ESL AND MAINSTREAM CO-TEACHING PRACTICES

IN ONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Implementing co-teaching was not something I expected I would be doing in my first year of teaching English as a second language (ESL). When I was interviewing for the ESL teaching position at an urban Midwestern public school, the school's principal told me that in her school the ESL program models ranged from pull-out to co-teaching with a mainstream teacher. When I actually started my job in the fall of 2009, it was a complete surprise for me to find out that the school's ESL program was mandated to change to 100% co-teaching with mainstream teachers, effective with the start of the school year. This news was scary and exciting all at the same time. First of all, it was scary, because I had had an awful experience student-teaching using the co-teaching model at an elementary school in another big school district in the same geographic area. I was surprised by how ineffective the collaboration was at that school, and during the whole period of my student teaching, I felt like an educational assistant. Secondly, it was scary, because I did not know much about the co-teaching model, plus I had to learn how to work together with teachers I knew nothing about and who themselves knew nothing about co-teaching. In addition, I was intimidated by the fact that I had to teach the whole class of students, both English language learners (ELLs) and native English speakers, in classes of 23-25 students, because this is not what I had pictured when I had decided to become an ESL teacher.

At the same time, I was excited to begin my ESL teaching career as a co-teacher, because I had learned how important it is to teach language through meaningful academic content. I had just graduated from my ESL licensure program where I had been learning a lot of new information, so I was also excited to continue to learn new things. Co-teaching was definitely new to me. I had taught English as a foreign language in Russia for three years, so I was used to having my own classroom and having a small group of students that I was solely responsible for in regard to their learning a foreign language. By becoming a co-teacher in this school in the United States, I had to share the responsibilities for all the students in the class with the classroom teacher for one hour. Nevertheless, I was excited, because I knew that I would learn a lot from classroom teachers who had a lot of teaching experience, and I was excited to teach these classroom teachers about strategies that work best with English language learners.

Since I was required to implement co-teaching, I had a lot of questions about it: Can ESL and mainstream co-teaching be effective? What components need to be in place in order for co-teaching to be effective? Is effective co-teaching possible in the first year of teaching? Is co-teaching going to result in improved student achievement? Does it have to be full-time co-teaching or is there a time and place for pull-out? Trying to find the answers to my questions, I was reading a lot of articles and books about co-teaching and collaboration during my first year of teaching ESL in the United States. My eagerness to learn even more about it brought me to writing this capstone. This chapter introduces the issues associated with co-teaching between ESL and mainstream teachers and my guiding research question.

Preview of Literature

For too long English as a second language has been seen as a separate pull-out class at the elementary level or a separate subject in secondary schools. In this ESL instruction model students leave their mainstream classroom and receive instruction in an ESL classroom. The problem with this is that the content of this class is often completely unrelated to mainstream academics, which makes ELLs' educational experiences very fragmented (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Fu, Houser, & Huang, 2007; Mabbott & Strohl, 1992). When students are pulled out of their mainstream class for one or two class periods, they miss important academic subjects (Mabbott & Strohl, 1992; Thomas & Collier, 1999). Moreover, when they return from their ESL class to the mainstream class, they feel lost, because they do not know what is going on, what all the other students are working on, and how they can participate in class activities (Fu et al., 2007). As a result, ELLs become confused, frustrated, and detached. This is why the pull-out model of ESL instruction is not considered an effective program type for ELLs (Fu et al., 2007; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Thomas & Collier, 1999). It should be noted, however, that in the study conducted by Thomas and Collier (1997), the pull-out ESL program referred to two-year long programs with a focus mainly on social language, which is different from the pull-out programs implemented in the state where this research took place (A.S. Mabbott, personal communication, November 3, 2010).

As a result of the Supreme Court decision, *Lau v. Nichols* (Lau v. Nichols, 1974), schools are obligated to provide English instruction, access to the curriculum, and materials to students who do not speak English. However, there is not a specific

recommended way to provide this instruction, because *Lau v. Nichols* did not prescribe a particular model for servicing ELLs. The *Castañada v. Pickard* Supreme Court case (Castañada v. Pickard, 1981) helped clarify what constitutes a quality ESL program by establishing three necessary criteria: it must be based on a sound educational theory, it must be implemented effectively with adequate resources and personnel, and it must be evaluated as effective. However, even with this court ruling, schools still have significant latitude in deciding on the model of ESL service.

