

Renewed Co-Teaching: The Perception of ESL Teachers in Australia

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Abstract

With an ever-increasing trend towards diverse collaborative teaching models, there is a growing body of research on why and to what extent these teaching approaches positively affect students' attainments as well as teaching quality in different educational contexts. In Australia, there have been a number of studies on two common collaborative teaching schemes: team teaching and co-teaching. Nevertheless, very few published studies have explored the different perceptions of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Australia, specifically their views of co-teaching in English instruction to students from migrant or refugee backgrounds. The purpose of this paper is to report a case study conducted to document various teachers' perceptions of co-teaching in a TAFE institution in Australia, where ESL courses are provided to Australian migrants and refugees. This study focused more on qualitative data in nature, which were collected through semi-structured interviews. To analyse the contextual data, thematic analysis was conducted. Through the collected data, the study identified different ideas or components which fitted into specific themes. The data also suggested that there are a number of factors affecting co-teaching in this context. The findings of this paper indicated that a careful consideration of the compatibility or the partnership between co-teachers can be of importance for enhancing ESL students' achievement through well-designed co-teaching models. It is believed that this innovative pedagogical strategy could help these normally poorer English speakers to access the general education curriculum as well as to integrate into the wider social community.

Keywords: Co-Teaching, Team Teaching, Collaboration, ESL, Australian Refugees and Migrants, Perception of Co-Teaching,

Introduction

Traditionally, classroom teaching is conducted by a single teacher. It is based on the premise that teacher is the primary source of knowledge for learning to take place, and he or she solely bears the full responsibility for students' learning progress.

This assumption has been questioned by those who argue that teaching and learning should not be confined to one single teacher as all teachers have their own strengths and weaknesses. As a result, it is suggested that teachers need to work together to build their mutual strengths and to share their teaching knowledge and experiences for the development of their expertise. This has led to the recognition of the significance of collaborative teaching in education. In Australia, there are two common collaborative teaching models: team teaching and co-teaching. Although the two terms are basically referring to a similar teaching framework for teaching instruction, they have been practised in different contexts. Team teaching has been broadly taken place in various learning environments whereas co-teaching has been mainly adopted in the situation where ESL and content teachers collaborate in classrooms.

With an increasing interest towards collaboration teaching models, a great number of studies have been conducted to address questions on how these joint teaching approaches affect students' achievement and professional development for co-

teachers (Arkoudis, 2006; Arkoudis & Creese, 2006; Davison, 2006). Another question of concern has been why joint teaching has proven to be worthwhile even in different teaching and learning contexts. While many studies address these concerns in the broader contexts, few studies have examined the specific ESL teaching and learning setting of migrants or refugees. It is believed that co-teaching, if well-designed and effectively implemented, is the most effective instruction model in helping these normally poorer English speakers to access the general education curriculum as well as to integrate into the wider social community. However, without a general understanding of the co-teaching concept, it would be problematic to map a co-teaching theory onto teaching ESL for students from migrant or refugee backgrounds. Therefore, this paper reports a small study conducted in the context of ESL teaching to Australian migrants and refugees at the Technical and Further Education College (TAFE) in Tasmania in an attempt to find out various teachers' perceptions on co-teaching.

Distinction between Team Teaching and Co-Teaching

Historically, team teaching was first introduced among primary, middle and high schools in the 1950s in the United States (Friend, Cook & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2010). Afterwards, with the introduction of the reforms of middle schools and the integration of special education into general education, co-teaching emerged as another collaborative teaching model. Conceptually, team teaching was commonly used in general education where two or more teachers share a big or combined group of students (Friend et al., 2010) while co-teaching was recognised as a specialised joint teaching model for students with disabilities (Walther-Thomas, 1997).

Basically, the aims of team teaching and co-teaching converge towards meeting the varied learning needs of students. As a result, in general, co-teaching (differently labelled as collaborative teaching or cooperative teaching) and team teaching are often used interchangeably. However, it is worthwhile to point out the subtle distinction between them to eliminate confusion. Four explicit differences, which are noted by scholars such as Conderman, Bresnahan and Pedersen (2009), Friend et al., (2010), Villa, Thousand and Nevin (2008), can be summarised in the following table.

