



An Overview of the  
Taxonomy of Online Collaboration

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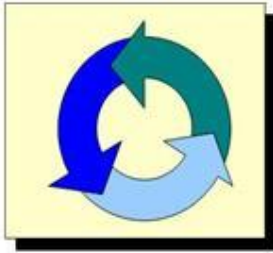
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Citation:

Salmons, J. E. (in press). *Taxonomy of online collaboration: Theory and practice in e-learning*. Hershey: IGI Global.

## Taxonomy of Online Collaboration: Levels of Collaboration

### Levels of Collaboration

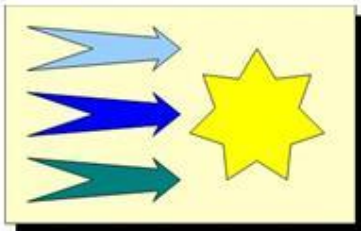


### Activity

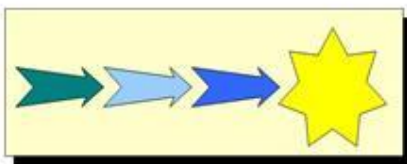
**DIALOGUE:**  
Participants exchange ideas to find shared purpose and coherence in the plans and/or tactics needed to coordinate their efforts.



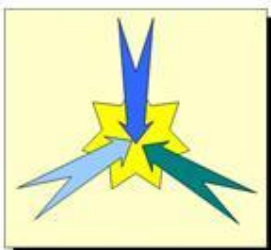
**PEER REVIEW:**  
Participants provide critique of each other's work and incorporate others' comments. Participants create individual outcomes based on peer input, or the process moves to another level of collaboration.



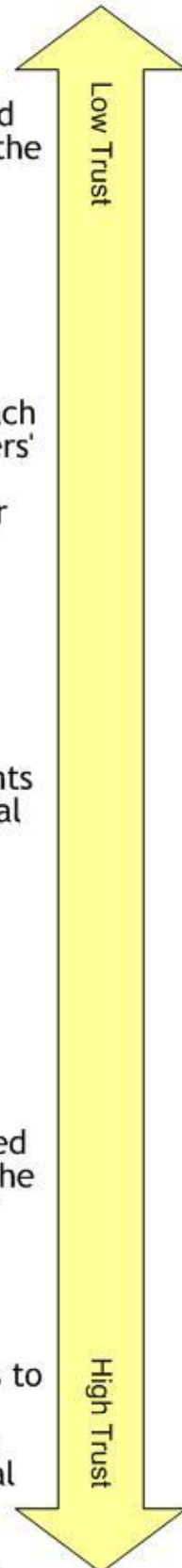
**PARALLEL COLLABORATION:**  
Participants each complete a component of the project. Elements are combined into a collective final product, or the process moves to another level of collaboration.



**SEQUENTIAL COLLABORATION:**  
Participants build on each other's contributions through a series of progressive steps ; all are combined into a collective final product or the process moves to another level of collaboration.



**SYNERGISTIC COLLABORATION:**  
Participants synthesize their ideas to plan, organize and complete the creation of a product that meshes contributions into a collective final product.



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The *Taxonomy of Online Collaboration* offers a new conceptual framework for understanding levels of collaboration and ways to organize learning activities so participants learn to achieve collective outcomes. Twelve experienced online instructors from five countries participated in this qualitative study and contributed their perspectives on planning, facilitating and assessing learning activities. A prototype Taxonomy developed by the researcher was refined based on analysis of instructors' perceptions of teaching with online collaborative methods, and descriptive examples of their approaches. In a follow-up study, twelve learners contributed perspectives on participation in a graduate team project based on the Taxonomy of Online Collaboration.

Based on study findings, the Taxonomy of Online Collaboration is presented as a set of materials: The *Levels of Collaboration* is presented here. Additional materials include *A Typology of Learning Milieus* and *A Typology of Collaborative E-Learning Assessment*. Additional information about publications and webinars can be found on the [Vision2Lead](#) website and [eLearn2Lead blog](#). View a short presentation of the Taxonomy at: Overview of the Taxonomy of Online Collaboration: <https://sas.illuminate.com/p.jnlp?psid=2008-07-16.2054.M.CE3C5FD168E167A73A9F1FA6B0DB14.vcr>

The Taxonomy of Online Collaboration offers a practical reference for educators who would use collaborative teaching methods in online and blended learning and researchers who want to study online collaboration.