Since ELLs need to learn grade-level content material while they are acquiring English, educators started looking for options to provide effective instruction to ELLs other than the pull-out model. Research shows that ELLs acquire their second language and achieve academic success most effectively when there is a focus on academic language that is taught through meaningful content (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Short & Echevarria, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 1997). One recently developed ESL program model that incorporates both content and language into daily instruction for ELLs is co-teaching between ESL teachers and mainstream teachers (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). In the ideal co-teaching model, the ESL and mainstream teachers plan and deliver instruction together to accommodate the diverse needs of their ELLs and teach academic language through mainstream content. Many schools are making a shift from ESL pull-out to ESL – mainstream co-teaching because research suggests that co-teaching can be one of the most effective ways to meet the needs of the growing ESL population (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; Fu et al., 2007; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008; Mabbott & Strohl, 1992; Young, 2006).

Co-teaching as an instructional approach originated in the field of special education as an effort to provide mainstream inclusion for students with special needs. Even though co-teaching has been implemented in special education for about 30 years, little research is available regarding the impact of co-teaching on student achievement (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008; Murawski & Swanson, 2001). Co-teaching as an approach to teaching ELLs both mainstream content and English language skills is practiced in an increasing number of schools, because it allows teachers to meet the needs of ELLs by keeping them connected to the mainstream curriculum and by eliminating fragmented service delivery and social isolation (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Mabbott & Strohl, 1992). Because co-teaching is a relatively new approach of ESL service delivery, even less research is available in the specific area of ESL – mainstream co-teaching (DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; DelliCarpini, 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008; Martinsen Holt, 2004; York-Barr, Ghere, & Sommerness, 2007).

Thus, more research is recommended by most special education and ESL researchers on co-teaching and its effectiveness. Researchers suggest conducting studies with larger experimental and control groups (Murawski & Swanson, 2001; York-Barr et al., 2007), studies that would determine the effect on student achievement in a variety of subjects, grades, and in relation to gender and age of the students (Kohler-Evans, 2006; Murawski & Swanson, 2001), and studies that would include both successful and not so successful co-teaching practices (Murawski & Swanson, 2001).

In spite of the serious lack of research on co-teaching and its impact on student achievement, many authors have described or made recommendations about best practices for co-teaching (Conderman, Bresnahan, & Pedersen, 2009; Cook & Friend, 1995; Cramer, Nevin, Thousand, & Liston, 2006; Davison, 2006; Fattig & Taylor, 2008; Kohler-Evans, 2006; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Schumm, Hughes, & Arguelles, 2001; Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2008; York-Barr et al., 2007). From my review of the literature, the essential elements of effective co-teaching that are consistent in all relevant literature and research are: administrative support, professional development, parity, voluntary partnerships, common planning time, establishment of common expectations, shared resources, shared accountability for student outcomes, maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship, and implementing different models of co-teaching. These elements will be described in more detail in Chapter Two.

Role of Researcher

I teach ESL at a Pre-K-8 school in a large Midwestern urban district. The school's total enrollment is 1,188 students, 65% of whom are English language learners and 97% of whom qualify for free and reduced-price lunch. The school has three separate sections: pre-kindergarten, elementary school (grades K-5), and middle school (grades 6-8). This study will only focus on elementary school, grades K-5. There are 40 elementary mainstream teachers, seven ESL teachers, and one ESL coordinator working at the school with grades K-5. Each ESL teacher works with classrooms from two or three grade levels, teaching or co-teaching ESL in various subjects.

Since my first year of teaching at this school, I have been co-teaching during Reader's Workshop with three elementary teachers in fourth and fifth grade working with all the students in the class, including native English speakers. Reader's Workshop is an instructional model for reading employed by the school district. It focuses on explicit instruction of reading strategies and providing students with opportunities to practice each reading strategy independently, with a peer, or in a small group (McDavid, 2004). Reader's Workshop consists of three parts: teacher read-aloud or mini-lesson, guided and independent reading, and closure. My research will be focused on all K-5 elementary and ESL teachers' experiences of implementing the co-teaching model during Reader's Workshop at this school. Therefore, as a fellow teacher or a co-teacher, I will have access to all the participants in this study.

The bias that I bring to this topic is that I believe that co-teaching can be successful even in the first year of implementing the model, because I personally felt success in the first year of doing it. I also believe that the success of co-teaching depends a lot on the co-teachers' willingness to work together as a team.

Guiding Question

In this paper I am going to focus on best practices for co-teaching between ESL and mainstream teachers in elementary grades because I want to find out which of these practices are currently being implemented in various co-teaching situations in the school where I work. This is important because this is the model of instruction that is required at this school and because the limited available research seems to show that co-teaching is an effective way to provide both language and content instruction to the growing ESL

population. My research question is: What does co-teaching look like in one urban elementary school?

