

SUPPORT FOR TEACHING TO COOPERATE

**THE PROCESS OF TRAINING / CONSULTATION
THE CL / LC PROGRAM OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHING
TO LEARN IN A TEAM**

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The training and consultation process to help teachers and schools to teach team learning consists of a set of activities aimed at regulating and guiding teachers when planning, developing and evaluating the progressive incorporation of the CL / LC Program (Cooperating to Learn / Learning to Cooperate) in classrooms and educational centres.

The activities and tools of this process are the result of two R + D + I (Research, Development and Innovation) projects carried out by the Research Group for Attention to Diversity (GRAD) at the University of Vic – Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC): PAC Project (1): An Inclusive Didactic Program to assist students with diverse educational needs in the classroom. An evaluative investigation (Reference: SEJ2006-01495 / EDUC) and PAC project (2): A case study on the implementation and counselling process in the PAC Project program of inclusive educational support (Reference: EDU-2010 to 19,140).

One part of the first of these projects, PAC Project (1), (planned as a part of the GRAD group's research line on the Structuring of Cooperative Learning) consisted of evaluating the program itself. The other part (planned as a part of the GRAD group's research line on Guidance for the Improvement of Educational Practices) was dedicated to identifying which elements of the counselling process had most specially contributed to the incorporation of the CA / AC Program in educational centres that applied it experimentally.

The analysis of the data obtained in the training and counselling processes, which were carried out in different educational contexts by the members of the Training Group for “Inclusive education, cooperation between students and collaboration between teachers ” from the Centre for Innovation and Training in Education (CIFE) of the UVic-UCC, has made it possible to develop the set of guidelines and instruments for what we call the Training / Consultation Process to Help to Teach to Learn in a Team.

This process is structured in three stages, each one of which is implemented, in general, over one or two school years:

- Introduction Stage
- Generalization Stage
- Consolidation Stage

In this document we present the content of these three stages of the Training / Consultation process and information about the CA / AC Program.

2 The Implementation of the Training and Consultation Process

In PAC Project (1) that we have already mentioned, we were not only able to evaluate the CA / AC Program but also we also analysed the training and consultation process in the Program, so we were able to identify the optimal conditions that must be met and the successive steps that must be carried out to ensure that this process is successful and that the Program ends up being integrated into the centres where it has been introduced. All this has allowed us to develop the set of guidelines and instruments that we call the Training / Consultation Process to Help to Teach to Learn in a Team (Pujolàs and Lago, 2007; Lago and Onrubia, 2011; Lago, Pujolàs and Naranjo, 2011; Pujolàs, Lago and Naranjo, 2013).

This process is structured in three stages (see figure 1), each of which is developed in lines general, in a school year.

