

Points on a Continuum: ESL Teachers Reporting on Collaboration

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Today's K–12 English as a second language (ESL) teachers are encouraged to coplan or coteach with content teachers in order to support English language learners, thus moving English language support into the content area classroom, through push-in or coteaching rather than the pull-out model. However, results from a questionnaire of 72 K–12 ESL teachers across a wide range of settings suggest that collaboration may or may not take place within any of these models and can best be understood in terms of the intersection of the variables of frequency (limited to extensive) as well as type of practice (formal to informal). Results of this study have implications for administrator professional learning, teacher education, and teacher leadership.

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In recent years, there has been growing debate over which K–12 English as a second language (ESL) program type is most effective. Yet this debate rarely includes the perspectives of the ESL teachers who often struggle to meet students' needs within the constraints of their local instructional model. Currently, several models for providing English language instruction in K–12 schools exist in the United States. In *push-in*, the ESL teacher provides instruction in students' content or grade-level classroom, whereas in *pull-out* the ESL teacher provides instruction to small groups of students in another location. In *coteaching* models, the ESL and classroom or content teachers jointly provide instruction to English language

learners (ELLs). Recently, in many schools across the United States, coteaching and push-in models have been favored over pull-out models, because they are perceived as being more collaborative. However, no matter which model is used, content and ESL teachers need opportunities to engage in discourse within which both parties assume responsibility for meeting the academic and linguistic needs of ELLs (English, 2009).

Studies investigating the impact of ESL program models on ELL academic achievement have resulted in mixed findings. Some research, such as that reviewed by Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, and Christian (2005, 2006), has shown ELLs are more academically successful in integrated instructional settings. Studies that point to the benefits of push-in and coteaching models cite factors such as (a) ELLs remaining in the classroom with their non-ELL peers, which may decrease their marginalized status in the school (Theoharis, 2007); (b) ELLs increasing their development of social language as they interact with their non-ELL peers in classroom dialogue (Abdallah, 2009); and (c) ELLs not missing valuable instruction (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). In contrast, other studies have revealed educational advantages for ELLs who receive a separate period of targeted English language instruction (Goldenberg, 2008). For instance, in pull-out classrooms, ELLs may be more likely to (a) find a sense of safety and security, leading to a lower affective filter, resulting in greater risk taking and language production; (b) receive instruction targeted for their language level (Harklau, 1999); and (c) acclimate to the U.S. school culture while preserving features of their home cultures and languages (Gibson, 1988; Olsen, 2008).

There is likely value to be found in judicious application of push-in and pull-out models, as Fearon (2008) concluded in a yearlong investigation of elementary ESL and classroom teacher collaboration across both contexts. Fearon found that the quality and extent of collaboration between teachers was more important than the program delivery model and that both models provide distinct learning opportunities for both ELLs and their teachers.

For teachers, collaboration provides potential opportunities to view each other's content discipline, to clarify goals and expectations for students, and to gain valuable pedagogical

knowledge. For instance, Pawan (2008) notes that many content area teachers are already knowledgeable about some scaffolding techniques that are supportive of ELLs. Through collaboration, teachers can provide continued cooperative professional development, including sharing additional strategies and scaffolding techniques, in an ongoing, meaningful, and contextualized manner. For collaboration to function optimally, however, the teachers involved require common meeting times for planning, professional development on how to successfully collaborate, equal status, clearly defined common instructional goals, and compatible working and personality styles. As defined by Friend and Cook (2010), "interpersonal collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal" (p. 7).

In many schools there are more barriers to collaborative teaching than supports. Some barriers include the lack of allocated, common planning time (Friend, 2008), the absence of administrator understanding for structuring collaborative teaching for ELLs (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011), innovation weariness (Hargreaves, 1994), and a status differential placing the ESL specialist as inferior to the classroom teacher (Arkoudis, 2006; Creese, 2002, 2006), which may lead to ESL teacher resistance to collaborative teaching (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Contextual conditions also play a role in the success of collaboration (Bell & Walker, 2012). For instance, in the secondary school environment, departmentalization of secondary schools may limit the contact content teachers have with ESL teachers, and in elementary schools ESL teachers may be providing English language instruction across multiple grade levels, making grade-level coordination difficult. Therefore, although schools are mandated to provide ESL instruction to ELLs, content and ESL teachers may not be able to coordinate instructional planning.

