

from socially disadvantaged neighborhoods. Among the 50% of people we help, we measure those who are really in great social difficulty, as they benefit from 100% financial support. This group represents 5 to 6% of the public we welcome.

We work to integrate and support this group in the same as for all the other young people, but we take it a step further. For example, prior to their stay, we talk to each participant and their family or caregivers to understand their abilities and what they may or

may not be able to experience during their stay. In a sailing course, for example, will they be able to get on a boat?

Do they require adapted equipment or not? So all we do is see how to best integrate them into the activity with all the other young people, while making adaptations as necessary. Indeed, in cases of physical disability, there is clearly a need for adaptation. The same applies to young people from socially deprived areas. To be very clear, we are able to accommodate young

There is always a meeting with the whole group to ensure that everyone understands the plans or rationale behind decisions

people up to a certain level of difficulty, both in cases of mental or physical disability and in cases of social integration difficulties. That said, if the disability is too severe, we make it clear that we cannot accept them.

The presence of these young people creates bonds, because everyone strives to help them and establish a relationship with them. It's the circle of life at the center that comes into play, enabling the group to cooperate, take charge and support everyone.

This process, which we call "equal opportunities", has been evaluated by external consultants to try and measure what happens in this type of experiment. For example, offering migrants the chance to take part in sporting activities enables them to regain their self-confidence, re-establish their sense of belonging after a period of challenging migration, learn French and acquire sporting skills, which in some cases can even lead to successful professional integration by becoming a swimming instructor, for example.

Similar phenomena can be observed in the case of young people who are victims of domestic violence, and whom we try to help, through various sporting activities, to regain their self-confidence, regain

their social skills and get away from their violent past.

A few days ago, we organized a youth regatta in Marseilles, which enables young people from the northern suburbs to discover a sporting activity in partnership with social service centers and neighborhood organizers. These young people in difficulty are integrated into the activities with all the others, and this is a powerful lever for social integration and personal development.

Just one last point to emphasize. There are three very interesting things that happen when young people cooperate:

The first process is differentiation, i.e. cooperation enables young people to differentiate between situations, social values, people who know how to live together and people who don't. Cooperation helps young people to make this differentiation. Cooperation helps young people to experience differentiation because they realize, thanks to the presence of others, that there are different possibilities and that a choice can be made between them.

The second process is authentication. This is very important in today's pluralistic world. Young people need to authenticate things in order to learn them. Is what I'm discovering good, true and



Photo UCPA

**Learning, obviously,
involves the ability to
link things together, to
make logical and aesthetic
connections**

right, or is it something that's going to hurt me? Cooperation enables young people to make this authentication because they can better see and discern if the other members of the group are making progress, improving through this or that situation, this or that experience, and so they authenticate this situation or this experience as a source of progress for themselves as well.

Finally, the third process is relationship-building. Learning obviously involves the ability to link things together, to make logical and aesthetic connections... It's intelligence at work... Cooperation enables us to experience this linking in real life, through sensations and action, not just in theory. So I can internalize it more easily.

In the cooperative situations implemented by UCPA, these 3 processes can be clearly observed. And in companionship, which I mentioned earlier, and which is the 3rd widest circle of cooperation and the most difficult to perceive, this logic of authentication is very strong. The nomadic sociability I was talking about enables learning to continue, because the young people will authenticate in another context, beyond the UCPA, where they have experienced that which feels right and positive versus distorted or twisted by social games or constraints.

DB - Yes, what you say about the processes of differentiation, linking and authentication undoubtedly corresponds to the importance that proponents of constructivist learning assign to socio-cognitive conflict. It's essential that a group doesn't fall asleep through a false facade of consensus, but that there are debates, disagreements and cognitive conflicts to confront different points of view and through which they manage to authenticate the right solutions, the right behaviors and integrate them. Thank you very much for your contribution to this issue of *Approches Coopératives*, and for revealing the educational strategy pursued by UCPA.

We too often forget the role of the body in learning and

Learning, thinking, creativity and intelligence are not processes of the brain alone but of the whole body

intelligence. An American psychologist, Hannaford, wrote: "We have missed a fundamental and mysterious aspect of the mind: learning, thinking, creativity and intelligence are not processes of the brain alone but of the whole body. Sensations, movements, emotions and integrative brain functions are rooted in the body... Rather, we must consider the mind as distributed throughout the body and in constant interaction with the environment through sensation and action."

This is why I firmly believe that the role played by the UCPA in popular education is essential.

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Making cooperative education accessible to all by 2050

Interview with Sobhi TAWIL by Patrick GALLAUD

Rethinking our futures together, a new social contract for education, is the title of a new report recently published by UNESCO. It describes a global initiative to reinvent the way knowledge and learning could shape the future of humanity and the planet.