<div align="center">Overview of Chapters</div>

In this first chapter I have established the significance, purpose, and necessity for research in co-teaching between ESL and mainstream teachers. I have provided an overview of the context of the study as well an examination of how my background and experiences relate to my role as the researcher. In Chapter Two I will give a review of the most relevant literature concerning best practices in co-teaching between ESL and mainstream teachers. Chapter Three will describe how I designed my research and what methodologies I used in implementing the study. Chapter Four will present the results of the study. Chapter Five will include my reflection on the data that I collected within this study. In Chapter Five I will also examine the limitations of the study and consider the implications for further research on the topic.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to examine what the best co-teaching practices are and how co-teaching is carried out in one elementary school. In this chapter, I will discuss how changes to the co-teaching approach in the field of ESL started, provide definitions of the terms associated with co-teaching, and examine seven co-teaching approaches adapted by Dove & Honigsfeld (2010) specifically for ESL – mainstream co-teaching. I will also include information about research on the effectiveness of co-teaching along with the necessary elements that need to be in place in order for co-teaching to be effective. I will end this chapter by examining the current gap in research that led me to this topic of study and my research question.

Change to Co-Teaching: Why and Where Did It Come from?

Co-teaching as an approach to educating diverse learners originated in the field of special education in the 1980s as a way to implement the philosophy of inclusion of students with special needs into mainstream classes (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). Interest in special education – mainstream co-teaching has increased considerably with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which required that all students have access to general curriculum, be taught by highly qualified teachers, and be accounted for in regard to their achievement outcomes (Friend et al., 2010). Even though there is not much quantitative data on the effects of co-teaching, Murawski and Swanson (2001) came to the conclusion that co-teaching can be moderately effective

after analyzing six quantitative studies of special education – mainstream co-teaching practices. Additionally, Kohler-Evans (2006) argued that co-teaching can become an effective strategy for helping all the students succeed at school.

With the growing number of ELLs in the U.S., the interest in co-teaching has recently moved into the field of English as a second language. Co-teaching between ESL and mainstream teachers is viewed as a way to provide access for ELLs to the mainstream curriculum and language instruction (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008) and as a way to differentiate instruction for ELLs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). Researchers recommend that an effective ESL program provide students with frequent opportunities for interaction, include scaffolded instruction and background knowledge building for ELLs, and involve students in hands-on activities (Herrera & Murry, 2005). It is also important that ESL instruction is based on grade-level content area material and that there is strong support of the ESL program from the school administration. All of these components are easy to incorporate into daily instruction when ESL is taught through the co-teaching model.

According to ESL researchers, ELLs acquire a second language faster and more effectively when academic language is taught at the same time as the mainstream content material (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Short & Echevarria, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 1997). This model is different from traditional ESL pull-out programs, during which ELLs are pulled out for a period of time to receive ESL instruction (Minnesota Department of Education, 2005). Unfortunately, what is taught in pull-out ESL classes is often unrelated to what is being taught in the students' mainstream classes, which makes the pull-out

model of ESL instruction the least effective program model for ELLs (Fu et al., 2007; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Thomas & Collier, 1999). In the study conducted by Thomas and Collier (1997), the pull-out ESL program referred to two-year long programs with a focus mainly on social language (A.S. Mabbott, personal communication, November 3, 2010). However, many pull-out programs in the state where this study was conducted have been different because they focus on oral language skills, vocabulary, and reading and writing skills development without any time-frame limitations (Duke & Mabbott, 2000). Nevertheless, even with a broader focus of instruction in pull-out ESL classes in the state where this study was conducted, ELLs miss out on the content lessons when they are pulled out of their classrooms, because ESL and mainstream teachers usually do not have time to collaborate and coordinate their lessons (Mabbott & Strohl, 1992). In addition, in pull-out ESL classes, especially at the secondary level, ELLs are often grouped by language proficiency level, and students who are in those classes are struggling readers and writers or students who have little English language proficiency (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). When ELLs learn mainstream content in the mainstream classroom, they are given more opportunities to work with students who have various levels of English language proficiency.

Besides providing more opportunities for interaction with students of different English language proficiency levels, the co-teaching approach to teaching ESL may enhance students' English language acquisition. ELLs get the opportunity to hear and interact with native speakers of English who serve as language models for ELLs in mainstream content classes. Finally, since mainstream teachers usually have limited

training in second language acquisition and pedagogy, collaboration between ESL and mainstream teachers allows ELLs to not only learn both content and language, but also to develop socially and academically (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008).