The purpose of this investigation was to better understand how ESL teachers across grade levels, schools, geographical contexts, and ESL program models provide instruction to ELLs and how they view and actualize collaborative teaching. Though push-in and pull-out models are often considered collaborative models, in

this study *collaboration* encompasses all of the ways in which teachers communicate with each other in any of the models. Three research questions guided this inquiry:

1. What are ESL teachers' beliefs regarding teaching models?
2. Based on the ESL program delivery model, to what extent do ESL teachers engage in collaboration for ELLs (extensive–infrequent), and what is the nature of their collaboration (formal–informal)?
3. What conditions do ESL teachers perceive as necessary to sustain successful collaboration?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The academic achievement of ELLs is enhanced by collaboration between content area and ESL teachers (Díaz-Rico & Weed, 2006; Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Gottlieb, 2006; Hoffman & Dahlman, 2007; Holcomb, 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Walker, Shafer, & Iiams, 2004), although challenges to successful collaboration are to be expected (Arkoudis, 2000, 2006; Creese, 2002, 2005, 2006; Davison, 2006; English, 2009). These challenges arise from collaborators' need for institutional supports as well as from teachers' orientations toward collaboration. These orientations encompass the knowledge, beliefs, and assumptions of the teachers involved.

Contextual Conditions for Collaborative Teaching

Teachers are traditionally characterized by their desire for autonomy, with a proclivity for independent, rather than interdependent, decision making (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Lortie, 1975), and therefore may tend to resist collaborative teaching approaches. Hargreaves (1994) notes that, even when teachers are interested in collaboration, well-intentioned school administrators often impose mechanistic systems that stifle teacher decision making, turning attempts for collaboration into “contrived collegiality” (p. 208). For collaboration to occur among teachers, as is expected within the macro forms of professional learning communities (PLCs), a school principal must authentically distribute leadership. PLCs were conceived of as “an environment that fosters mutual cooperation, emotional support,

and personal growth as [teachers] work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone" (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, p. xii). However, if teachers are only given token power, they may view their collaborations with colleagues as ultimately fruitless. In order to encourage collaboration to take place at the micro level (two teachers coplanning and coteaching), the school leader needs to structure the school schedule around this partnership, providing the time, space, and instructional resources for it to flourish. Common to all teachers attempting collaboration is the need for administrator support (Murawski & Dieker, 2004), but few teachers perceive their school leaders as possessing the professional knowledge in how to create, foster, supervise, or evaluate collaborative teaching (Friend, 2008; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007; Walther-Thomas, 1997).

Collaborative Teaching for ELLs

Although the challenges of collaboration are likely common to all teachers, some are unique to ESL and content area teachers. First is the lack of expertise about ELLs among content area teachers. Despite the large and growing population of K–12 ELLs in U.S. schools, close to 90% of teachers have not participated in meaningful professional development targeted for ELLs (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008). A study conducted by Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005), with more than 5,000 California teachers, showed that 43% of teachers with 50% or more ELLs in their classes had received no more than one in-service workshop on the instruction of ELLs. This is especially problematic given that many non-ESL teachers may hold negative attitudes about ELLs (Cutri & Johnson, 2010; Reeves, 2006; Verplaetse, 1998; Walker et al., 2004; Youngs & Youngs, 2001).

Second is a lack of pre- or in-service training on how to collaborate, either for ESL or content teachers. Similar to the absence of general education teacher preparation for ELL instruction, there is a lack of ESL teacher preparation for collaborative teaching (DelliCarpini, 2009; Pugach & Blanton, 2009). According to Nordmeyer (2008),

Staff development for mainstream teachers is not enough. ESL teachers also need to develop new skills in order to meet the demands of their changing professional roles. Most ESL teachers were not trained to work within a collaborative environment, and some teachers have only used a pull-out model of ESL instruction. Curriculum integration and co-teaching require a different skill set and new ways of working with colleagues. (p. 40)

A third challenge to ESL–content area teacher collaboration has been investigated through the lens of critical discourse analysis. Arkoudis (2000, 2006), Creese (2002, 2005, 2006), and English (2009), in examining dialogue taking place in planning, reflection, and teaching sessions between content and ESL teachers, have discovered that content teachers enjoy a privileged status vis-à-vis ESL teachers, with the former seen as having more power and hence more control in the relationship. In regard to lesson planning, Arkoudis (2000) found that “the ESL curriculum is often reduced to a focus on a few teaching strategies while the mainstream subject material gains prominence in any collaborative work” (p. 70). English described the collaborative conversation as fraught with invisible and competing discourses, which when left unnamed, serve to preserve the status quo and continue to place responsibility for ELLs solely in the hands of ESL teachers.

Many ESL teachers indeed face a variety of barriers to collaboration with their content area counterparts, such as lack of institutional support, preparation for collaborative teaching, and lower status, as well as lack of physical space and/or resources, mandated curriculum, and insufficient contact time with ELLs. In spite of these, there are examples of successful collaboration. St. Paul Public Schools, in Minnesota, has been recognized for improving ELLs’ achievement scores after implementing a collaborative model (Pardini, 2006). In addition, York-Barr, Ghore, and Sommerness (2007) found that ELLs made achievement gains in a 3-year study of the collaborative partnership between classroom and ELL specialists in a midwestern U.S. urban elementary school. Theoharis and O’Toole (2011) describe two reform initiatives that were successful in reculturing schools to encourage ESL and content teachers to work closely together; in

one school teachers were acquiring dual licenses (ESL and elementary), and in the other teachers were using inclusive teaching models. Both schools had principals who were highly motivated and committed to the success of ELLs in their buildings.