As part of this initiative, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay has commissioned an independent International Commission, under the leadership of the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ms Sahle-Work Zewde, to produce a global report on the future of education.

The members of the Commission are intellectual figures in the fields of political science, academic research, the arts, science, business and education. In addition, the expertise of 200 UNESCO Chairs has enriched this work as has feedback from 400 UNESCO Associated Schools.

Finally, a million people contributed to this study, from young people and teachers to civil society and economic players, through a multitude of networks. On June 21, "Cooperative Approaches" met with Mr. Sobhi Tawil, Director of UNESCO's "Future of Learning and Innovation Team", who has guided this work for over 2 years.



Sobhi TAWIL

PG: Mr. Tawil, can you share with our readers the background that led you to become the linchpin behind this monumental task?

ST: I hold a doctorate in education and development from the Graduate Institute of Development Studies in Geneva, and am currently Director of the Future of Education and Innovation team at UNESCO, where I lead the "Futures of Education" initiative, as well as work on technology and

It had thus become necessary to rethink the purpose of education

innovation in education. I have extensive experience in teaching, educational policy analysis, research and program management with various institutions and organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (Geneva), and the Network for International Policy and Cooperation in Education and Training (NORRAG). I have also worked on educational policy issues relating to identity conflicts, social cohesion and citizenship.

PG: This isn't the first world report on education that UNESCO has published. Could you remind us of previous reports?

ST: Indeed, as early as 1972, the Faure Report on "Learning to be" had a worldwide impact. It was published at the time of the great independence movement, and in a context of social movements calling into question the aims of education. It focused on the individual within the framework of a learning society. In 1996, the Delors Report was set against a new international backdrop, namely the fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the USSR. To the "learning to be" pillar, which was still relevant, this new report added three other pillars:

"learning to do" (necessary alternation between school

and work), "learning to know" (lifelong learning) and "learning to live together": This last concept, which is highly topical today, anchors education in this collective perspective: Whereas the Faure Report was more focused on the individual, the Delors team insisted on these indispensable social and collective dimensions.

PG: Although these new concepts have helped to reorient many educational policies, they are far from having been adopted and implemented by the entire educational world. So why this third report?

ST: It was necessary to update and enrich the reports published in the previous century. The emergence of social networks, growing globalization, new technologies - including artificial intelligence - and the threats posed by climate change are just some of the new data to be taken into account in education systems. What's more, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular SDG 4 (ensure equal access to quality education for all, and promote lifelong learning opportunities) adopted by the UN member states, have set a new framework and new objectives.

It had thus become necessary to rethink the purpose of education, in particular by promoting sustainable development, human rights education, gender equality,



The report invites us to place interdependence, interconnection and cooperation at the heart of educational actions

cultural diversity, global citizenship and climate, all within the context of the rise of artificial intelligence.

Finally, it should be noted that this UNESCO report is being published at a time when the international community is showing great concern for the issue of education. One example is the statement made by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in September 2022 ahead of the UN Education Summit: "The summit on transforming education will seek to renew our collective commitment to education and lifelong learning as a core public good."

PG: Given this new international situation, what does the Report on Cooperative Pedagogies bring to the table?

ST: It's about rethinking our future "TOGETHER" on the basis of a renewed social contract for education. The title of the Report is self-explanatory in this respect, and the new document invites us to place interdependence, interconnection, collaboration and cooperation at the heart of educational actions. It's a question of considering education as a common good, and not just a public good. The text is clear: everyone is concerned by education; teachers, of course, but also parents, families, NGOs, the world of research, and that's why we are calling for the cooperation of all social forces.

A whole chapter of the report is devoted to cooperative and supportive pedagogies, a pedagogy that will heal the



We're encouraging teachers and students to work together, which should lead to new evaluation methods

wounds of injustice, that will teach people to "unlearn" prejudices, which are a source of division, and so on. And the approaches we advocate are relevant in all educational contexts, including informal and non-formal settings such as community centers, libraries, youth associations and clubs.

These new approaches are also leading us to rethink assessment methods and the validation of prior learning, in the formal, non-formal and even informal sectors. For example, we're encouraging teachers and students to work together, which should lead to new evaluation methods.

The Report stresses that assessment must be useful to students' development and learning, and that examinations, tests and other assessment instruments must be aligned with the aims and intentions of education. Much learning does not lend itself easily to

measurement and counting, and we need to prioritize teacher-led formative assessments to facilitate student learning. We need to review the centrality of standardized competitive assessment, through large-scale assessments of learning outcomes.

PG: All this work of transformation requires a new approach to teacher training. In fact, an entire chapter of the Report is devoted to the "transformative work of teachers". On several occasions, it also emphasizes teaching as a "collaborative profession". Can you tell us more about this?