<div align="center">What Is Co-Teaching?</div>

To be able to address the issue of effective co-teaching practices, it is first necessary to provide definitions of the terms associated with co-teaching, because different people use different terms to refer to co-teaching or use "co-teaching" to refer to a range of teaching models. The co-teaching model of providing instruction originated from the field of special education, and this is where the definition of co-teaching was first developed. Cook and Friend (1995) shortened the term "cooperative teaching" to "co-teaching" and defined it as "…two or more professionals delivering instruction to a diverse, or blended, group of students in a single physical space" (p.1). This definition has been widely accepted among both special education and ESL researchers (Conderman, Bresnahan, & Pedersen, 2009; Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

When implementing this model of instruction at the elementary level, special education teachers co-teach with mainstream teachers for as little as a single class period up to three 60-minute class periods with three different co-teaching partners (Friend et al., 2010; Rainforth & England, 2001; Villa, et al., 2008). Co-teaching is usually implemented in English/language arts, social studies, math, or science classes (Austin, 2001). This approach allows schools to improve the student-teacher ratio and, as a result, gives students more opportunities for participation and engagement (Cook & Friend,

1995; Friend et al., 2010). In addition, co-teaching allows educators to bring two different areas of expertise to the co-taught class, which is beneficial for all learners (Friend et al., 2010).

Very often other terms are used to refer to co-teaching, such as pull-in, push-in, collaboration, and team teaching. According to Mabbott and Strohl (1992), the term "pull-in" originated as a result of contrasting the commonly used pull-out ESL model. Thus, instead of pulling ELLs out of their classroom to provide them with ESL services, the ESL teacher is technically "pulled into" the mainstream classroom to provide joint instruction with the mainstream teacher. The same reasoning stands behind the term "push-in": it is the opposite of "pull-out" (Fu, Houser, & Huang, 2007). Both of these terms – "pull-in" and "push-in" – have a connotation of representing the ESL teacher not as an equal educator of students, but rather as a teacher with a secondary role. In a true co-teaching situation, however, both ESL and mainstream co-teachers are viewed as having a similar status in the classroom: they are both teachers and experts in their field. Moreover, very often in push-in ESL programs the ESL teacher pulls the ELLs aside and provides ESL instruction while staying in the general education classroom (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). This becomes an ESL pull-out program, even though the students stay in the classroom. I will not be using "push-in" and "pull-in" to mean co-teaching in my capstone.

The term collaboration has a much broader definition than just providing joint instruction by two teachers. It is what Murawski and Hughes (2009) called "an umbrella term" that includes different kinds of interactions between people. True collaboration

includes four necessary parts: planning, co-teaching, assessment and evaluation, and reflection (ELL Department of St. Paul Public Schools, 2009). Collaboration in schools can happen in different ways, such as periodic consultations between a special education teacher (a specialist; a gifted and talented teacher; a reading teacher; an ESL teacher) and a classroom teacher; informal meetings to discuss students' strengths and weaknesses; or co-teaching for part or all of the day (DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Pugach & Fitzgerald, 2001). Because co-teaching is only one example of collaboration, I will not be using the term "collaboration" to mean "co-teaching".

Finally, the phrase "team teaching" is often used to refer to a co-teaching situation. However, Cook and Friend (1995) and Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2008) consider team teaching as one of several approaches to implement the co-teaching instructional model. This and other approaches to co-teaching will be described later in the chapter. For this reason, the term "team teaching" will not be used interchangeably with the word co-teaching, but rather as a subset of co-teaching.

ESL Models of Co-Teaching

Co-teaching with an ESL teacher looks similar to co-teaching with a special education teacher: the ESL teacher co-teaches with one to three general education teachers (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Mabbott & Strohl, 1992). Most of the available research on co-teaching in the field of ESL focused on co-teaching during language arts classes (Fu et al., 2007; Mabbott & Strohl, 1992; York-Barr et al., 2007).

Co-teaching in ESL may mean that the ESL teacher follows the same ELLs from classroom to classroom and therefore co-teaches different subject matter with different

co-teaching partners (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). Another way that the ESL teacher can implement co-teaching is by being assigned to more than one grade level. This model entails having more than one co-teaching partner for the ESL teacher; however, it may also entail having the co-taught subject area limited to only one subject, such as language arts (Sims, 2008). In a true co-teaching situation both the ESL and the mainstream teachers are responsible for academic achievement of all the students in the class. That assumes that the ESL teacher is responsible for both ESL and non-ESL students. As a result, the ESL teacher who is co-teaching with three different partners has a lot more students that he or she is responsible for than does the mainstream teacher (D.B. Kramer, personal communication, September 29, 2010). Finally, ESL services may be provided by a combination of co-teaching and pull-out programs (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). Mabbott and Strohl (1992) and Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) recommend continuing to have ESL pull-out classes with newcomers and beginning level ELLs even if co-teaching is being carried out.