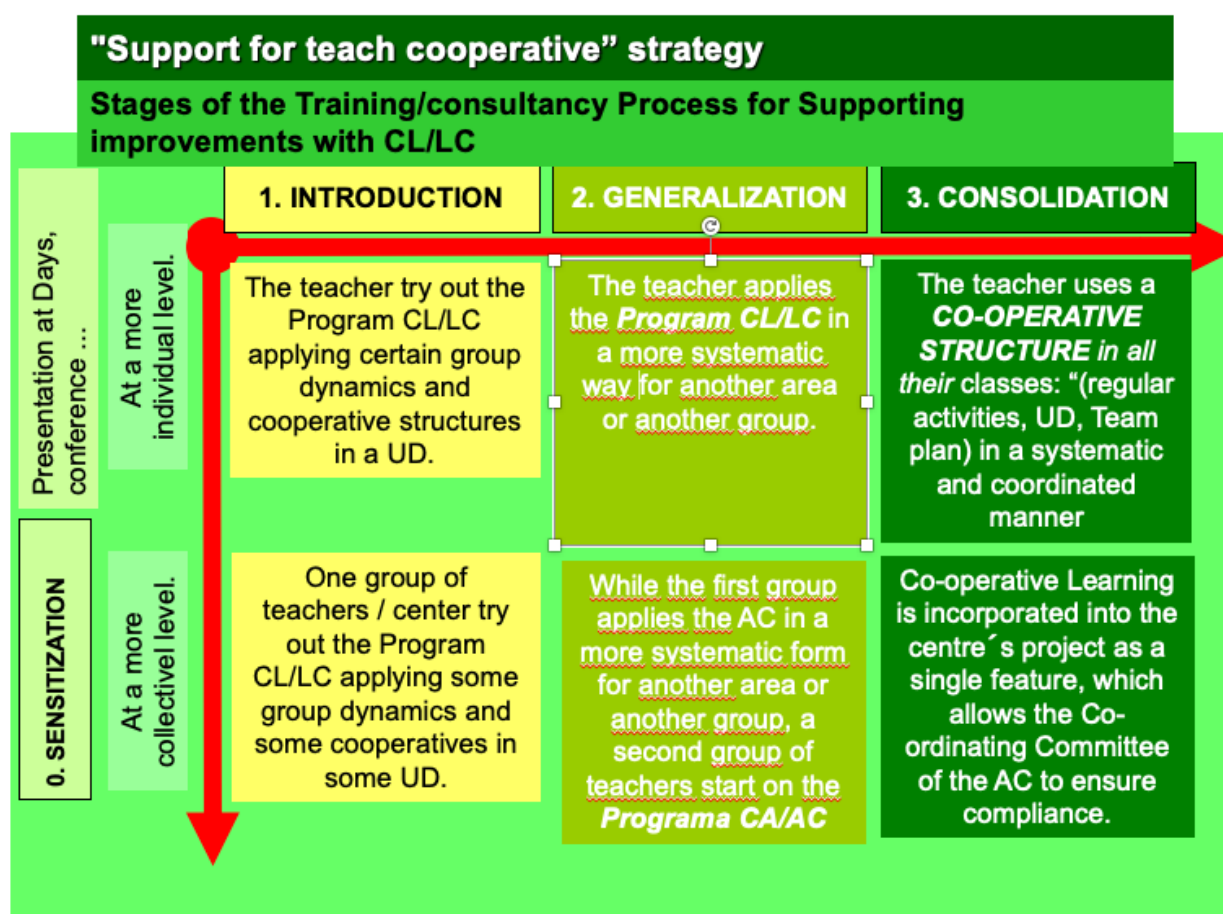


Figure 1. Stages of the Training / Consultation Process

In this process, there is a "sensibilization stage" which takes different forms: a presentation at a conference, a seminar given to a faculty, a session in a more generalised training course, etc.), which is used mainly to present the CA / AC Program and the Training / Consultation Process, and encourage participants to participate in more intensive training by showing them a way of organizing their students' activities in the classroom that can be more motivating and effective for both teaching and learning.

The stages of the Training / Consultation Process are as follows:

1. In the **Introduction Stage**, the teachers participating in the process make a first attempt at implementing some of the proposals of each of the three areas of the program and plan some activities linked to their interests and their objectives for the improvement of their teaching practice.
2. In the **Generalization Stage**, the group of teachers from each centre who have carried out the introductory stage, plan the generalized implementation of what they have learned and tested in the previous stage in two ways. At an individual level, the participating teachers apply cooperative learning in a systematic way both in the areas or groups included in the first stage and in new areas or groups. At the school level, on the other hand, the more experienced group helps a new group of teachers to start the program and presents the proposals of the three areas of the program, sharing the planning of these proposals, their implementation in the classroom and their evaluation.
3. In the **Consolidation Stage**, we can also differentiate what happens at the individual level and what happens at the school, or centre, level:
 - At the individual level, a significant number of the school's teaching staff will have introduced the organization of teaching activity through cooperative learning as a regular and central way of working in the classrooms.
 - At the centre level, cooperative learning will be incorporated into the educational project at all stages and will be considered as forming part of the identity of the centre, which will be making use of instruments such as the Commission for the Coordination of Cooperative Learning, which ensures ongoing monitoring and a permanent system of reflection on practice with the aim of the continual improvement of cooperative learning in the centre (the AC Improvement Plan).