Table 1: *Distinction between Team teaching and Co-teaching*

<i>Type</i>	<i>Team teaching</i>	<i>Co-teaching</i>
Mode of implementation	Not specific	Concurrent delivery
Areas of expertise	Same	Different
Teacher-student ratio	1:25	2:25
Student groups	All types	Heterogeneous only

Reinhiller (1996) describes that co-teaching has been differently interpreted as collaborative teaching or cooperative teaching, because the term 'co-teaching' is originally a short form for 'cooperative teaching' (Murawski & Swanson, 2001). Remarkably, Cook and Friend (1995) interpret team teaching as "a variation of co-teaching" (p. 2).

In some Asian countries such as China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (Tsai, 2007), team teaching has been implemented in ESL/EFL teaching, especially in the class where a native English speaking teacher and a non-native English speaking

teacher collaborate to perform diverse learning activities (Carless & Walker, 2006; Fujimoto-Adamson, 2004; Stewart, 2005). Although this pedagogical technique is still a relatively new concept among those countries, it is being applied with increasing frequency. Co-teaching has been also adopted in the situation of teaching English for Specific Purposes and content-based language teaching in the primary school context (Liu, 2006; Chien, Lee, & Kao, 2008).

In Australia, recently, team teaching has been widely conducted in higher education including Queensland University of Technology (QUT), University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), Griffith University, and University of Wollongong (UOW) (Brady, 2004; Knights, Meyer, & Sampson, 2007; Yanamandram & Noble, 2006). Those universities have expressed their reflections on implementing team teaching models and some of their studies have identified team teaching as a work-based learning activity (Brady, 2004), a tool of strengthening collegiality (Buckley, 2000 cited in Yanamandram & Noble, 2006) and a form of on-going professional development (Rosaen & Schram, 1997).

Co-teaching (team teaching) in Australia and the UK has emerged from the idea of the integration of ESL teaching into mainstream curriculum (Arkoudis, 2006; Arkoudis & Creese, 2006). This joint collaboration has received attention from state government policy makers and school curriculum developers. The purpose of implementing the co-teaching approach is to provide ESL teaching for students who have ESL learning needs while they participate in mainstream subjects (Arkoudis, 2003; Creese, 2002). Recently, several researchers have contributed their findings on how co-teaching can be more effective in a particular learning environment. The examples of their contributions include knowledge framework, different co-teaching models and collaboration strategies to implement co-teaching between a content-teaching and an ESL teacher more successfully (Arkoudis & Creese, 2006; Davison, 2006).

Australian migrants and refugees

As a multicultural country, Australia has given an outlet to a number of refugees and migrants over the past five decades (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship [AGDIC], 2008). Australia, as the sixth country to ratify the Convention, is sharing responsibilities with other countries for protecting people especially refugees and providing their resettlement places in humanitarian need (AGDIC, 2009). Many refugees have lost properties, families and countries; been subject to severe torture and trauma; and had little or no health and education services (AGDIC, 2009). In order to settle successfully in Australia, they need social support, individual motivation, education and understanding from the wider community. Among these concerns, overcoming the language barrier should be given the priority so that they can understand, communicate and integrate into the local community (AGDIC, 2008). The Australian Government has developed a specific English program, the Adult Migrants English Program (AMEP), specialising in teaching English to Australian migrants and refugees. According to a recent study conducted by the Australian Government (AGDIC, 2008) over 60 percentage of the enrolled students at AMEP are female and over 80 percentage were aged from nineteen to forty four (p. 13). Many of them have been identified as having learning difficulties due to a lack of experience of formal education or no knowledge of non-roman scripts (Adult Migrant English Program Research Centre [AMEPR], 2006). Additionally, anecdotal evidence shows that there are some students in the classroom, who have other learning difficulties because of having bad eyesight, minor physical injuries or under medication for their own health issues. These barriers hinder the development of their learning process and socio-cultural awareness. Overall, it is rather difficult for one single teacher to deliver effective