ST: Faced with these new pedagogical perspectives, we need to promote genuine cooperation between teachers, teamwork - in short, educational co-construction - in initial and in-service training, in conjunction with educational research. Co-construction with other social players - the local educational community - with a view to genuine educational cooperation.

That's why it's important for all educational environments around schools to include a whole network of learning spaces. This would help to break down the various barriers between school-based learning and extracurricular activities carried out inside or outside schools.

The report calls for schools to be, or to become again, truly democratic spaces that are open to all, cross-sectorial and intergenerational

As far as the physical and social space of the school is concerned, the COVID experience was a powerful reminder that nothing can replace the school as a place of education. No online course can replace the interaction experienced at school. That's why in this Report we draw attention to the fact that digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI) must serve schools, not replace them. We want to prevent AI and digital algorithms introduced into schools from reproducing stereotypes and systems of exclusion.

In short, the report calls for schools to be, or to become once again, truly democratic spaces that are open to all, cross-sectorial and intergenerational.

PG :And now, what will be the future of this Report? What follow-up can we expect?

ST: The report has been launched, and it's up to those involved in education - teachers, educators, organizers, social workers and politicians - to make it their own. It's not a guide, nor a manual, still less a roadmap. It is an invitation to react, to transform, to innovate, to build a new social contract for education. To bring it to life in the field, UNESCO encourages and supports translation work. 14 language versions are already available (in addition

to French and English, the two official languages, it can already be read in Chinese, Catalan, Korean, Greek, Italian, Slovenian, Japanese... And it will soon be available in Swahili).

Readers are invited to ask themselves a number of questions: what should be maintained in our educational approach, what should be preserved at all costs, what doesn't work and should therefore be eliminated, what should be re-imagined?

Recently, on behalf of UNESCO, I led a training session in Oslo for over 400 educational players to work on the Report in connection with the implementation of the new national curriculum. This is a good example of the Report's appropriation by education players. And the Report, which is intended to be a means to an end, not an end in itself, should encourage other initiatives of this kind, with a view to forging a new social contract in educational communities.

Further information:

The interview focused on the cooperative and co-construction aspects of this new world report, which aims to "rethink the future of education together". To explore these concepts in greater depth, please refer to the full text, which is available free of charge: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379705.locale=en>

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A TEACHER'S MEMOIR

Two rules of three

By Michel SEYRAT



Everything that lives must learn to live

I have no idea how much an ant, a hummingbird or an elephant has to learn, but I do know that the small human being probably has the most to learn, and that this amount is constantly increasing. At the same time, whole swathes of human knowledge are disappearing for lack of apprentices: hunter-

gatherers knew how to feed on berries, something that every child necessarily incorporated into his or her knowledge, but which no one could teach today. Many oral languages have also disappeared with their last speaker...

At the same time, human knowledge is growing exponentially, to the point where Pico della Mirandola's humanist dream of "knowing everything" is impossible. In any case, he or she will have integrated only a tiny fraction of the knowledge accumulated by the mass of human beings since the dawn of mankind, and since they have been thinking, as La Bruyère wrote!

Learning apprentice

You may think I'm pushing open doors with these 'café du commerce' considerations, but they've been bothering me ever since I qualified as a teacher. Right from the start of

**Destabilizing problems
in wider society such
as drug addition, high
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system**

my "career", I was astonished to read the "programs" I had to implement for my students. Was it possible? I had to learn how to teach them so I passionately read all the instructional treatises on democratic, modern, open, cooperative, interactive, non-directive, group, libertarian, constructivist teaching education and so on. It was the 1960s, and everything was blossoming. I attended the training courses given by the "old-timers", they spoke well...

There's no irony in what I'm saying: I discovered a thousand things, and changed many others in my relations with younger people, and along the way I got students coming to life in class or bypassing the lecture. I could hear the refrain that the French education system was backward-looking, elitist, Byzantine, emphasizing the accumulation of abstract knowledge... and blah, blah, blah, it's always the fault of the education system if there are accidents such as drug addicts, the unemployed, harassers, leftists, fascists, etc, etc, etc.

All this stimulated my thinking and my practice, but in the end, when the classroom door closed, I was left with 35 or 40 kids whose faces I had to feed (force-feed?) with programmed knowledge.

A rule of three

So, how could I be a teacher who succeeded in teaching and an educator who knew how to help children grow? I carefully put away all the books in the bookcase (the books lined up behind me now reassure me) and I ironed out some of the philosophy that had taught me how a person is united, unique and also reunited.