2.0 CONDITIONS IN FAVOUR OF THE TRAINING / CONSULTATION PROCESS

Analysis of the processes followed in different educational centres when applying the CA / AC Program during the PAC Project has clearly highlighted the conditions that favour the Training / Consultation process. We can synthesize them into three areas:

1. The commitment of the management teams at the educational centres to the innovation promoted by the Program

The innovation process of the CA / AC Program should, ideally, be initiated, strengthened and, in the best case, be led by the centre's management team. This commitment can be specified in three key areas:

- By allowing voluntary participation in the process by teachers at the centre.
- By the centre's coordinating bodies providing space and time to make known to the rest of the teaching staff improvement in practices that have been developed as a result of the Training / Consultation process.
- By ensuring the direct participation in the improvements of a member of the management team, who at the same time acts as promoter and coordinator of this process in his or her centre and main contact with the consultant from the Educational Service and the advisor from the UVic.

2. The active participation in the process of the advisers from the area Educational Service and the training of the people who are to promote and coordinate the implementation of the program.

The Seminar on cooperative learning is the appropriate framework to carry out this training, a space in which the participants of the seminar can interact with the UVic advisor to analyse and resolve any doubts and difficulties that arise.

3. Support for teachers participating in the process

Support must be available both within the same centre and between different centres and must increase progressively through the stages of innovation progress. In accordance with this, in each centre, there will be a coordinator (or one per stage or cycle in larger centres) of the work to be carried out, available in the centre throughout the process.

2.1 THE INTRODUCTION STAGE

The purpose of the Introduction Stage is for the participating teachers to familiarize themselves with the main contents of the different areas of the CL / LC Program, try them out, try them in the classroom and see that, applied in a more systematic and sustained way, they will produce the beneficial effects for their classes that the program claims. It is not a question, therefore, of starting to apply CL /LC in a systematic way in the first year. This is the main purpose of the next stage, the Generalization Stage.

Types of sessions

In the Introductory Stage, various types of session can be differentiated:

- Training sessions, in which the theoretical framework is presented, which are carried out by the consultant /UVic trainer with all participants (teachers, coordinators of the centres, the coordinator of the teaching centre or institution).
- Follow-up seminars, directed by the UVic advisor / trainer, which are carried out with the coordinator of the teaching centre or Institution and with the coordinators of each centre, to monitor the process: to assess the previous session and prepare the next session.
- Finally, work sessions in the centres, led by the coordinators of each centre (with the support of the coordinator of the Teaching Centre or Institution) in which the teaching staff from the centre participate.

General structure of the advice and contents to work in each sesión

In the Introduction stage, the Training / Consultation process (see Table 1) consists of 10 sessions which are followed by all participants, four of which are carried out by the advisor / trainer of the UVic (shown in green in table 1) and the others which are carried out internally in the centres (shown in white in table 1) and directed by the coordinator of the centre with the support of the coordinator of the Teaching Centre or Institution.

At the same time, there are six follow-up Seminars (shown in yellow in Table 1), led by the advisor / trainer of the UVic, to assess each session once it has been carried out and to prepare the next session.

The contents of each session and each seminar are summarized in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 1: General plan of the Introduction Stage Training Consultant sessions