Theoretical Models of Collaboration

Collaboration between ESL and content area teachers exists in a wide variety of forms, with greater and lesser degrees of formality, quality, and frequency. Davison (2006), in analyzing the discourse between collaborating English as a foreign language (EFL) and content area teachers, developed a schema that focuses on the partnership, rather than the teacher, as a unit of inquiry. Results show collaboration at five levels of intensity: Level 1, *pseudocompliance or passive resistance*, is characterized by little to no investment by the teachers; Level 2, *compliance*, moves from reliance on external rewards to internal rewards; Level 3, *accommodation*, moves from a focus on highly concrete activities to more complex analyses of teaching and learning; Level 4, *convergence*, gives rise to an increasingly positive attitude about the opportunity to learn from a peer; and Level 5, *creative co-construction*, in which teachers see their collaboration as a preferred option that extends to reading and action research in one another's discipline area (Davison, 2006, pp. 467–468). Davison's work helps to explain why the partnerships studied by Arkoudis (2006), Creese (2006), and English (2009) would be fraught with tension. Because content teachers and ESL teachers may occupy different positions of power in their schools, lack common technical language for lesson design, and differ in instructional goals, their collaborations may be particularly challenging to enact at the higher levels of convergence that Davison describes.

METHOD

Procedures

This study follows previous research that resulted in the joint construction of a working theoretical model of ESL teachers' collaborations with content teachers, called the *Collaboration*

Continuum (Baecher & Bell, 2011). This model represents ESL teacher collaboration along two dimensions: *frequency* (infrequent to extensive) and *formality* (informal to formal). Collaborative activities that are infrequent generally are not initiated equally from both teachers, occur sporadically, and only address short-term concerns. In contrast, extensive collaboration is characterized by frequent and consistent collaboration, through regular meetings, long-term planning, and daily interaction. During formal collaboration, structures for collaborating are expected, supported, and often provided by school administration and are likely to have consistent scheduled times; set agendas, protocols, and norms; and work products reviewed by school administration. Informal collaboration is generated by the teachers and may or may not be supported by the school administration; it is typically characterized by ad hoc interaction between teachers and usually fulfills an immediate need for communication among teachers.

The present study employed an online questionnaire to elicit a greater number of respondents across a wide range of school contexts in order to further explore the model. A draft version of the online questionnaire (created with SurveyMonkey) was piloted with 20 ESL teachers who completed the survey and provided feedback on format, content, and length. We revised the instrument, with special consideration to issues of item design, following recommendations for the design of surveys by Dornyei (2003) and Babbie (1973). The survey included quantitative (forced-choice) and qualitative (open-ended) questions based on issues related to ESL program models and collaboration from the prior study (the survey may be viewed at <http://db.tt/AIWMsmah>). It was then administered anonymously through SurveyMonkey, placed on the TESOL organization's elementary and secondary teacher Listservs, and forwarded to TESOL 2010 and 2011 convention attendees at our sessions on this topic. The response window was 3 months.

Data Analysis

Both of us independently interpreted the data and then reviewed the analysis together. For clarity, the analysis is discussed

according to the type of data that the closed and open-ended questions generated: qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative data. First, the qualitative responses were open-coded by looking for emerging themes while reading responses to each of the questions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Many of the codes were *in vivo codes*, which “capture the actual words used by participants” (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007, p. 576). Next, the codes were axial-coded, meaning categories were formed by continually reviewing the coded data (Creswell, 2007). Finally, the categories were selectively coded (Creswell, 2007) by rereading through all of the data to make sure the previous codes and categories were analyzed according to similarities and differences among participants and connected to emerging themes based on the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). We used synchronous and asynchronous online tools such as Google Docs and Skype as means to reach consensus coding for all of the qualitative responses by reading through each other’s analysis and discussing the interpretations.

Quantitative data. The survey-creating program we used, SurveyMonkey, reported the quantitative responses in a table that included the number of responses, as well as the percentages for each response, for each of the questions. If a question had a response of *not applicable (N/A)*, we subtracted the number of N/A responses from the total responses and then recalculated the number and percentage of respondents for each answer in order to reflect the answer according to the participants who did use the particular model.

The Collaboration Continuum model was used as a guiding theoretical frame for organizing and interpreting the quantitative and qualitative data, and we referred back to it throughout the data analysis in an iterative process.