instruction to a group of students with those various needs in a classroom. In order to ensure the quality of English language teaching, it is imperative to develop co-teaching models between an ESL teacher and an external educator from diverse areas such as speech-language therapy, reading specialism, bilingualism and social work. The nature of the external educator will vary according to the students' English level, class type, their specific learning needs and activities. However, without a general understanding of the co-teaching concept, it would be problematic to put the co-teaching theory into action. Therefore, this paper starts with a commonly agreed definition on co-teaching, followed by an illustration and a brief review of co-teaching approaches. In addition, it identifies important factors affecting co-teaching practice in teaching and learning to support students with migrant background. Finally, some practical suggestions are offered to guide ESL teachers to implement co-teaching successfully.

ESL teaching to Australian migrants and refugees

As briefly noted earlier, the inherent problems of Australian migrant and refugee students such as culture shock, social isolation, financial hardship, emotional damage, or language barrier have a negative impact on their learning of English in ESL classrooms at the AMEP. Besides, many of those students are not familiar with the Australian general education system and their individual learning abilities are significantly different from each other.

Allender (1999) argues that the increasing number of migrant and refugee students in each classroom has a negative impact on the quality of language learning, pointing to the fact that a small class of around ten students and the closer distance to learners are beneficial to students with special learning needs. However, in reality, it seems difficult to allocate around ten students in each classroom. Against this backdrop, a co-teaching model between an ESL teacher and a special educator can be a sensible alternative to better accommodate those groups of students and settle them neatly in the Australia general education curriculum. This is based on the assumption that co-teaching can provide extra support and assistance to migrant and refugee students which in turn enables them to be more motivated and engaged in classroom activities. Co-teachers also offer a variety of pronunciations/voices and create mini-role-plays to attract students' attentions (Tajino & Tajino, 2000). Anecdotal evidence suggests that co-teaching can be mutually beneficial to both teachers and students, as students exposing to at least two teachers can benefit from different roles of teachers or diversity of teaching styles, in turn, sharing responsibilities lightened the workload for teachers. For example, two teachers from different expertise can be effective for students to enrich their sense of multicultural society. All in all, different teaching styles of co-teachers provide more opportunities to meet diverse students' learning needs than a single teacher classroom.

Research Aims

This paper addresses an area where there has been a gap in the literature regarding co-teaching in ESL contexts, particularly where ESL courses are provided to Australian migrants and refugees. No matter how well-designed the model is, its ultimate learning outcomes depend predominantly on various context-specific elements during the implementation process. Therefore, this study aims to identify important factors that may determine the effectiveness of co-teaching in this specific context of TAFE.

Specifically, the objectives of this paper are as follows:

- 1) to examine ESL teachers' perceptions of co-teaching;

- 2) to identify the key success factors of co-teaching as perceived by the respondents; and
- 3) to provide some implications for enhancing co-teaching in practice.

Research Methodology

A qualitative study was conducted in a TAFE context of English language teaching to Australian migrants and refugees in an attempt to examine various perceptions of teachers on a co-teaching model. This study can be treated as a case study with an attempt to gain an 'in-depth' understanding of a specific discourse being studied. The study involved eight participants from a TAFE institution and each participant was selected on the basis of their teaching experiences and interests in delivering collaborative instruction to diverse groups of students. As a qualitative research, data was collected through semi-structured interviews.

Through analysing the data obtained from the interview transcripts, patterns of factors have been discovered. To represent these identified themes emerging from participants' ideas, thematic analysis (Aronson, 1994) was used. With thematic analysis, it was possible to compare literature with findings regarding the main recurrent identification issued in co-teaching.

Analysis of Interviews

Considering the above design of this study, the interview data are presented in three major themes which are sought to address three research objectives (see table below).

