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<tr>
<th>Observer/Coach</th>
<th>Process/Next Steps</th>
<th>Takeaways</th>
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<th>Observer/Coach Wonders:</th>
<th>Observer/Coach Suggestions:</th>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<th>Observer Identified Models Used:</th>
<th>Teacher Identified Models Used:</th>
<th>What went well (Notices Identified by)</th>
<th>What I do differently (Wonders)</th>
<th>Co-Teachers Identified by the Co-Teachers</th>
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<th>Length or Time Co-Teaching:</th>
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Peer Observation of Coaching Conference Form (Modified Noticing and Wondering)
Students are measuring the new container, the ELTs and possible other risks, observing and interpreting how chemicals throughout the room.

The ESL specialist leads a review and practice lesson on while the fourth-grade classroom teacher leads the science lesson. The ESL specialist and the teachers assess and reteach the concepts and skills throughout the ELT observations.

While the ESL specialist assesses the lesson, the teacher leads the ELTs.

The teachers each teach the same lesson at the same time. The teachers split the class and work cooperatively to reach the same lesson at the same time.

Both teachers direct a whole-class concept or skill. One teacher leads while the other facilitates. The ESL teacher provides mini-lessons to individuals or small groups in classrooms. The lead takes turns assuming the lead role. One teacher leads, while the other role is reversed. The lead manages the mini-lessons and ESL teachers, while the mathematics teacher introduces the mathematics component of the mini-lesson.
learning needs: assistance for their particular teaching/learning support students with

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Welcome to the collaboration age! or so announced Edutopia lead author Grace Rubenstein (n.d.) in a recent article. She not only designated the current era to be recognized for its dire need for collaboration but also coined a new term to describe the students in the contemporary classrooms: the “collaboration generation.” She pondered how schools teach them, how they learn, and what resources are needed to support them and concluded that the future depends on people’s collaborative agility.

Why Collaboration?
Principals face a tangled web of accountability for several reasons: NCLB shifted the focus of programs for English language learners (ELLs). Success is no longer viewed with the single lens of meeting English proficiency, but rather with a magnifying glass to ensure that students “will meet the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet” (NCLB, 2001, §3102[2]). With the advent of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, see www.corestandards.org), school leaders must not only guide their faculty and staff members to meet a new framework of standards-based instruction but must also interpret how to meet those standards with ELLs.
More than a decade has passed since higher academic standards and additional test accountability have been in place, yet nearly one-fourth of schools in the United States report that their students are not meeting the standards as anticipated (Baker, 2006). The only way schools can successfully comply with the changing regulations is if the entire school community understands and lives by the legislative mandates and if all stakeholders join forces to support ELLs’ language and literacy development and academic content attainment.

In addition, principals and other school leaders are members of a greater body of practice within their schools (Sergiovanni, 2006) and must create learning communities with their faculty and staff members to maintain high academic standards for all learners. It is particularly important for all teachers who have special knowledge of ELLs—and their unique linguistic, social-emotional, cross-cultural, and academic needs—to have a venue to act as advocates for their diverse learners who may be at a heightened risk of academic failure and to serve as cultural brokers as well as highly valued resources on second language acquisition and research-based best practices that support ELLs.
Key Collaborative Practices
Collaborative practices are new to some administrators and teachers, and adopting them can be complex and challenging. In our research and observation in numerous school districts, we have found that to successfully collaborate for the sake of ELLs, guidelines and procedures must be developed, implemented, and maintained that cultivate the transition from working in isolation to working in collaborative partnerships. The development of collaborative practices may have a more or less direct instructional or noninstructional focus.

Instructional Activities
Instructional collaborative activities allow teachers to align teaching objectives, materials, learning strategies, and assessment so that ELLs can be supported academically in a cohesive manner. Such activities require an ongoing commitment as a part of shared beliefs and overall mission for ELLs.

Joint planning. ELLs need access to the mainstream curriculum and assistance through particular teaching and learning strategies that make academic material comprehensible. When ESL and content-area teachers plan together, they can ensure that ESL lessons contain pertinent academic subject matter and that content lessons are presented using strategies that help reach ELLs.