Participants

Descriptive data from the 72 survey respondents show that participants represented a range of states and international locations: Alabama, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont,

Virginia, and Washington, D.C., as well as Canada, Japan, and Mexico (one to two respondents in each of these locations); Colorado, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Oklahoma (three to five respondents in each); and New York and Georgia (more than five respondents in each).

In terms of years of teaching experience, 41% of the respondents had worked as ESL teachers for more than 8 years, 17% between 3 and 5 years, 16% between 5 and 8 years, 14% between 1 and 3 years, and 13% less than 1 year. Most (93%) were certified to teach ELLs under a TESOL license or ESL endorsement, whereas 7% were serving as ESL instructors without these credentials. Approximately 25% held an elementary license and 14% a secondary license. About half of the respondents indicated possessing additional licenses in areas such as special education, reading, Spanish, and early childhood education.

Limitations

We realize that 72 participants is a small sample of the total population of ESL teachers in the United States. Because the invitation to participate was placed primarily on TESOL Listservs, it is hard to estimate the total pool of possible participants. In addition, those who decided to complete the survey may have overrepresented or underrepresented a population who wanted to share their concerns about teacher collaboration, with potential bias toward professionally active ESL teachers, because they might be more likely to be members of, read, and respond to TESOL Listservs. Not all states are represented, and program models and contextual conditions vary from school to school. Further studies would need to be conducted to determine whether these findings hold true for teachers, states, and schools not represented in this sample, or for EFL settings.

FINDINGS

Teaching Context

The ESL teachers who participated in this study were mostly employed in schools with fewer than 1,000 students, as follows:

- 45% worked in schools with fewer than 500 students
- 37% worked in schools with 500–1,000 students
- 13% worked in schools with 1,000–3,000 students
- 6% worked in schools with more than 3,000 students

A near majority of respondents (49%) reported ELL populations of fewer than 50, with about 40% responding that there were 50–250 ELLs, and 11% reporting more than 250 ELLs.

Survey responses indicate that teachers provided ESL services to between 4 and 380 students. A few teachers (5%) provided services to fewer than 15 ELLs per day; 32% to 15–29, 36% to 30–44, 8% to 45–59, 6% to 60–74, 6% to 75–99, and 9% to more than 100 ELLs. Most of the teachers worked at the elementary rather than secondary level. Approximately 30% taught PreKindergarten and Kindergarten students; 60% were elementary teachers, teaching Grades 1–5; 27% were secondary teachers; and 13% taught a combination of students in elementary and secondary school. Table 1 illustrates the participants by grade level and number of ELLs served.

Most teachers served ELLs through a pull-out program (46% reported spending more than 75% of their time in this model), followed by push-in (13% reported spending more than 75% of their time in this model). No teachers reported spending more than 75% of their time coteaching. Most of the participants (67%) reported using a pull-out model at least 50% of the time, in contrast with only 6% of teachers coteaching at least 50% of the time and 34% of teachers using push-in at least 50% of the time.

TABLE 1. Participants by Grade Level Taught and Number of ELLs Served

Grade level	Percentage of ELL teachers	Number of ELLs served per teacher (average)	Number of ELLs served per teacher (mode)
Elementary	60	42	35
Secondary	27	75	30
Both elementary and secondary	13	41	27

Almost 80% of the teachers stated they cotaught less than 25% of the time.

Teaching Models

For this study, we were interested in ESL teachers' beliefs about teaching models. Participants responded to questions about their preferred program model as well as the challenges and benefits they perceived with each model. These data are presented in Figure 1 and Table 2.

Participants overwhelmingly preferred to teach in a pull-out instructional model (64%), followed by coteaching (23%) and push-in (13%).

The push-in model was the least favored. Teachers acknowledged the benefits of push-in instruction, such as ELLs being included in classes, not missing content, and having access to English-speaking peers. At the same time, teachers reported unsuccessful utilization of push-in instruction. Many teachers noted feeling like an aide when pushing into the content area classrooms. Often they did not know what to plan for because the classroom teacher did not share lesson plans or because the classroom and ESL teachers did not have time to meet, due to their administrators not scheduling the ELL classes or planning time to make the model work.