<i>Code</i>	<i>Interview Question</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Aim</i>
Q1	What does the concept of 'co-teaching' mean to you	Perception of co-teaching	A1
Q2	What are the strengths and weaknesses of co-teaching	Key Factors relating to 'co-teaching'	A2
Q3	What considerations would play a part in your decision to conduct co-teaching		
Q4	What could be the benefits of co-teaching to students		
Q5	What are the benefits of co-teaching to you as a teacher		
Q6	What can hinder the implementation of co-teaching		
Q7	Please share a case where you were involved in a co-teaching experience	Recommendations and Suggestions	A3
Q8	Please give me any comments/suggestions/ideas		

To address the first research objective, interviewees were first asked about their understanding of what the concept of co-teaching meant to them, personally and particularly as a teacher in their work context. Different definitions of co-teaching were derived from the data as each interviewee had different interpretations based upon their perceptions.

Ideas from two TAFE teachers reflected their similar views on the nature of co-teaching: *When two teachers work together, in the same class at the same time* (TAFE J1, 1). *From my point of view, co-teaching is a cooperation of two professionals from which they both benefit as well as the class* (TAFE K1, 1). Data from the respondents revealed that the number of co-teachers involved is an essential condition of co-teaching. Similarly, another respondent with her experiences of teaching stated that co-teaching means *sharing a class with another teacher, working collaboratively to support each other and the learners in the class* (TAFE J2, 1).

However, only two out of eight respondents included the planning stage in their definitions of co-teaching. One respondent stated that *when two or more teachers plan a lesson together and then carry it out-however the two teachers could be responsible for different aspects of the preparation and/or teaching* (TAFE C2, 1). With a similar perception, another respondent defined co-teaching as the *sharing management of teaching duties with a teaching colleague which includes the planning and delivery of lessons* (TAFE D, 1).

Regarding their perceptions of the strengths and weakness of co-teaching, most teachers believed that co-teaching provides a number of benefits for students. Most importantly it allows them to be exposed to a higher quality of teaching and learning, where joint effort is put into exploiting the strengths of each individual teacher.

It could also benefit students as different teachers have different strengths and they may be provided with a more holistic learning experience (TAFE D, 2).

Another important advantage of having more than two teachers in the class is that students can benefit by having a variety of teaching styles. As one respondent commented:

All teachers have different styles, approaches, strengths and weaknesses, classes with more than one teacher can be more varied and interesting to the learner. This suits different learning styles (TAFE J2, 1).

According to the respondents' views, co-teaching approach had a number of benefits for students. However, there were also several weaknesses identified by them. This is revealed in some of their comments, for example: *"if the two teachers didn't get along or work well together it could be a problem"* (TAFE C1, 5). *"It might go wrong if teacher's personalities are not comparable. They may start competing or not pulling their weight"* (TAFE K2, 4). However, they pointed out that if two teachers are very well-organised, students will be beneficial in their learning.

A series of interview questions targeted at the second research aimed at identifying key factors that contribute to successful co-teaching. A number of key factors of co-teaching were identified and discussed as follows.

All respondents agreed that partnership is a key to the success of the collaborative co-teaching. The reasons for their remarks are given below:

The close nature of cooperation could provide extra support for beginning teachers as well as providing extra ideas and professional learning for both teachers. It could also benefit students as different

teachers have different strengths and they may be provided with a more holistic learning experience (TAFE D, 2).

I regularly co-taught with another teacher... It was a tremendous help to me as I was new to the culture and had a lot to learn about teaching. Also, we had very large class sizes (40 students) and we were able to help the students much more by working together than we would have otherwise (TAFE C2, 5).

All respondents also strongly agreed that the lack of planning/preparing time for the co-teachers might hinder the implementation of co-teaching. One teacher, for example, suggested that: *"preparation time could increase as teachers have to consult each other constantly when designing the syllabus and preparing classes"* (TAFE J2, 1). A respondent also commented that management could be an issue if the teaching team have vastly different teaching styles and philosophies. *"The potential weaknesses lie with the domination of one teacher over another creating a stressful workplace environment and the extra time that it takes to coordinate such activities"* (TAFE D, 2). Therefore, co-teachers need to be given enough time for planning, preparing and sharing their knowledge in order for them to work collaboratively in the class. Furthermore, another issue was workload as it was pointed out by a teacher: *"in our institution, the amount of paperwork we do for each class is enormous. With a team teaching situation, the division of this becomes difficult"* (TAFE J2, 1). The data strongly suggests that the administrative support guidance for teachers is important for effective co-teaching.