SESSION NUMBER AND CONTENT			SEMINAR NUMBER AND CONTENT	
FIRST TERM	1	Presentation of Theoretical Framework I: Basic concepts Presentation of the Counselling Process.	1	Session Preparation 3a and 3b
	2	Presentation of Theoretical Framework II: The three areas (A, B and C) of the CA / AC Program		
	3	Session 3: Area A: Group cohesion Analysis of the cohesion of the group of students. Planning a group dynamic in Domain A that the participating teachers will apply in the classroom. Session 3b: Assessment of the applied group dynamic in Domain A.		
			2	Assessment of Session 3 and preparation of the 4a and 4b.
	4	Session 4: Area B: Simple cooperative structures Planning an activity that teachers carry out that will be carried out with the students applying a simple cooperative structure. Session 4b: Assessment of the simple structure applied in the classroom.		
SECOND TERM				
	5	Presentation of an experience: processes that must be followed, examples of group dynamics and structures applied, difficulties and doubts that have arisen and how they have been overcome...		
	6	Session 6: Area B: Cooperative techniques and Didactic Unit (UD) Cooperatively Planning a UD in which a minimum of three simple cooperative structures occur in 3 of the 4 moments of the UD (before, at the beginning, during and at the end of the UD). Session 6b: Applied UD assessment, with some activities performed through a simple cooperative structure.		
	7	Theoretical framework III. Area C of the CL / LC Program: Resources to Teach Teamwork	4	Assessment of Sessions 5 and 6 and preparation of the Session 8a and 8b.
THIRD TERM	8	Session 8: Area BC: Programming of a cooperative UD + The team plan. Session 8b: Area BC: Assessment of a cooperative UD + The team plan.		
			5	Assessment of Session 8 and preparation of Session 9
	9	Presentation to the rest of the teaching staff of the experiences of the activities carried out by the participants.		
	10	Final assessment of the contents worked on and of the process followed. Presentation of the Generalization Stage.	6	Final assessment and preparation of the Stage of Generalization

2.2 THE GENERALIZATION STAGE

In the Generalization Stage (see Figure 1) teaching staff who have started the CA / AC Program during the previous course begin to apply cooperative learning in their classes, systematically and in an increasingly generalized way. At the beginning they may only apply it to some activities in one of the areas of the curriculum (or with one of the groups) in which she or he teaches. However, anyone who decides to carry out their classroom work with a cooperative structure — be it a little or a lot — must do it continuously to be able to experience the benefits of this way of working. As will then be seen, the positive effects of cooperative learning in students — mainly affecting motivation, participation and interaction between students, which in the long run implies an improvement in performance — will encourage them to increase the number of activities carried out in teams in the same area (or with the same group) or in other areas (or with other groups).

Meanwhile teachers who have already started in the CA / AC Program and have begun to apply in a more systematic way in their classroom may tutor a classmate who has become interested in the Program LC/LC and is starting up. Therefore there can be two groups of teachers in one centre: a first group already in the Generalization Stage and a second group in the Introduction Stage. In this way we can differentiate goals that are pursued at an individual and those pursued at a centre level in the Generalization Stage.

A. At the individual level, each of the teachers or professors who has already started in the CA / AC must pursue two objectives:

- Applying cooperative learning in their own classroom in a systematic and increasingly generalized way.
- Accompanying and supporting colleagues from the centre who are starting out in the CA / AC Program.

B. At the centre level, two objectives are also pursued:

- Procuring the coordination of the teaching staff of the centre of the same cycle, level or department that you want to generalize cooperative learning (CA) in their classes.
- Seeing that there are new teachers from the centre who are starting in the AC, who want to continue after the introduction stage of the CL / LC Program.

The combination of the first individual-level and the first centre-level objectives is what we call the Generalization Plan of the CL / LC Program, the combination of the second individual-level and the second centre-level objectives are what we call the Presentation and Support Plan for teachers that is introduced in the CL/LC Program. Therefore, in a single centre that is already in the Generalization Stage, there are two working groups whose function is separate but closely related:

- On the one hand, there is the group of second-year teachers who will generalize the CA / AC Program in their classes and that will carry out the centre's AC seminar.
- On the other hand, we can find the group of first-year teachers who are being introduced to the CL/LC. Between them, an interaction and a close relationship is established in which some of the second-year teachers accompany or tutor those from the first year.

Type of sessions

In the Generalization Stage (as we will see in Table 2) there are also three different types of sessions, as in the Introduction Stage: Formative sessions (green), Seminar sessions (yellow) and Work sessions in the centre (white).

