

## **The programme "Cooperating to Learn / Learning to Cooperate" as a tool for inclusion of all students in regular classrooms: Proyecto PAC<sup>1</sup>**

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**First and second choice network** (4 & 16 )

**Some networks will ask for identifying sub-themes:** Not possible

**3 - 5 keywords:** Cooperative Learning, inclusion, structure of activity.

### **General description on research questions, objectives and theoretical framework (up to 500 words)**

The PAC Research Project was twofold: firstly, to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme "Cooperating to Learn / Learning to Cooperate" (CL / LC) in contributing to the improvement of educational practices that promote school inclusion of all students, and secondly, to analyze what characteristics and conditions of the counseling-training processes of advice for the introduction of such a development programme help effectiveness. In the last ECER Congress held in Berlin it [GRAD] presented the results of the project relative to the second of the goals: the analysis of counseling-training process undertaken (Lake et al., 2011). In this communication we present the results for the first purpose: evaluation of the program itself CL / LC.

This research project, has been developed by the GRAD (Grupo de Recerca en Atenció a la Diversitat), Research Group on Care Diversity at the University of Vic. GRAD belongs to the C.I.E.S. network which stands for (Collaboration in Social and Educational Inclusion) . The central aim of CIES is research into the improvement of inclusion in educational practices. The network is GRAD with four other research groups.

The Program CL\_LC (Cooperating to Learn\_Learning to Cooperate) is based on the principles of cooperative learning, following the approach of Kagan (1999) and Johnson and Johnson (1997) , and it has been developed by GRAD. As proposed by Pujolàs, in 2008 the program articulates a set of educational resources organized in three closely related intervention areas: **area A** ; which includes resources linked to improve the cohesion of the group, **area B**; which contains a series of co-operative activity structures to organise the teaching of the content of the curriculum areas, this is work in teams to teach curriculum as a resource, and the **area of intervention C**, which includes actions aimed at teaching pupils and students, in an explicit and systematic way, to work in teams.

The overall research question related to the evaluation of the CL / LC it focused if the actions planned in the three areas where the program helped to improve the performance of all students, regardless of their characteristics and educational needs, because in turn improved the classroom climate and group cohesion. More specifically, we wanted to check if the proceeding under the program contributes to improve: (a) the attitude of solidarity among all students, (b) social classroom climate, (c) group cohesion, and consequently (d) academic performance. At same time, for to attribute the improvements achieved to cooperative learning, it was necessary to check whether the structure of the resulting activity had the essential elements of cooperative learning, for which we had evaluated the degree of cooperativity (Pujol, 2009) of the teams formed within the classrooms where the program was applied AC / AC.

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<sup>1</sup> Proyecto PAC: Programa didáctico inclusivo para atender en el aula alumnado con necesidades educativas diversas. Una investigación evaluativa. Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia (Referencia: SEJ2006-01495/EDUC), continuado en el *Proyecto PAC-2: Estudio de casos sobre el desarrollo y el proceso de asesoramiento de un programa de apoyos educativos inclusivos* (Referencia: EDU2010-19140).

The theoretical frameworks of research for the evaluation of the program are, on the one hand, studies on cooperative learning and Johnson and Johnson noted in (1997) and Kagan (1999), in addition to Slavin (1985) and Putnam (1993), on the other hand, the principles of inclusive classroom approach developed by Ainscow (1995), Stainback and Stainback (1999), Stainback (2001) and Porter (2001), and finally, third, the research approaches evaluation of programs proposed by Stake (2006).

### **Methods/methodology (up to 200 words)**

It is an programs evaluative research following the methodology of the evaluation of Responsive Evaluation Model of Robert Stake.

Robert Stake proposes, that to analyze the quality of a particular educational program is necessary, among others, analysis of "absolute quality". To do so, in this project, we tested if in the classrooms that implemented the Program were found the quality criteria established for the Program, and to what extent were these criteria, the quality standards set for the same program .

According to the specific research questions posed above, the quality criteria of the program were: academic performance, the attitude of solidarity, the social climate and cohesion of the group.

To see how much they had achieved the quality standards for each of these criteria were used several data collection instruments before and after program implementation: A solidarity questionnaire, a questionnaire on the social classroom climate and sociometric test to check for changes in group cohesion.

In addition, to verify the degree of cooperativity of the structure of the activity resulting after applying the program under evaluation, the research team developed a specific procedure described in Pujolas (2009).

### **Expected outcomes/results (up to 200 words)**

In this paper we present the results of the implementation of CL / LC Program in five schools. The results varied depending on the degree of program implementation. In schools that more fully they had applied the program it was found indeed that after its application had improved social classroom climate, the degree of group cohesion and harmony and solidarity among students and in addition, and probably for this reason, school performance also improved.

The results can be attributed reasonably to the applied to the program, according to the Responsive Evaluation Robert Stake Model . One hand we had tested on the one hand, the theoretical coherence and logical consistency through an triangulation of "opinions of experts "and, moreover, is also found consistency between planning and program implementation in the participating centers .

Furthermore, we was found that groups with better results, the structure of the activity resulting was an cooperative structure. We can atribute this to the implementation of the Program because when we analyzed the degree of cooperativity, we was found that gave a significant main elements of cooperative learning in this classrooms.

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