Discussion

The findings regarding the different perceptions on co-teaching among ESL teachers indicated that most of them put a great emphasis on the collaborative delivery of the lesson while failing to mention the planning and assessing stages. One possible explanation for the phenomenon is that the notion of teaching often denotes only what happens inside the classroom. Accordingly, more attention needs to be paid to preparation and assessment which is of equal importance to ensure effective co-teaching.

Another significant problem emerged from the responses seemed to be that teachers were unclear about the concept of co-teaching. In the TESOL field, generally, co-teaching means the cooperation of one ESL teacher and one educator who has expertise in other areas such as special educator and subject teacher. The main purpose of co-teaching is not just to share teachers' roles and responsibilities, but to deliver rich instruction to heterogeneous group of students. In some cases, it turns out to be that some teachers were just timetabled on the same class or the same group of students. This should not be considered as co-teaching.

Taking into consideration the concept of co-teaching briefly mentioned above, some important factors related to the success or failure of co-teaching practice from the data are raised. The findings from the perceptions of respondents indicate that there are important factors that need to be considered for co-teachers when they are involved in co-teaching practice. In this paper, the following key factors are summarised for effective co-teaching, namely

- Time for planning and preparing
- Administrative Support
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Sharing Attitude
- Collaborative Partnership/Compatibilities

Time for planning and preparing

Cook and Friend (1995) address that the critical need for successful co-teaching is professional preparation. Basically, it includes a number of sub-factors such as communication skills, instructional strategies, and collaborative planning. This factor was reflected in the interview responses, which reported their understanding of co-teaching in their work context: for example, co-teaching was depicted as *"sharing management of teaching duties with a teaching colleague which includes the planning and delivery of lessons"* (TAFE K2, 3). One participant also gave an example: *"we had to prepare correct and incorrect sentences to use, organize a prize, decide how to seat the students, etc. When the students arrived, we knew exactly what to do"* (TAFE C1, 5).

However, there are two major comments in previous studies regarding the importance of planning time: 1) the difficulty of making common planning time with co-partners and 2) lack of planning time (Friend & Cook, 1996; Kohler-Evans, 2006). Practical dilemmas of co-teaching on planning time have been argued over past many years. Primarily, insufficient planning time is related to a lack of its recognition from administration. That is to say, schools do not realise a need of additional planning time for co-teachers to work together. This leads to another important factor – Administrative Support.

Administrative Support

As noted in many other studies, co-teaching would be better implemented with administrative support (Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Wilson, 2005; Thousand, Villa & Nevin, 2006; Conderman, Bresnahan & Pedersen, 2009). The roles of administration are to facilitate co-teachers by providing resources including time, human, materials and facilities so that they can collaborate well with their partners and provide qualitative services to their students. However, the finding showed that the respondents were aware that *"it might be too expensive for the organization"* (TAFE K1, 4) to provide available resources for teachers, which impeded the implementation of co-teaching in ESL teaching practice. In line with the suggestion in the literature, many teachers often stressed that administrative support is necessary and co-teaching cannot be successful by entirely depending on co-teachers themselves. For example, a case study conducted by Austin (2001) proves that co-teachers are more likely to collaborate well to implement co-teaching when they received support from administrators.

Roles and Responsibilities

The interview data indicated respondents agreed that co-teachers' roles and responsibilities are of great significance. Teachers believed that a clear role or responsibility in co-teaching class would help motivate ESL learners. For example, one participant gave a practical example of what happened to them:

"We all had different roles (e.g. passing out papers, explaining the directions, circulating around the room to check students' progress, etc. One of the teachers had done it before and was happy to be the 'auctioneer'--she did a terrific job. I have repeated the lesson myself on my own several times since. It was a great experience (TAFE C1, 5)."