General structure of the advice and contents to work in each session

In the Generalization stage, second-year teachers (see Table 2) carry out a minimum of eight sessions throughout the course, four of which are conducted by the UVic advisor / trainer (shown in green) and others internal sessions in the centres (shown in white), directed by the centre coordinator with the support of the coordinator of the Teaching Centre or Institution. In parallel, there are three Seminars (shown in yellow), led by the UVic consultant / trainer, to monitor the actions of the participating teachers during this stage.

The contents of each session and each seminar are summarized in the table on the next page.

Table 2: The General plan of the Generalization Stage Training Consultant sessions

SESSION NUMBER AND CONTENT		SEMINAR NUMBER AND CONTENT	
FIRST TERM	1	Theoretical Framework IV: Beginning to work in a team systematically. The Team Notebook: The Team Plans and the "Session Diaries". Rubric to evaluate teamwork. Generalization Plan (I): Simple structures in fixed activities or at different times during a UD.	
	2	Internal coordination session: Sharing of the Generalization Plans (I) and coordination between the teachers	
		1	Seminar for the monitoring of the Generalization Plan (I)
	3	Assessment session of the Generalization Plan (I) and decisions to be made for the Generalization Plan (II). It is held at the end of the first term jointly with the first-year faculty. Follow-up report (1)	
SECOND TERM	4	Theoretical Framework V: Expanding the application of AC. Cooperative techniques. Generalization Plan (II): Simple structures in fixed activities or at different moments of a singular Didactic Unit . Classroom AC folder	
	5	Internal coordination session: Coordination of the Generalization Plans (II) and between staff members. Decisions regarding AC toolkit in the classroom.	
		2	Seminar for the monitoring of the Generalization Plan (II)
	6	Assessment session of the Generalization Plan (II) and the Classroom AC toolkit. It is held at the end of second term jointly with the first-year faculty. Follow-up report (2)	
THIRD TERM	7	Theoretical framework VI: Deepening of evaluation. Grassroots teams and sporadic teams. Participation in teams with a student who encounters greater barriers to learning. Presentation of the CA Project scheme of the Centre. Final Questionnaire Presentation	
		3	Final assessment. Consolidation Planning.
	8	Final assessment. Moving to the Consolidation Stage. Progressive incorporation of AC in the centre. The Centre AC Project. Creation of the AC Commission of the Centre.	

2.3 THE CONSOLIDATION STAGE

At the individual level, the main purpose of the Consolidation Stage (see figure 1) is that the teachers incorporate cooperative learning into their classroom programming and that they introduce this way of organizing students' work in their classes in a regular fashion.

At the centre level, the process of consolidating cooperative learning has the following indicators:

- The incorporation of cooperative learning in the classroom schedules of the majority of teachers of each stage and cycle.
- The incorporation of cooperative learning in the educational project of the centre as a part of its identity, which distinguishes it in relation to other centres.
- The creation of the AC Coordination Commission in the centre to ensure correct monitoring.
- The preparation (planning and assessment) of an Improvement Plan for the AC of the centre.

The actions carried out in this last stage are based on what is known in the school framework as "Reflective Practice" and in the research methodology as "Action Research": teachers reflect on their own practice - in this case, on their experiences related to the cooperative learning of the teachers from the centre - analysing them and identifying certain "weak points" that will lead to the establishment of a certain number of "improvement objectives". At this point, a set of actions is planned to achieve the set objectives. At the end of a certain period (in this case, a term), there is a further cycle of reflection on practises, evaluation of actions, with new actions being planned for the following term (in this case). During this stage, everything done in the canters is done with the support of the UVic advisor/ trainer so that, at the end of the stage, the staff at the centre can repeat this same improvement process in successive courses autonomously.

AC Coordination Commission and the AC Improvement Plan

In this Consolidation Stage there is what we call the Coordination Commission of the Cooperative Learning of the centre and the instrument that articulates the work of this commission, the Cooperative Learning Improvement Plan.

