

ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE TEACHING IN THE CLASS

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Abstract. *Collaborative teaching, a significant concept in the field of English language teaching, involves teachers in sharing expertise, decision-making, lesson delivery, and assessment.*

It is a common practice for instructors in many schools and universities where English is taught as a foreign/second language (EFL/ESL) in intensive programs or departments to be involved in collaboration in many ways ranging from co-planning to coconstructing and co-teaching their language classes.

The present study concentrated on collaborative practices of English language instructors planning the EFL program.

Key words: *collaboration, co-teaching, collaborative teaching, EFL instructors, language teaching, decision-making, assessment.*

Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. This review article outlines benefits of learning in collaboration style, begins with the concept of the term and continues with the advantages created by collaborative methods. Collaborative teaching, or in other terms, co-teaching or team-teaching, has been implemented differently in many contexts either as an intercultural team work of one native English teacher and non-native English teacher working together in a classroom setting in the process of planning, instruction, and evaluation.¹

Collaboration is a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle where individuals are responsible for their actions, including learning and respect the abilities and contributions of their peers. In all situations where people come together in groups, it suggests a way of dealing with people which respects and highlights individual group members' abilities and contributions.

¹ Luo, W. H. (2014). An inquiry into a collaborative model of teaching English by native Englishspeaking teachers and local teachers. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 23(3), 735-743

There is a sharing of authority and acceptance of responsibility among group members for the groups' actions.

Brown and Lara (2011) cite Johnsons (2009) that say; there are three ways when individuals take action in relation to the actions of the others. One's actions may promote the success of others, obstruct the success of others, or not have any effect at all on the success or failure of others. In other words, individuals may be:

- a) ☐ Working together cooperatively to accomplish shared learning goals;
- b) ☐ Working against each other (competitively) to achieve a goal that only one or a few can attain;
- c) ☐ Working by oneself (individualistically) to accomplish goals unrelated to the goals of others.

Collaboration in teaching English involves educators working together to create a supportive and dynamic learning environment for students. This is the process of working together with others to achieve a common goal or outcome. It involves sharing ideas, resources, and responsibilities to achieve a desired result. It often involves communication, teamwork, and cooperation among individuals or groups. It can occur in various settings, such as in the workplace, in academic settings, or in community projects. Collaborating with others can lead to greater creativity, efficiency, and success in achieving goals.

They state that Johnsons' survey of educational research demonstrates cooperation, in comparison with competitive and individualistic efforts, results in;

- 1. ☐ Higher achievement and greater productivity;
- 2. ☐ More caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and;
- 3. ☐ Greater psychological health, social competence and self esteem.

The structural characteristics of teacher collaboration are also manifold. Friend and Cook (1992) listed six defining features of collaboration: is voluntary; requires parity among participants; is based on mutual goals; depends on shared responsibility for participation and decision-making; individuals who collaborate share their resources, and individuals who collaborate share accountability for outcomes. Little (1990) identified four different types of collaborative elements, including storytelling and scanning for ideas, aid and assistance, sharing, and joint work. The positive influence of teacher collaboration transcends the teacher community; research has shown that professional collaborative activities might have a positive effect on student achievement.

It is further suggested that an ideal collaborative partner should be flexible, open to communication, tolerant, respectful, honest, energetic, supportive, and willing to cooperate just to name a few to create a positive atmosphere for collaboration. In addition to these, collaborative practice should be strengthened by having more meetings, assigning different skills to different instructors, benefiting from more experienced colleagues according to the instructors participating in this study.

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