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Literature Review: Cooperative learning is an informative technique in which students work together in small fixed groups on a structured learning with the aim of maximizing their own and each others learning (Johnson & Johnson 1986). Cooperative learning has two very striking aspects on focus; these are academic and social learning benefits. Academic benefits include high grades in all that they achieve, reading intellectual capacity, keeping the kids physically fit, enhanced hypothetical understanding and great triumph in science. Social benefits focus mostly behaviors towards certain tasks and the way they relate among group members, development of higher skill that come from within and self esteem. Social benefits also focus on how they positively relate with others, how they involve themselves in class activities and to develop a positive attitude towards schooling. (Johnson & Johnson 1986, Buron, James and Ambrosio 1993; Gillies 1999: Gillies and Ashman 1998; McManus and Gettinger, 1996)

Johnson and Johnson's " Learning together" approach involves a more collaborative approach in which students are directed to coordinate their efforts towards task completion emphasizing less on competition. One purpose of the approach is to cater for the third grade leaner's' cooperative learning. Several studies on the application of cooperative learning in computer classes have been carried out. Barons (1999) studied the effects of 276 fifth and sixth grader cooperative learning and their ability to form groups during microcomputer learning. The outcome of the four measures of achievement did not go for the idea of cooperative learning or the ability to form groups during microcomputer learning. Seymor (1994) did his study

with 57 computer aided design students. Some students worked individually while being given commands by their teacher, another group worked cooperatively and the last group combined both approaches. Seymor made conclusions later on, that cooperative learning proved more efficient in the use of computers.

While cooperative learning has so merits behind it towards the students' academic achievement, building of self esteem, active learning, achievement of equity and the development of social skills, it surely is not a universal remedy for education; it cannot solve all the problems for the students. (Cohen, 1994; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Kagan, 1992; Slavin, 1995), found out that students who had behavioral disorders and had not received proper social skills, performed better with direct instructions rather than with the cooperative approach. Its for this reason that teachers will be advised to have some substantial understanding of how o bring to effect their design of cooperative learning. They should take relative or social-ecological variables into consideration, as proper initial consultation while using cooperative learning requires strong basis in the theoretical and empirical foundation before it is used.

The use of computers in group learning enhances deep learning and critical thinking (Eunsook Hyun 44 (2005) 69–91). The children tend to move deeper into what they are learning and critically analyze the activity, to get a deeper understanding. According to these researchers (Newman, Johnson, Webb, & Cochrane, 1997), the critical thinking chains positive peer self-motivation, learner's internal evaluation and the amalgamation of newly acquired information with the already existing comprehension. In the early childhood

classes, the computer technology can be used as means of motivating collaborative learning (Eunsook, 2005).

Crook (1998), from his own perspective observed that children cooperate and learn collaboratively. If natural and learner-favoring environments were provided, where the children are free to explore, negotiate with their peers, teach and share with their peers, while taking charge of their own learning, would be critical in uncovering the characteristics of young children's cooperative-learning behavior in now a classroom rich in computer technology. Eunsook (2005) also cites Crook (1991) arguing that technology based activities are effective especially when they help the groups of kids to explore ideas at developmentally meaningful levels.

Roth et al (p. 1009) describes how a particular computer display affords the possibility of a coherent conversation. Malone and Lepper (1987) show how certain computer games afford intrinsic motivation. This includes control of activity, interactivity, immediate results, graded goals, conflict and moderate certainty. The outcome of interest was working theories or schemas and the individual technology relationship can be described as anchoring. In Papert's book, *Mindstorms* , (1980), he asserts that anything is easy if it can be assimilated to your collection of models. He continues to put it across that what an individual can learn and how he learns it depends on what models he has available. Children tend to assimilate the real things, for instance Mathematics, with what interests them most or what preoccupies their minds most.

Ceci and Bronfenbrenner (1985, 1991) studied students of age 10 and 14, and found out that a change in how a certain was located, changed the skill of the children. In one of their studies they changed the computer settings in a laboratory. Geometric shapes were to be predicted using a video game setting. In this, the migration of butterflies was to be predicted. The cursor was changed to the picture of a butterfly net and the students were to capture the insects in the butterfly net instead of pointing to the position of the shapes

The authors describe strategic and attention behavior that was more efficient for a particular problem solving task in the more familiar context than in a laboratory context. There appeared to be several aspects of a meaningful or comfortable context that anchor the skill, knowledge or strategy. For a variety of reason, then the technology or the problem is more transparent, understandable if anchored to meaning and effect.

Nicola Yelland (1999) in his article “ Technology as play” has tried to paint the picture of how the advent of technology has contributed greatly towards how children learn from the technology through play. Learning is not only fun but children can actively form their own meanings and make sense out of the world around them, in different ways. The angle in which toys were observed has changed considerably over the years after the invention of the new technologies. They have brought other dimensions to objects that previously were taken to play a passive role. Computer software that allows children to engage in play tends to be unrestricted and do not simply require the child to press a button to get a feedback. Such softwares are regarded as high yielding cognitive actions. Some software enables children to play with

the real world items such as musical instruments, but now in a different dimension. The children can create their own sounds using these softwares which prove to be so interesting to them and a motivation to even create more tunes.

Nicola Yelland ha also identified, through other research works, softwares that contribute towards play include the electronic games. Some of these games involve the application of education concepts such as early skills in science and art, like making patterns, matching objects and placing object according to certain specifications. Traditional activities can now be complemented with different experiences that have been made possible with the new information technologies. The new information technologies and the activities associated with them have the potential to extend new learning in new and exciting ways.

The question that hovers in many researchers' minds is whether really children can really learn effectively using the collaborative approach, in a technology filled classroom. Young children are very enthusiastic about technology and therefore, they may be less inhibited about working with computers than adults (Clements, 1994; Haugland, 1999, 2000; Shade, 1999). But the question still remains; how do they behave if placed in a classroom with a great deal of technology. However, little attention in writing has been taken about the impact of this kind of an environment on the computer proficiency of young children.

Tiene and Luft (2001a&b; 2000a&b) completed a number of quantitative studies focusing on teacher's general perception of children's collaboration

learning in this kind of a facility. The teachers reported that both they and their students improved their technological proficiency during the time they were in the technology saturated environment.

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