In each centre (ideally, at the end of the Generalization Stage) the Coordination Commission will be created by the centre AC so that, from that moment onwards, it will oversee the carrying out of all the improvements that are necessary for the consolidation of cooperative learning in the centre. It is made up of a representative from each cycle or stage, one of whom exercises the functions of coordinator for a school year and another who performs the role of secretary. This commission is responsible for preparing a Cooperative Learning Improvement Plan in the centre for each school year. From each centre's final assessment of the situation in the centre at the end in the Generalization Stage, a maximum of three priority improvement objectives are set, and the actions to achieve them that must be carried out during the first term are specified. At the end of the term, at a new meeting of the Committee, the work carried out is evaluated and the actions planned for the second term. The same cycle is repeated for the third term. At a final course meeting the Commission, based on its final assessment, sets the priority objectives of the AC Improvement Plan for the following year.

The representative of each cycle or stage in the CA Coordination Commission oversees the actions in each term that are described in the Improvement Plan and, in a regular meeting with the members of each cycle or stage, transforms these actions into "personal commitments" made by the teaching staff of the cycle. These commitments are evaluated at another regular meeting of the cycle or stage at the end of the term, so that the representative of the cycle or stage can pass this assessment to the Committee session dedicated to assessing a given term and planning the actions of the following term.

Type of sessions

In the Consolidation Stage we can differentiate, as in the previous two, three different types of session, but in this case, the participants in each sessions vary:

- The **Training sessions** are led by the UVic advisor / trainer and the members of the Coordination Commissions of all centres participating in the training / consultation process. Also participating, where appropriate, is the teacher's centre advisor, or the institution's coordinator, who coordinates the process.
- The **Follow-up Seminar sessions** are also led by the UVic advisor / trainer, but only with the coordinator of the CA Coordination Commission of each centre participating in the process, together, where appropriate, with the advisor of the teaching centre, or the institution coordinator.
- Finally, **the sessions in the centre itself** can be meetings of the Coordination Commission of the CA of the centre (directed by the coordinator of the Commission), or cycle or stage meetings (directed by the representative of the cycle or stage in the Commission).

General structure of the advice and contents for working in each session

In the Consolidation stage, the UVic advisor / trainer only works directly with the members of the Coordination Commissions of each centre, carrying out a minimum of six sessions:

- Two with the UVic advisor / trainer (one at the beginning of the course and one at the end of the course), jointly with all the members of the AC Coordination Commissions of all the canters (These sessions are shown in green in table 3).
- Four sessions of the Coordination Commission of each centre, directed by the coordinator of the Commission (Shown in white in table 3).
- At the same time, there are two Seminars (shown in yellow), led by the advisor / trainer of the UVic, to monitor the centre's Improvement Plan.

The contents of each session and each seminar are summarized in Table 3 on the following page.

Table 3: General plan of the training consultant sessions of the Consolidation Stage

Coordination Commission of the Centre's AC Number of the session and content		Meetings to plan and assess the actions of the Improvement Plan	Number of the seminar and content
FIRST TERM	1	AC Improvement Plan in the centre. Priority objectives and actions of the 1st term.	
	2	Preparation of the Centre's Improvement Plan: Priority objectives and actions of the 1st. term	
		Planning for the cycle of actions in the 1st term (what each teacher commits to) Assessment of the actions of the 1st term (what each teacher is committing to)	
	3	Assessment of the 1st term and planning of the actions of the 2nd term	
SECOND TERM			1 Follow-up seminar on the Improvement Plan.
		Planning for the cycle of actions in the 2nd term (what each teacher commits to) Assessment of the actions of the 2nd term (what each teacher is committing to)	
	4	Assessment of the 2nd term and planning of the actions of the 2nd term	
			2 Improvement Plan follow-up seminar
THIRD TERM		Planning for the cycle of actions in the 3rd term (what each teacher commits to) Assessment of the actions of the 3rd term (what each teacher is committing to)	
	5	Assessment of the 3rd and final term and determination of the priority objectives of the Improvement Plan for the following year	
	6	Final assessment and objectives of the Improvement Plan for the following academic year. Presentation of the KHELIDÔN Network.	

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