Though few teachers cotaught, they preferred coteaching to pushing in, reporting that content teachers seem to take more

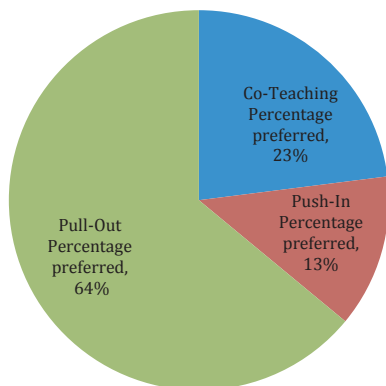


Figure 1. Preferred instructional model of teachers in study

TABLE 2. Perceived Benefits and Challenges of Each ESL Program Model

	Benefits	Challenges
Pull-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in small groups are more focused on targeted instruction, can be louder, are free to express themselves. • The ESL teacher has more autonomy/control. • This is the best option for having to provide services to so many students in so many classrooms. • This model allows for individual planning because there is no group planning time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESL teacher does not know what is happening in content classrooms or how to teach the content students are missing. • Students miss content instruction. • Students do not feel validated; they feel stigmatized. • Advanced-level students may not benefit as much as beginning-level students.
Push-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are included in mainstream curriculum and therefore have language models. • The ESL teacher learns about content curriculum and student expectations. • Students may gain valuable content information. • The ESL teacher supports the content teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESL teacher does not know what to plan for. • Classroom teachers do not give lesson plans to the ESL teacher. • The ESL teacher feels like an aide; his or her expertise is not valued. • Curriculum in mainstream classes is taught too quickly for beginning- and intermediate-level ELLs. • Not enough time and attention is provided in scheduling to get to each class.
Coteaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are included in mainstream curriculum and therefore have language models. • The content teacher takes more ownership of ELLs; both content and ESL teachers share responsibilities for students. • The ESL teacher and content teacher target language and content goals for instruction. • The ESL teacher enjoys collaboratively planning for instruction to support ELLs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of common planning time with content teachers. • There are personality conflicts. • Some teachers are unable to release control. Some do not want to “step on toes.” • There is a lack of administrative support.

ownership of ELLs in this model. However, there were barriers that precluded teachers from successfully coteaching, including serving large numbers of ELLs, scheduling of ELL classes, serving

multiple schools, teacher personality conflicts, lack of administrator support, and lack of time for collaborative planning.

A recurring theme in favoring pull-out instruction is reflected in the following statement: “I prefer pull-out because I have more control that way.” One teacher mentioned with push-in and coteaching models feeling “like an appendage” to the classroom teacher and assuming an “I’m so sorry to bother you” persona. Another participant stated the pull-out model is “the most comfortable setting for me. However, I’m coming to realize that this may not always be the most beneficial for the students.” Teachers also mentioned that pull-out was the only model that worked due to high ELL caseloads and sometimes serving more than one school. One teacher stated that she taught at more than eight schools per week, and sometimes four per day, with little to no contact with the mainstream teachers.

Ten teachers suggested an alternative to the three main models: a hybrid model consisting of locally relevant, teacher-constructed combinations. ESL teachers could push in or coteach for some lessons and pull out for more individualized lessons focusing on specific student needs. For example, a teacher might coteach part of a lesson and then pull out students with lower levels of English proficiency to target certain goals. The teachers who proposed this alternative felt a hybrid approach could create opportunities to understand each other’s discipline and expectations while allowing flexibility in terms of how instruction would be offered.

Relationship of Current Study to Collaboration Continuum

One of the goals of this study was to elicit a greater number of respondents across a wider range of school contexts for further exploration of the Collaboration Continuum model. We questioned to what extent ESL teachers engaged in collaboration for their ELLs (*extensive–infrequent*) and what the nature of their collaboration was (*formal–informal*). We also wanted to know about examples of successful collaboration and conditions that were necessary to sustain this collaboration.

Nature and Extent of Collaboration

Surveyed teachers reported collaboration to be *mostly informal* to *somewhat informal* in all three models. Less than one third of the participants in each model stated their collaboration was *somewhat formal* to *mostly formal*. A majority (85%) of teachers using a push-in model responded that their collaboration with content teachers was *mostly informal* to *somewhat informal*, followed by 77% of teachers using a coteaching model and 69% of teachers using a pull-out model (see Figure 2).

The frequency with which ESL teachers reported collaborating ranged from *rarely* to *almost always*, with collaboration mostly occurring *sometimes* or *usually* in all three models, as seen in Figure 3. Responses demonstrate that collaboration did not occur more frequently in the coteaching and push-in models.

When comparing the nature and extent of collaboration, informal collaboration happened more frequently than formal collaboration. Teachers were asked to rate 18 statements describing situations for collaboration, indicating how frequently they engaged in each using a Likert scale ranging from *frequent* to *infrequent* (see Table 3). Most participants (87%) collaborated when a problem needed to be resolved. Fifty-two percent frequently used email to collaborate, 54% stopped by the content teachers' classroom, and 45% discussed issues as they passed each other in the hallway—all of which are informal. In addition, 83% of participants reported they infrequently planned lessons with content teachers, 66% infrequently participated actively in