Curriculum mapping and alignment. To ensure that instructional content and practices for ELLs are consistent with content standards and learning outcomes for all students, ESL teachers can map and align the ESL and mainstream curricula. In addition, curriculum frameworks can guide mainstream teachers' efforts to differentiate instruction for ELLs according to their levels of language proficiency.

Parallel teaching. Although their instruction is conducted in separate classrooms, ESL and mainstream teachers can plan lessons that include similar content and language concepts to foster continuity and congruence with ELLs' teaching and learning.

Codeveloping instructional materials. This shared activity promotes the use of differentiated learning; it supports all teachers in their efforts to adapt content for ELLs and can lighten individual workloads.

Collaborative assessment of student work. Teachers examine student work together not only to determine areas of instruction that need further clarification and reinforcement but also to identify teaching practices that need improvement. Because they focus on different aspects of ELLs' academic growth and language development, ESL and content-area teachers also may have different viewpoints on the progress of ELLs.

Coteaching. Within the context of a single classroom, the ESL teacher and the content-area teacher are equal instructional partners who combine their expertise and talents to make instruction comprehensible for ELLs. In addition, both teachers share the responsibility of planning, implementing, and assessing instruction for all students in the class.

Noninstructional Activities
Noninstructional activities are also an important aspect of collaborative practices and engagement that can have a great impact on student outcomes. These practices include creating opportunities for joint professional development; encouraging collaborative action research or teacher research to collect data on an intervention; preparing for and conducting joint parent-teacher conferences; and planning, facilitating, or participating in other extracurricular activities, such as family literacy programs, enrichment activities, and field trips.

Involving all faculty members when planning, participating in, and evaluating collaborative activities significantly contributes to their sense of ownership and successful leadership practices that serve ELLs. Without a doubt, cooperation among colleagues improves the quality of teacher learning and instructional delivery for students. Principals who promote key collaborative practices create school climates that foster critical conversations, enhance collaborative partnerships, develop overall trust and support among the faculty, and value teacher autonomy.
Collaborative, Integrated ESL Service Delivery

When teachers continue to work in isolation from one another, services to support ELLs become fragmented and disjointed. On the other hand, collaboration allows teachers and administrators to build a learning community with coordinated instruction for ELLs and all learners, as shown in the following examples.

In Riverhead (NY) High School, ESL director Liz Scaduto established a collaborative approach to content-area classes and invited all the ESL teachers on staff to pair off with science, math, social studies, and English content-area specialists to offer content-based, cotaught courses that used the sheltered instruction approach (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008) as well as best practices in collaborative lesson planning, delivery, and assessment of instruction (Honigfeld & Dove, 2010).

As teachers move from isolation to collaboration, the isolation cycle is broken, allowing for “respecting, acknowledging, and capitalizing on differences in expertise” (Elmore, 2000, p. 25). Teachers with general education, content-specific expertise offer their knowledge of the subject-matter content; general education curricula; and local, state, and national content-related standards and assessments to all other teachers on staff. At the same time, ESL specialists have the opportunity to share their expertise in second language acquisition, cross-cultural understanding, bilingualism and biculturalism, and literacy development. As a result, all learners benefit.

As principal of Schreiber High School in Port Washington, NY, Jay Lewis established a highly collaborative leadership approach. In his initiative, all members of the school leadership team, including ESL director Shirley Cepero and ESL teacher leaders, have engaged in shared decision making about what types of joint professional development the school should offer to support all teachers in learning effective strategies to help ELLs.

School leaders who share responsibilities and decision-making power in a democratic fashion are often said to be practicing “distributed leadership” (Spillane & Diamond, 2007), which suggests mutual interdependence among multiple members of the school: “Leadership for instruction typically involves principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, and classroom teachers who work independently as well as collaboratively to influence instruction” (Spillane & Diamond, 2007, p. 8). What collaborative leadership means for ELLs is that multiple school community members’ knowledge and expertise in curriculum, instruction, and leadership are used to make the school more effective and a more nurturing place to be. As a result, all learners benefit.

Under the leadership of principal Steven Siciliano, teachers and district leaders at Sagamore Middle School and in Sachem Central School District in Suffolk County, NY, as well as outside members of the school community, regularly collaborate to examine student data and make joint decisions about instructional selections and program improvement.

