

# Editorial Preface

Our journal aims to provide a platform for the discourse of cooperative learning in this issue. For over half a century, cooperative learning has represented a significant strand of educational interest. The practical and research outcomes accumulated in the last five decades illustrate how the practical application of this paradigm contributes to enhanced performance for all students, fostering constructive problem-solving, reflective, and critical thinking, as well as the mobilization and development of emotional and social competencies. It's particularly in these areas where cooperative structures stand out convincingly against individualistic, competitive, or traditional learning structures, which are increasingly being spotlighted. This emphasis is further magnified by the cultural shift brought about by the rise of artificial intelligence and machine learning models in our era.

The editors found themselves in both a challenging and fortunate position. Thanks to the dedicated editorial work of Neil Davidson, the pioneers of the cooperative discourse recently published a volume titled *Pioneering perspectives in cooperative learning: Theory, research, and classroom practice for diverse approaches to CL*. In this issue, the foremost representatives and their colleagues of the discourse summarize the outcomes of the most significant cooperative models over the past fifty years. This outstanding work serves as a valuable resource for those familiarizing themselves with the CL discourse or researchers seeking an overview of theoretical foundations, core principles, concrete practices, and evidence-based approaches in cooperative learning. In addition, Neil Davidson with two other editors who have significantly contributed to the discourse, Robin M Gillies and Barbara Millis, have released a contemporary volume this year - *Contemporary global perspectives on cooperative learning: Applications across educational contexts* - focusing on influential and emerging authors in the cooperative discourse. This publication offers substantial assistance to any reader seeking insight into current endeavors. As an Editorial Team, it was clear that we must set the bar high while providing the means for our scientific journal to portray the cooperative learning discourse.

From the submitted papers, we curated a selection for the *Article* section that offers both theoretical overviews and practical solutions. In the *Workshop* section, we chose studies focused on concrete practical implementation. In the *Dairy* section, we provided space for the global networking effort initiated within the CL discourse in 2020. In this section, we also present the two summary books mentioned above, along with a very recent handbook that bridges cooperative learning with reflective practice. This way, alongside the historical overview, contemporary research, and approaches, readers can also gain insights from a fresh practical handbook in our journal.

The first study (*Robyn M. Gillies: Strategies promoting dialogic talk during cooperative learning*) draws attention to a significant segment of cooperative learning, focusing on academic talk unfolding through interaction. The author provides a concise and vivid overview of research concerning student interaction within the contexts of constructivist and cooperative discourses. This sheds light on how the effectiveness, outcomes, and fairness of cooperative learning can be enhanced by intentionally followed constructivist strategies and models that are built upon interaction and employ diverse cognitive repertoires.

In the following article (*Seven ways of constructing knowledge through cooperative learning*), Arató illustrates how cooperative learning and the constructivist educational approach seamlessly intertwine. The author points out that to this day, the practice of cooperative

learning provides the framework for constructivist experiments, research, and established practices. Arató introduces seven modes of knowledge construction that can be easily integrated into everyday teaching within cooperative settings, either in the physical classroom or through online platforms. These modes also offer strategies and approaches that can provide guidance for researchers studying collaborative ways of knowledge construction.

In the third study (*Using cooperative learning to teach the sustainable development goals*), Jacobs and colleagues (Chenghao Zhu, Meng Huat Chau, Qingli Guo, and Jasper Roe) examine the possibilities of cooperative learning from the perspective of another segment, namely the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The authors thoroughly explore the essential characteristics of these goals, briefly introduce the background of cooperative learning, and connect the two areas through the student-centered approach. Using concrete practical models and principles, they demonstrate how the paradigm of cooperative learning can be suitable for supporting all SDG objectives.

In the journal's *Workshop* section, two additional studies find their place. In the first study (*A virtual peer tutoring project to improve communication skills*), authors Garriga, Gonzales, and Duran present a peer tutoring model that connects students from Scotland and Spain, aiming to enhance their communication skills. Through this intriguing case study, the authors clearly point out pathways towards prominent areas in the cooperative discourse for further exploration. These areas include conscious cognitive and communication skill development, strengthening the tutoring role with collaborative and partnering behavior patterns and strategies.

The other workshop study in the section examines the other side of implementing cooperative learning in practice by focusing on effective and successful teacher training programs. In their study titled "*Teachers' professional development for cooperative learning: A constructive controversy between long-term versus short-term professional development*", authors Liebech-Lien, Hammar Chiriac, and Neil Davidson investigate the effectiveness of teacher training programs with a focus on the time factor. The case studies summarize experiences from two countries' contexts while providing a brief overview of international experiences as well.

In the *Diary* section, a brief introduction is provided about the global network for cooperative learning (*Network of International Cooperative Learning Educators and Enthusiasts, NICLEE*), which continues the work of pioneering and practicing cooperative learning proponents (*International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education, IASCE*, from 1979 to 2019), initiating collaboration among researchers, theoretical experts, and practitioners once again. It is a pleasure for us that Yael Sharan has taken on the task of sharing her personal impressions about the "*Contemporary...*" book mentioned above and published in 2023, which features contemporary cooperative authors. We can read a review by Arató about the book of the "*Pioneers...*" summarizing fifty years of cooperative learning. Kata Oláh also presents a review of a handbook published in 2022, "*Cooperative Learning through a Reflective Lens*," authored by Jacobs, Li, and Tamah, recommended for language teachers but useful for any educator.

The earlier Hungarian-language issues of our journal consistently provided updates on the discourse surrounding cooperative learning. However, with the international expansion of the *Autonomy and Responsibility* journal since last year, our aim was to offer a platform for continuous visibility for the representatives of the cooperative paradigm. Through this second thematic issue, we sought to make it clear to both those interested in cooperative learning and those actively contributing to the discourse that we intend to provide ongoing exposure to the cooperative learning within the pages of our journal.

**Ferenc Arató, Issue Editor**