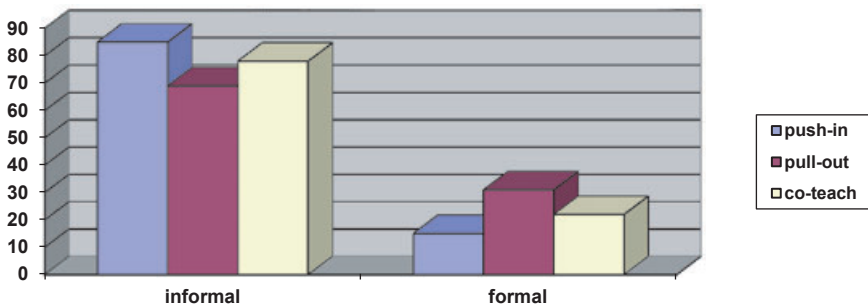


Figure 2. Percentage of teachers reporting on formality of collaboration across program models

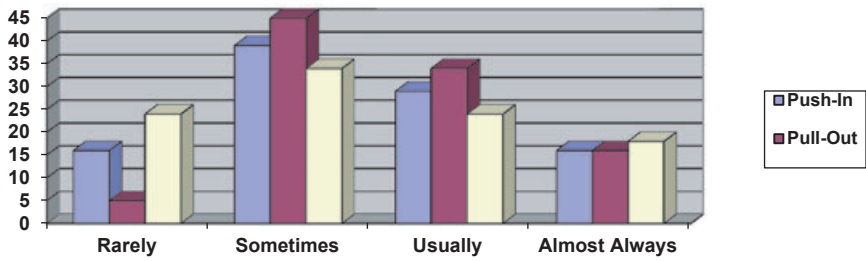


Figure 3. Percentage of teachers reporting on frequency of collaboration across program models

TABLE 3. Nature and Frequency of Collaboration

	Frequently	Infrequently
Collaborate via email	52%	48%
Communicate with content teachers of my ELLs when there's a problem	87%	13%
Communicate daily with content teachers of my ELLs	41%	59%
Discuss issues in passing in the hallway	45%	55%
Meet with teachers before or after school	26%	74%
Use a folder or note system to share information about ELLs	26%	74%
Stop by the teacher's classroom to discuss issues	54%	46%
Actively participate in grade-level meetings	34%	66%
Plan lessons with content teachers	17%	83%
Plan long-term goals with content teachers	19%	81%
Plan short-term goals with content teachers	27%	73%
Use curriculum mapping to plan instruction with content teachers	18%	82%
Use curriculum map of content class provided to me	29%	71%
Review assessment data of ELLs with content teachers	62%	38%
Create or adapt assessments for content teachers	29%	71%
Actively participate in professional learning community made up of content teachers	35%	65%
Modify or adapt text or materials for content teachers	26%	74%
Participate in professional development on collaboration	28%	72%

grade-level meetings, 81% infrequently planned long-term goals with content teachers, and 82% infrequently used curriculum mapping to plan for instruction with content teachers—all of which are more formal activities. The only formal activity that happened extensively was reviewing ELL assessment data with content teachers (62%).

Teachers' Perceptions About Collaboration

Overall, ESL teachers responded with a desire to collaborate to a greater degree, but reported that the current culture of their schools did not support collaboration. A *culture of collaboration* was operationalized through the constructs we deemed necessary for sustainment of collaboration: feeling valued, a sense of belonging, contextual conditions such as administrative support and scheduled time for collaboration, equal status as collaborators, being willing to collaborate, and sharing a sense of ownership of and responsibility for educating ELLs (Bell & Walker, 2012). Teachers were asked to rate 18 statements relating to these constructs using a Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (see Table 4). Though 98% of teachers wanted to collaborate, almost half (48%) indicated there was not a culture of collaboration established at their school, and 53% responded that collaboration between content and ESL teachers was not highly valued. A majority (64%) of teachers did not have scheduled time for collaboration. Also, 64% wanted to collaborate more, but felt there was not enough time in the day. More than half (56%) of teachers surveyed did not think content teachers wanted to collaborate, and 67% indicated they did not want to step on content teachers' toes. Even though most teachers reported frustration in the lack of collaboration, 78% perceived their expertise in teaching ELLs to be valued at their schools. Most teachers (77%) reported that collaboration was working in some situations but not others. In order to better understand what was considered successful collaboration, we asked about the situations in which collaboration was working.