Unity

United from head to toe: sweaty after gym, hungry at 11:30, pissed off with family because of firecrackers, jealous of little brother, dumped by daddy, etc, etc. It takes longer to integrate something new under these conditions than when you're rested, serene and well fed! Classes after the gym, at the end of the day, have their limits! Each person is a whole, where everything fits together all the time. And where everything serves to integrate knowledge: walking to memorize, lying down to think, reading aloud to understand, looking at a picture to uncover, snacking to concentrate... To help students acquire knowledge, it's useful to take this unity into account and encourage them to get to know themselves so as to manage and use these individual interdependencies.

**There maybe helpers,
examples, models,
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Uniqueness

Every human being is unique among the billions of billions of human beings conceived over the centuries. I've often started a relationship with a class or young people with this statement: you are unique, just as your voice is unique. The consequences of this reality are innumerable in teaching and education. Everyone has to learn how to learn, to discover how to make knowledge, skills and attitudes their own, because everyone is alone in acquiring them, and no one can learn in someone else's place. There may be helpers, examples, models, facilitators, teachers, monitors and even coaches, but it's always the individual who learns according to his or her own mental patterns. No one else builds the information highways in the brain. The first thing is to learn, then how do I learn, to each his own, and to each his own gifts... The question for the teacher and educator remains how to take into account this reality in mass teaching or in "educational" indoctrination?

Society

Humans are social animals, united by a group - mother, family, tribe, nationality, language and so on. Through the extraordinary density of acquisitions and learning in the first twenty years, the brain gradually assimilates all the codes of communication, the

needs for survival, the dialogue of self with self intellectually and physically. Apart from the rare, debatable cases of feral children, everyone learns through constant interaction. Finally, much of the work, studies, theories and systems on educational methods focus essentially on this aspect of a person's social upbringing: Learning alone, in a group, in a team, cooperating, competing, helping one another, etc. All these procedures are not neutral.

In truth, there is no such thing as a neutral educational system. After all, who promotes it, who finances it, who labels it?

We learn in society, and society teaches us what it expects of its members. But in the end, each individual is on their own to integrate all they need to know. And teachers mustn't forget that a class is a random gathering of individuals, even if this group sometimes acquires a collective personality.

Another rule of three

The other three great lessons in pedagogy were given to me by my pupils, and I say this without demagoguery at my age!

Anselme and Octavia

- Why are you so unpleasant in class with Miss Octavia or Mr. Anselme?

- Well, they don't like us, so...



Go figure! Same language? Same references? Same myths?

Do we learn (better?) among equals? among ourselves? in friendship?

No red for Valérie

Valérie was all pink, blue eyes, blonde curls, a chatterbox, loved talking to the teacher and apparently the others didn't hold it against her.

- Sir, for the next test, if you don't explain it better, we won't be able to do it, nobody even understands what to do! The one before, I didn't understand well either, you put red all over me...

Was I there to put red everywhere for the whole class? Or no red at all? I was there to help them succeed, wasn't I? Not to pin them down, to show my superiority through their failure. The blonde Valérie was right: you can never explain enough what is expected as a result!

From judge Valérie had made me passeur, I say passeur and not transmetteur, the ubiquitous use of the word transmission irritates me.

- Come on, Seyrat, you're dreaming, we're here to teach, to pass on knowledge. I'm a physics teacher (mathematics, history-geography, German...) not a psychology teacher: I explain the program as best I can, and they

I say passeur and not trasmetteur, the ubiquitous use of the word transmission irritates me

I then understood why Octavie and Anselme were convinced that the Administration always reserved classes for them! To help people learn, you must never despise! And that goes for all the methods in the world!

Jérôme and the sonnet

- Sir, you can't blame Jérôme for not being able to work out the rhyme scheme in a sonnet. I've done something to help me remember so if you want I'll explain it to him.

- Okay, what's your trick?

He explained it to me, but I didn't quite understand.

- Well, try it after playtime, you sit in the back with Jérôme and explain it to him.

And Jérôme understood, I could tell!

**In the end, I have a ball -
which has been passed to
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learn as best they can, period. I check and move on to the next chapter, right?

Bottle or ball

Why does this word "transmit" irritate me?

It conjures up an image I don't believe in: A "learner" would be an empty bottle into which, through a system of pipes (called pedagogy, methods, courses, etc.), I inject the fluid of knowledge I've been given and so on. Sometimes the hose is clogged, the bottle is full, the liquid is corrosive, what have you! Sometimes the hose is red, or rigid, or flexible, which doesn't make much difference. Besides, I'm not a knowledge renter who passes on knowledge to heirs. You can't always go backwards!

I'd prefer to be a "passer" - the image isn't perfect, but in the end I have a ball - which has been passed to me and which I've perhaps moved forward a little - which I pass on to the younger people so that they can make it their own, move it forward, pass it back, each with their own way of playing! And on a team to which each player, single and unique, is linked.



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