When the entire school community shares a collaborative culture, members of that community work together effectively guided by shared norms, values, and principles. Diverse experiences, ideas, and points of view are respected, rather than negated, marginalized, or trivialized. Members of such successful schools participate in collegial discussions about how to continually improve instruction and enhance the learning environment for all students. Finally, the norm is to be critical consumers of educational information as well as to produce data and information on the basis of carefully examined student data and program evaluations. As a result, all learners benefit.

Final Notes

Teacher collaboration and a team approach to serving ELLs are important for a number of reasons. Because of the demands on students, teachers, and administrators and the research base that supports teachers’ collaboration, shared knowledge, and collaborative inquiry, it is imperative that school leaders:

■ Create an inclusive, welcoming school learning community with a shared vision of respect and acceptance of everyone’s cultural heritage and background

■ Build a professional learning community that continually engages in collaborative inquiry on all students’ needs, including ELLs’ linguistic, academic, and cultural challenges

■ Establish flexible teaming that allows for both horizontal (on grade level) and vertical (across grade levels) teacher teams, as well as cross-disciplinary teamwork to support ELLs’ curricular, instruc-
tional, and extracurricular needs.

When an inclusive, collaborative framework is in place, the ESL program does not exist in isolation; ELLs and their ESL and English language development specialists do not become marginalized, second-class citizens; and ELLs’ education becomes everyone’s priority. As an outcome, teachers consistently work together as teams, and ELLs’ class participation, process of acculturation, sense of belonging; and above all, English language development and academic performance are often much improved. PL

REFERENCES


Andrew Honigsfeld is a professor and Maria G. Dove is an assistant professor in the Division of Education at Molloy College in Rockville Centre, NY.

Their book, Collaboration and Co-teaching: Strategies for English Learners, was published by Corwin in 2010.
Co-Teaching ELLs: RIDING A TANDEM BIKE

Content-area teachers and ESL teachers can address the needs of English language learners with a collaborative instructional cycle that starts with co-planning.

Andrea Honigsfeld and Maria G. Dove

Danielle Dodge and Paula Barnick first hopped on their tandem bike of co-teaching for English language learners (ELLs) more than three years ago. As teachers in New York’s Valley Stream Union Free School District 13, they’ve moved from the fragmented, pullout model of English as a second language (ESL) instruction into a multifaceted partnership in which they teach English language arts and social studies to their 4th grade students. Their class consists of 24 students; 5 of them are English learners. The challenges of implementing the Common Core State Standards with ELLs—as well as other diverse students who might be multiple grade levels behind in their reading and mathematics achievement—prompted the teachers to try co-teaching during their English language arts block.

“There are certain things that just require two brains,” suggests Danielle, who tends to take a global approach to lesson planning. She explains that as the content-area teacher, she looks at the curriculum standards and establishes the general progression of the lessons; in turn, Paula, a teacher of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), examines the curriculum and anticipates what aspects will present the most challenges for ELLs, focusing on the vocabulary, literacy subskills, and prior knowledge needed for upcoming lessons.

Paula expresses her appreciation for how the relationships are interconnected:

From students to teachers and students to students, the interaction of two adults working together closely provides the children with a powerful model of how the smallest to the largest tasks can be accomplished together, which they then apply while completing their own activities in tandem.

She believes that her co-teaching success with Danielle is the result of trust, respect, and high expectations, “which propel us through the curriculum on a daily basis.”

More Than Just Co-Teaching

The topic of co-teaching and collaboration for the sake of ELLs is gaining national attention. We have set it as our research and program support agenda and have, in recent years, devoted many articles and books to the topic. However, we continue to explore some essential questions: What propels successful co-teachers forward? How are they able to keep the balance and move their ELLs faster on the road of language development than they would move in stand-alone programs?
Through our own co-teaching practices, extensive professional learning, and instructional coaching experiences, as well as our decade-long research, we’ve identified three elements of successful, integrated collaborative instruction for ELLs in K–12 schools: (1) trust between co-teaching partners; (2) maintenance of the entire collaborative instructional cycle, which includes co-planning, co-teaching, co-assessment of student work, and reflection; and (3) leadership support.

Why is the entire collaborative cycle essential? Hopping on and off a bicycle might be a great way for a tourist to get around a new city to sightsee. But it doesn’t work that way with the co-teaching tandem bike. It’s unrealistic to expect teachers to meet their ELLs’ linguistic, academic, and social-emotional needs if they spend their day hopping from classroom to classroom, attempting to deliver content and language instruction at multiple grade levels with different teachers.