TABLE 4. ESL Teacher Perceptions of Collaboration

	Disagree	Agree
There is a culture of collaboration at my school.	48%	52%
Collaboration between content and ESL is highly valued.	53%	47%
Time for collaboration is scheduled.	64%	36%
Administrators support collaboration.	36%	64%
I am an integral part of our professional learning community.	44%	56%
I am an integral part of the grade levels which I support.	43%	57%
My ideas are valued at my school.	21%	79%
My expertise in teaching ELLs is valued at my school.	22%	78%
Collaboration is working in some situations but not others.	23%	77%
I would like to collaborate more, but I don't want to step on the content teacher's toes.	33%	67%
I would like to collaborate more, but the administration does not support it.	69%	31%
I would like to collaborate more, but content teachers don't seem to want to.	44%	56%
I would like to collaborate more, but there is not enough time in the day.	36%	64%
I would really rather not collaborate.	98%	2%
I feel the ESL kids are "my kids."	45%	55%
I think the content teacher sees the ESL kids as "her/his kids."	49%	51%
I think the content teacher sees the ESL kids as my responsibility.	52%	48%
I think the content teacher sees the ESL kids as "our kids."	31%	69%

Examples of Successful Collaboration

We asked teachers to describe an example of a successful collaboration they had experienced with a content teacher. The term *successful* was left to the participants to define. Fifty teachers responded to the question; however, four responded that they had not experienced what they considered to be successful collaboration. Themes that emerged from the data demonstrate that teachers who successfully collaborate (a) plan with the learners in mind while creating unified goals for cohesive instruction, whether pushing in, coteaching, or pulling out; (b) value each other's expertise and share ideas, resources, and responsibilities, resulting in enhanced instruction; (c) enjoy equal status and support with each other and with the students; and (d) like working with and learning from others.

One teacher stated, "I am coteaching, and we share the reading workshop mini-lessons. We are both flexible and do the parts we like, but also like new challenges. Either of us can teach the whole class or small groups, and the students see us as partners." Another teacher mentioned, "I have pushed in before in social studies, and the teacher and I planned the units together. It was great. We could split the work and were able to come up with more interesting materials because we shared the burden." Three teachers also mentioned that they learned from each other when collaborating. Nine mentioned that teacher collaboration helped students; according to one respondent, "In our cotaught algebra class, we had a 100% pass rate on last year's state exam." Usually, teachers' attitudes played a role in the success of the collaboration. An ESL teacher who collaborated with a fourth-grade teacher wrote, "My coteacher was very open to new ideas, taking risks, trying different approaches. She also never pigeonholed me as just the ESL teacher, but equally shared responsibility with me for the class." Another teacher stated,

When I have been able to coteach a lesson, it has always been very well received, and the teacher and students enjoyed the experience. I have recently collaborated to help shelter a unit for one grade level, and we made jobs for each of us to do. I modified some material, created a scaffolded graphic organizer for all students, made visuals for word walls, brought in a content book bin, provided realia, and have pushed in for oral language based on the content. This collaboration has been very positive for everyone, kids included.

Based on these teachers' experiences, it is evident that in many partnerships collaboration can be a positive, successful experience.

DISCUSSION

A major goal of this research was to situate the extent and nature of ESL and content teacher collaboration according to ESL program model. Several discoveries from this study were surprising, whereas others confirmed previous understandings. In reviewing the data and our research design, we recognized that we assumed that collaboration would be stronger in push-in and

coteaching programs and that push-in models were widely used; however, we found that the participants

- mostly served ELLs in a pull-out model,
- strongly favored the pull-out model,
- mostly collaborated in informal rather than formal contexts, and
- did not collaborate more formally or more extensively in the push-in and coteaching models than in the pull-out model.

The Collaboration Continuum model (Baecher & Bell, 2011) demonstrates how the frequency (infrequent to extensive) and nature (informal to formal) of collaboration intersect. It was evident in this study that most participants collaborated most frequently in an informal rather than formal manner, and somewhat similarly across program models. Extensive collaboration was mostly informal, and most formal collaboration occurred infrequently, as indicated by the areas shaded of Figure 4.

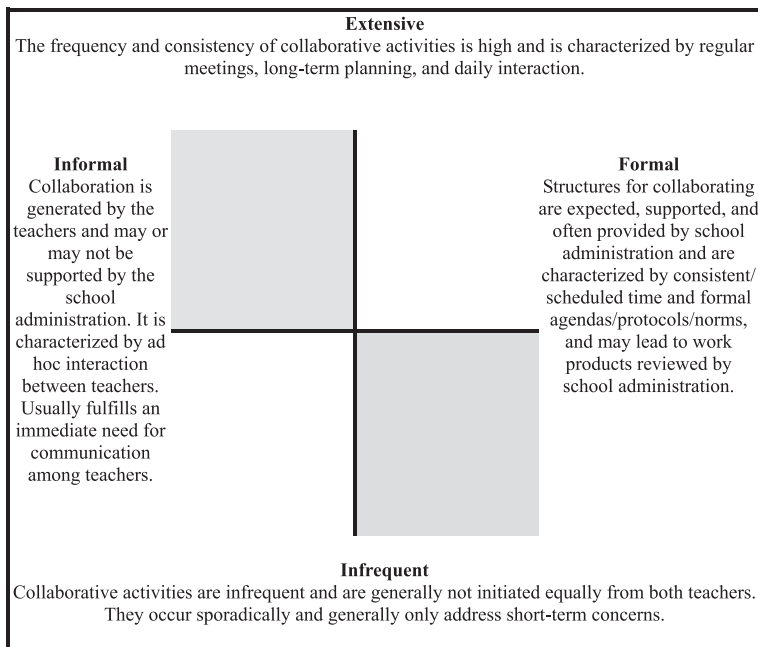


Figure 4. Findings as viewed through the Collaboration Continuum Model. *Source:* Adapted from Baecher & Bell (2011, p. 58).