According to Friend et al., (2010), unbalanced roles and responsibilities could hinder collaboration between co-teachers, and also cause the practice of co-teaching to flounder and fail. In some case studies, teachers engaged in co-teaching often complain that one teacher takes the lead role while the other assists his or her partner instead of sharing equal responsibilities in a classroom (Weiss & Lloyd, 2002; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007; Friend, 2008). To clarify the concepts of teachers' roles and responsibilities, Walther-Thomas (1997)

emphasises that sharing responsibilities is not necessary that co-teachers perform exactly the same roles and responsibilities. For example, one respondent reflected that co-teaching *also allows each teacher to specialise in what he/she does best i.e. the teacher who knows a lot about pronunciation can work with students on this while the other teacher teaches other skills* (TAFE J2, 1). It is apparent that the effective way of sharing roles and responsibilities is to maximise strengths and to minimise weaknesses under the premise that both teachers agree and accept.

Sharing Attitude

The nature of collaboration is sharing. Co-teachers are required to share not only their responsibilities and the teaching resources, but also their beliefs and feelings to ensure harmonious cooperation. Very often, however, experienced teachers feel that the other teacher takes advantage from them. Thus, they are very reluctant to share with each other. Therefore, attitude towards knowledge sharing has been identified as an important factor for co-teaching. The interview data in this study addressed positive aspects of sharing nature and showed that, as co-teachers, they were willing to share their knowledge to enhance the collaboration. For example, one teacher commented that *"I had some very good working relationships with colleagues. We used to share a lot of ideas and materials"* (TAFE C2, 5). Similarly, another teacher also reported that *"I have also more recently shared classes with less experienced teachers and felt that this was an opportunity to share my knowledge and experience and consolidate my own professional learning"* (TAFE D, 2). The finding indicated a very positive attitude towards their co-teaching efforts. This can be described as a voluntary commitment and supported in the literature by Thompson (2001) who reports that voluntary attitude (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams 2000; Carless, 2006) and flexibility (Conderman, Johnston-Rodriguez & Hartman, 2009) should be the attributes of co-teachers. Fanning and Taylor (2007) also support and highlight that co-teachers' inappropriate behaviour may cause collaborative problems. Therefore, it can be asserted that class teachers need to be fair-minded, patient, willing to compromise, positive and confident. These characteristics are essential to co-teachers, whose attitudes can strongly affect the motivation of students to learn. This gives rise to another factor – Collaborative Partnership or Compatibilities.

Collaborative Partnership/Compatibilities

As indicated above, sharing attitude must be based on collaborative teaming. Comments from ESL respondents in this study also reported the significance of collaborative partnership and personal compatibility in co-teaching. The respondents recognised positive aspects of the partnership, for example:

"Sharing a class might enable me to take on another class which adds variety to my teaching schedule... If I had any particular areas that I felt I was weak at, I could get assistance from the other teacher. Enables me to have a second opinion on student progress... In another institution which was an ELICOS school. The other teacher was considered the "main" teacher and she followed a grammar based syllabus, using a set textbook for her three days plus some other activities. I was expected to follow up on the same grammar function, giving students extra work in this area. This situation worked well in this context as resources were excellent and paperwork and admin were minimal within this institution" (TAFE J1, 1).

"On several occasions we were also able to combine our classes and co-teach. Once we put three classes together and so there were three teachers--myself and two others. We did a grammar auction, which we planned and carried out together" (TAFE C2, 5).

This finding is consistent with the literature. For example, Scruggs et al., (2007) described that collaborative partnership is sharing strengths to give better service to students, managing the stress of teaching for teachers, and mutually trusting and respecting co-partners. In addition, Paul (1999) believes that utilising an appropriate collaborative type helps build a comfortable relationship for co-teachers in order to obtain productive outcomes for themselves and their students. However, on numerous occasions, collaborative partnership is more sophisticated to build than it may sound. Having an uncomfortable relationship may negatively affect the whole process of co-teaching and create extra stress, such as personality conflicts caused by faulty perceptions of each other (Friend et al., 2010). This requires a healthy compatibility between individuals. In the two case studies in Pennsylvania and Australia conducted by Rice and Zigmond (2000), the most critical factor stressed by several teachers is teacher compatibility between partners. In some cases, working between different positions, nationalities, and characters is more complicated than having similar backgrounds. Feiman-Nemser (2001), working with effective mentors, defines such practices as opportunities to "co-think" about the complexities of teaching (p. 20).