Schools have a tendency to focus on co-teaching only. The danger here is that it may easily turn into a “push-in and pull-aside” scenario, in which the classroom merely offers shared classroom space without shared goals, shared instruction, and shared assessment. One of the concerns we hear most frequently from educators is that the ESL teacher is relegated to the role of the helper who routinely has to ask, “What are we doing today?”

In contrast, when teachers put in place all four components of the collaborative instructional cycle—planning, teaching, assessment, and reflection—learning will flourish. The teachers have the opportunity to craft unit goals, lesson objectives, or learning targets with ELLs in mind. They can gather resources and materials that supplement and support instruction. They can design differentiated units and lessons with ample scaffolding, and they can conduct
formative and summative assessments together. Jointly, they can monitor student progress in both language development and content attainment, analyzing student data and planning interventions as needed. And they can reflect on the teaching-learning process that took place in the class.

In this article, we focus on the first two parts of the collaborative instructional cycle: co-planning and co-teaching. But first let’s explore the foundation of the entire cycle: trust.

Imagine getting on the tandem bike of co-teaching. Who sits in the front and takes the lead? Who takes the backseat? Who decides when to make a left or right turn? This requires trust. According to Dassette, developing “a trusting relationship over the life of a co-teaching partnership may be the most critical issue of all.”

Neither classroom teachers nor secondary content-area teachers have proven eager to give up leading their lesson when a co-teacher is present, whether the co-teacher is there to support ELLs or students with disabilities. Co-teaching requires a delicate balance. Much like riding a bike, if you lean too much one way or the other, the bike will fall over. However, when trust develops between two educators, their instruction is fully focused on the students rather than on the uncertainties of their work relationship. That focus keeps the tandem bike of co-teaching upright.

Trust comes from sustained opportunities for collaborative conversations in which co-teachers learn to value each other. Some key elements to building trust are shared goal setting, shared decision making, bilingual materials that may be useful for clarifying new topics.

To support teachers new to, or overwhelmed by, co-planning, we developed a three-phase co-planning framework (see fig. 1). Let’s consider how a teaching team—a social studies teacher and an ESL teacher—might use this framework to collaboratively plan a co-taught lesson in a 9th-grade social studies class with 25 students, 7 of whom are ELLs.

Pre-Planning (Completed Separately)
The team has identified the Great Depression as the topic for the upcoming joint lesson, and each teacher engages in the pre-planning phase. The social studies teacher decides on the content objective—to have students identify the causes of the Great Depression and its effect on the world. She selects vocabulary that all students will need to know, such as recession, foreclosure, gold standard, and so on. She reviews a PowerPoint presentation that she used the previous year to introduce the topic, and creates a list of key questions, and considers how to engage students in a jigsaw reading, in which they would be grouped and assigned reading tasks at various skill levels to become experts on one part of the topic.

Meanwhile, the ESL teacher has selected a language objective aligned with the Common Core State Standards: for students to be able to cite textual evidence to better comprehend the text. She reviews the text the students will read—an article on the History website called “The Great Depression” (www.history.com/topics/great-depression)—and devises some questions to assist them in finding the major points of information.

She also notices a patterned use of superlatives—deepest, longest, and worst—and decides to address this aspect of grammar with her ELLs.
Collaborative Planning (Completed Together)

After planning separately, the co-teaching team has a phone conference to plan jointly. They've already e-mailed each other their lesson plan ideas and reference materials. The team members agree on the content and language objectives they identified during pre-planning, but they decide that the text might be too challenging for some of the ELLs. The ESL teacher offers to create a summary page of information for students who need additional support with the content.

The co-teachers review the targeted vocabulary, and the ESL teacher identifies some additional vocabulary and idiomatic expressions to highlight during instruction, such as justified, anticipated, and kick into high gear.

They also discuss learning tasks, instructional strategies, and ways to configure the class for each activity. They decide to introduce the lesson together to the whole class using the PowerPoint presentation. After reviewing this presentation, the ESL teacher suggests that they modify it to include more photographs and additional vocabulary.