Researchers, including us, have asserted that both informal and formal structures are needed to support successful, sustained collaboration (Baecher & Bell, 2011; Bell & Walker, 2012; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). In this study, however, when teachers did collaborate formally, it was infrequent, and the only formal collaboration that occurred frequently in most schools was the review of student assessment data. Other important types of formal collaboration, such as planning goals based on students' needs, curriculum mapping, and coplanning for instruction, seemed to occur infrequently.

Push-in and coteaching models have been gaining favor in recent years; however, data from this study provide evidence that pull-out models may still be prevalent. In our study, teachers who traditionally used pull-out models appeared to resist implementing push-in or coteaching models due to their belief that the benefits to ELLs appear to outweigh the challenges, or because contextual conditions did not support a more collaborative approach to teaching ELLs. Perhaps a hybrid model, in which teachers utilize a combination of models, should be considered.

No matter the model, ESL teachers need time, not only in the short term to plan for instruction with content teachers (task orientation), but also to set common long-term goals and objectives based on student needs (vision orientation). They need more extensive collaboration to develop a shared vision and to plan goals for ELLs. In keeping with Davison's (2006) findings, teachers in this study who collaborated informally were limited to a task orientation. Without more opportunities to collaborate, they may not be able to become vision-oriented as well. Vision-oriented teachers can become leaders in their schools and "can play a critical role in sustaining school reform and supporting academic success for all students in a school community" (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010, p. 13). However, for collaborative efforts to be sustained, teachers must be supported by the school administration.

Several questions are raised by this research. In what ways are administrators supporting ESL and content teacher collaboration, and how do teachers respond? How do administrators encourage teachers to voluntarily collaborate, avoiding having to force

reluctant teachers to do so? In schools where informal and formal collaboration is working, were teacher leaders part of activities that led to the successful collaboration?

There are lessons to be learned from listening to the stories of teachers who are successfully collaborating. These teachers have found a way to plan and work together, in the same space, without stepping on each other's toes. They seem to enjoy sharing ideas and materials, and splitting the workload. They also report student success as a result of collaboration, across program models.

CONCLUSION

There are several implications of this research for teacher educators, school administrators, teacher leaders, and ESL and content teachers. Because the responses in this study were limited and voluntary, more research is needed to support our conclusions and better situate collaboration on the Collaboration Continuum model (Baecher & Bell, 2011). However, the results provide evidence for a growing body of research describing how collaboration is occurring in schools today. Regardless of program model, teachers need opportunities to collaborate. In order for push-in and coteaching models to work, teachers of ESL and content areas must be made aware of the various successful models of collaborative teaching, and they must also have an opportunity in teacher education to address its challenges. Fieldwork placements that give teacher candidates a chance to work across program boundaries can build capacity for collaborative work while still in a supervised environment that fosters critical reflection. Once teachers are employed, administrative support for collaboration must be provided. When support is lacking, it causes frustration among some teachers and contributes to the reason many teachers prefer the pull-out model. Administrators making programmatic decisions need opportunities for professional learning related to program models and collaboration.

Teacher leaders who come from ESL backgrounds are often able to provide direction to administrators who may wish to see ELLs achieving academically but lack in-depth understanding of

the work of ESL teachers (Baecher, 2012). Teacher leaders can work with administrators to attend to teacher workload and seek input from teachers on scheduling and program models. ELLs should be carefully placed in order to be served appropriately, depending on the selected model. Teachers' attitudes must be considered to make sure collaborating teachers can get along and embrace the idea of collaborating, and they should have opportunities for facilitated reflection in order to foster collaboration (Davison, 2006).

In order to foster a collaborative community, ESL and content teachers must be provided with opportunities to work together, sharing their expertise, so that they can meet the needs of the children they serve (Friend & Cook, 2010). They require time to plan content and language objectives, to create and use curriculum maps, and to co-create lessons according to the assessment data of students. They should be included in professional learning opportunities together, including guidance on how to successfully collaborate. Resources are available on implementing and sustaining PLCs (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), on the contextual conditions necessary to support effective collaboration (Bell & Walker, 2012), and on how to implement effective collaboration and coteaching for ELLs (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). Now it is time for administrators and teachers to take action; in order to flourish, collaborative efforts need everyone's support.

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