Renewed Co-Teaching models

Another important concern of co-teaching is to structure and deliver an effective instruction for both teachers and students. Unlike the individual teacher's instruction, co-teaching can be performed in many ways. There are 4 to 6 different types of co-teaching models recommended by several researchers (Friend & Cook, 1996; Villa, Thousand & Nevin, 2008; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000, Friend & Bursuck, 2009), and summarized in Table 2:

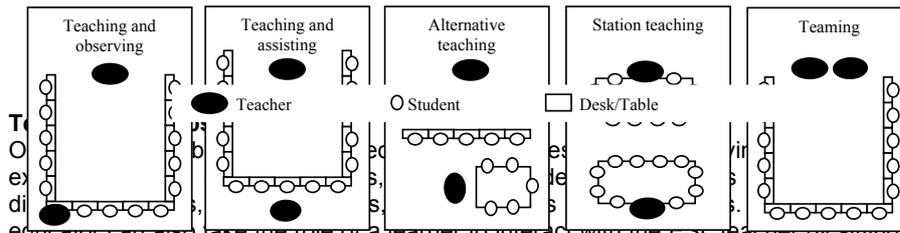
Table 2: *Different Types of Co-teaching Models*

Co-teaching Model	Author	Year
1) One teaching, One supporting; 2) Station teaching; 3) Parallel teaching; 4) Alternative teaching; 5) Team teaching	Friend & Cook	1996
1) Interactive teaching; 2) Station teaching; 3) Parallel teaching; 4) Alternative teaching	Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams	2000
1) Supportive co-teaching ; 2)Parallel co-teaching; 3) Complementary co-teaching; 4) Team-teaching	Villa, Thousand & Nevin	2008
1) One teach, one observe; 2) Station teaching; 3) Parallel teaching; 4)Alternative teaching; 5) Teaming; 6) One teach, one assist	Friend & Bursuck	2009

In this paper, the latest version of co-teaching models developed by Friend and Bursuck (2009) is selected and modified in order to facilitate various co-teaching approaches to meet Australian migrant and refugee students' needs. More importantly, it is not necessary to implement co-teaching models during an entire term or year. Co-teaching is only considered to be used when the purpose of instruction fits in the size of a classroom, class curriculum, students' learning needs, school culture and teachers' availability.

Figure 1 below illustrates five renewed co-teaching models which are particularly designed to fit in ESL teaching to migrants and refugees in the Australian context.

Figure 1: *Renewed Co-teaching Models (adopted from Friend & Bursuck, 2009, p. 92)*



External educator can also take the role of a learner to interact with the ESL teacher by sitting beside students and bring friendly atmosphere to the classroom. Thus, the distance between the teachers and students can be reduced. After observation, it is important for the co-teachers to discuss together with the feedback from observation, particularly individual students' learning needs. This co-teaching model is useful to be the beginning stage of co-teaching when the two teachers are not familiar with each other.

Teaching and Assisting

The recommendation for this model is that while the ESL teacher delivers a classroom instruction and the external educator offers assistance or support to individuals or small groups of students or vice versa. Although this approach has not been fully adapted to the AMEP, it is often formed in classrooms between one ESL teacher and one volunteer. The teacher takes primary responsibility for teaching while the volunteer circulates through the room providing unobtrusive assistance to students as needed. It can be seen that it might be difficult for the class teacher to assist the students while delivering an instruction to the class. Therefore, this teaching and assisting approach can be very effective for any class as there are always some students who need more assistance than the others.

Station Teaching

This model is useful when the teachers deliver new or multiple tasks in a lesson. The co-teachers teach different instructions with two divided groups. In the beginning of class, the two teachers work in their separate groups for half of the class time. After that they change their groups. In this approach, each group can be differentiated by learning abilities, styles or teaching tasks. This approach can increase students' participation in the classroom activities. The main advantage of this approach is that the teachers can monitor students' learning progress more closely and students can pay more attention to teachers' instruction, which increase student's motivation.