At this point, the teachers plan their individual teaching roles. Guided by the PowerPoint presentation, the social studies teacher will share new information about the Great Depression. The ESL teacher will verbally and visually scaffold the information by repeating what's been said, modifying some vocabulary words, jotting down notes on the board, and creating a timeline.

The teachers decide that students will be divided into cooperative-learning groups after the lesson introduction. Instead of engaging in the jigsaw reading that the social studies teacher initially proposed, some students will read and annotate different aspects of the text with sticky notes while the social studies teacher monitors their work. Other students will work in a small group directly with the ESL teacher to review concepts and grammar.

For an assessment, the team decides on a Think, Pair, Jot, Share at the end of class. The assessment will be scaffolded to support individual students. Before they end their planning conversation, the team members review their roles and responsibilities.

Post-Planning (Completed Separately)

Each teacher on this team prefers to keep her own separate written plans instead of sharing one completed plan, as others may decide to do. The social studies teacher completes a text annotation guide and, as agreed, modifies the PowerPoint presentation to include more photographs and vocabulary. She also creates the Think, Pair, Jot, Share exit assessment.

The ESL teacher completes a summary page of the text, a grammar activity that emphasizes the superlative form of adjectives, and a modified Think, Pair, Jot, Share. The teachers finish writing their individual plans and share them with each other by e-mail.

Co-Teaching: The Next Step

Without such careful planning, coordination of instructional delivery, and intentional use of assessment measures and tools that inform collaborative instruction, co-teaching will most likely fail. One teacher will have the responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment, while the other will be relegated to assistant status.

True co-teaching looks different. There, teaching partners assume multiple, changing roles to deliver instruction that meets the needs of all students. At times, one teacher undertakes a leading role while the other teacher supports the lead teacher's instruction. At other times, both teachers may take on similar roles and responsibilities.

As researchers, professional
developers, and coaches, we’ve documented seven co-teaching approaches that we refer to as models of instruction. We’ve organized them to show the grouping configuration the teachers choose—one group, two groups, or multiple groups—as well as the roles and responsibilities of each teacher within that particular configuration.

Leadership Support
For collaboration and co-teaching to work, a schoolwide framework designed around diverse student needs must be in place. The most successful co-teaching programs I’ve worked with broker skills, resources, and time for not only co-teachers, but also for those students who benefit from the co-taught classroom,” suggested Martina Wagner, EL Supervisor for the Roseville Area Schools in Minnesota.

We’ve proposed such a framework to strengthen whole-school practices for ELLs. It includes an inclusive vision and mission; schoolwide disciplinary literacy, in which all teachers focus on students’ learning both the content and the language of the discipline they teach; curriculum mapping and alignment, in which all coursework to address ELLs’ needs is aligned with what native English-speaking peers are learning; collaborative planning, instruction, and assessment; explicit strategy instruction; and a focus on student engagement.

Administrators aren’t the only ones to offer leadership support. Coaches and teacher leaders also play a crucial role in the success of co-teaching initiatives. Christine Seebach, longtime ESL co-teacher in an elementary school, suggested to her principal that the school schedule each of the five ESL teachers to co-teach at one grade level. This, she noted, would “foster best practices by allowing the ESL teacher to be an integral part of that grade level.” This simple yet crucial step allows for greater coordination of services and improved communication among ESL and classroom teachers, service providers such as reading specialists, building and district administrators, and parents.

A Steady Ride
Riding the tandem bike of co-teaching can be a rewarding experience. It brings together two teachers with different expertise, talents, strengths, and abilities to synchronize instruction for the benefit of all students. It requires building a trusting partnership that must include all four parts of the collaborative instructional cycle. It also requires leadership support, beginning with a shared vision for equitable learning practices for ELLs. Get these pieces in place, and enjoy the ride!


Andrea Honigsfeld (ahonigsfeld@molloy.edu) is professor of education and Maria G. Dove (mdove@molloy.edu) is associate professor of education at Molloy College, Rockville Centre, New York. They are coauthors of Common Core for the Not-So-Common Learner, Grades 6–12: English Language Arts Strategies (Conwin, 2013) and Collaboration and Co-Teaching for English Learners: A Leader’s Guide. (Conwin, 2014). Follow them on Twitter @andrealhonigsfel and @profDove.