Alternative Teaching

The alternative teaching model mainly focuses on balancing the students' learning abilities. Although students are allocated to their classrooms based on their level of English, in most case, some students need extra attention, especially for lower level ESL class. In this approach, one teacher takes responsibility for the large group while the other works with a smaller group. The smaller group consists of those who need additional explanation or support to understand the class instruction. Consequently, it helps teachers to make balance students' learning level.

Teaming

In teaming, it is critically important to have equal knowledge of the content, a shared philosophy, and commitment to all students in the class. In teaming, both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time as 'one brain in two bodies' but with different teaching styles (Friend, 2008). At the AMEP, most co-teachers consider this approach the most complex and costly but satisfying way to co-teach. Some classes are taught by this approach for pronunciation teaching, but between two ESL teachers. In teaming, two teachers can deliver a variety of classroom activities and they can also demonstrate how to do these activities, which can be very helpful for students who have poorer English skills.

Among those co-teaching models, “no one approach is best or worst; each has a place in a co-taught class” (Cook & Friend, 1995, p. 5). There are five important points that need to be considered in order to implement co-teaching effectively before applying co-teaching approaches.

- Which model should be applied in sequence
- How often teachers should do co-teaching
- What is the connection between models and curriculum
- How to do it properly in different class settings
- Who should be the co-teacher

These five considerations help co-teachers to create positive outcomes from the co-teaching practice. At the AMEP, many students who are highly motivated to learn, do not have learning experience. Therefore, among these co-teaching approaches, ‘Teaching and assisting’ and ‘Alternative teaching’ are the most urgent practices for this special context of ESL migrant and refugee classes.

Limitation and Further Research

There are some limitations of this study that need to be acknowledged. First, generalisability of the findings may be limited due to a small number of participants involved in this study. Second, this study was conducted in a single institution in a single geographic location: a TAFE Collage in Australia. Future studies of more diverse geographic areas are needed with larger populations in multi-institutional settings to generalise the findings obtained in this study. Finally, the semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method in this study. However, the use of one single data-gathering method does not indicate that the data collected are invalid or unreliable. On the contrary, in terms of the selection of participants, all lecturers were selected based on their teaching experiences and knowledge. The in-depth face-to-face interviews that captured various perspectives of experienced co-teachers’ perceptions contribute to the dependability and credibility of this study. In conclusion, this study provides a starting point for more in-depth studies devoting to the emphasis on providing co-teaching to ESL migrant and refugee students in TAFE settings in Australia.

Conclusion

A number of divergent definitions on co-teaching in the literature have been reviewed in this paper. Many researchers contribute to develop what can be termed as ‘co-teaching’ and how beneficial the co-teaching can be. However, it is rather surprising that = research on co-teaching ESL migrant and refugee students in the context of the TAFE is very limited and is being neglected in Australia. =. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to report data obtained from a case study conducted to document various perceptions of co-teaching experiences from eight teachers in an Australia’s TAFE institution. The findings of this study indicate that there are key issues and problems that stand out due to differing perceptions of co-teaching when co-teaching is applied to ESL settings in an Australian TAFE institution. The data suggest that there are a number of factors affecting co-teaching in this context, namely 1) Time for planning and preparing; 2) Administrative Support; 3) Roles and Responsibilities; 4) Sharing Attitude; 5) Collaborative Partnership/Compatibilities, each of which is perceived as considerably significant to the success of co-teaching. This findings not only support the literature that professional development and administrative support for co-teaching practices are highly expected, but also more specifically argue that a careful consideration of the compatibility or the partnership between co-teachers can be of importance for improving ESL students’ achievement through co-teaching. In the last section of discussion, five renewed co-teaching

models were introduced with an illustration for the implication of co-teaching. Future research studies may need to further examine other factors of co-teaching in an intercultural context such as cultural interference, teachers' teaching styles, and resource sharing.

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