There are several models for implementing co-teaching. They can vary from the four types in special education (Villa et al., 2008) to seven types in the ESL context (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). Since this paper is focused specifically on co-teaching between ESL and mainstream elementary teachers, seven co-teaching models adapted from special education specifically for ESL context by Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) will be presented. Alternative, more commonly known names for these models, as have been used by Cook and Friend (1995), will also be provided. They are presented in Table 1 under the column "Name used in special education".

Table 1
ESL Models of Co-Teaching

Co-teaching model	Student arrangement	Description	Amount of co-planning needed	Name used in special education
One lead teacher, one teacher on purpose	Whole class	While one teacher leads, the other provides mini-lessons to one student or a small group to clarify a concept or skill. Both teachers alternate roles.	Low	One teach, one drift
Two teachers teaching same content to one student group	Whole class	Both teachers deliver the same instruction at the same time to the whole class. The mainstream teacher focuses on the content while the ESL teacher supports students' linguistic development.	High	Team teaching
One teach, one assess	Whole class	One teacher leads the lesson while the other one circulates and assesses students using observations, checklists, and anecdotal records.	Low	One teach, one observe
Two teachers teaching the same content to two student groups	Two flexible groups	Two teachers parallel-teach the same content to two student groups using differentiated learning strategies.	Medium	Parallel teaching
One teacher pre-teaches, one teaches alternative information	Two flexible groups	Students are divided into two groups based on their prior knowledge. Those who have limited prior knowledge about the target content receive instruction to help them build background for future whole-class instruction.	High	Alternative teaching
One teacher re-teaches, one teaches alternative information	Two flexible groups	Students are divided into two groups and receive instruction based on the support they need for specific content already covered during whole-class instruction.	High	Alternative teaching
Two teachers monitor and teach multiple student groups	Multiple groups	Students are divided into several learning stations. Both teachers monitor and assist students with particular student needs.	Medium	Station teaching

Note. Adapted from "ESL Co-Teaching and Collaboration: Opportunities to Develop Teacher Leadership and Enhance Student Learning" by M. Dove and A. Honigsfeld, 2010, *TESOL Journal, 1*(1), p.7. Copyright 2010 by the Copyright Clearance Center.

The seven models for ESL – mainstream co-teaching as described by Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) are: one lead teacher, one teacher on purpose; two teachers teaching same content to one student group; one teaches, one assesses; two teachers teaching the same content to two student groups; one pre-teaches, one teaches alternative information; one re-teaches, one teaches alternative information; two teachers monitor and teach multiple student groups. These approaches are summarized in Table 1.

In the first three approaches two teachers teach the whole class, both ELLs and native English speakers. In the next three approaches two teachers work with two different student groups. Finally, the last approach implies two teachers teaching multiple student groups. Even though co-teaching traditionally means two teachers teaching in the same physical space, when working with two or more student groups, co-teachers do not have to always be in the same classroom (Bean, 2001; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Villa et al., 2008). However, it should be noted that if co-teachers do teach in different spaces, it should not be the same students or the same co-teacher who leave the classroom to work in an alternative space (Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Villa et al., 2008).

Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) adapted special education co-teaching approaches to the context of ESL by adding ESL strategies to the description of co-teaching approaches. First, the "two teachers teaching same content to one student group" approach, more commonly known as "team teaching", includes incorporation of both content and language objectives into the lesson. This helps ELLs acquire both language and content. Secondly, what used to be known as the "alternative teaching" approach, has been split

into two different types based on two ESL strategies: pre-teaching and re-teaching of specific content, skills, or strategies to students.

When deciding which approach to use in a particular situation, co-teachers need to take into account their lesson objectives and student needs. For improved student achievement, it is recommended that co-teachers try different approaches, even within one lesson, to be able to make the most of co-teaching (Cook & Friend, 1995; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Villa et al., 2008).

<div align="center">Impact of Co-Teaching on Student Achievement</div>

There is not much research data on the effectiveness of co-teaching practices in the field of special education (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010; Murawski & Swanson, 2001), and there is even less data available in the field of ESL (DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; DelliCarpini, 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008; Martinsen Holt, 2004; York-Barr, Ghere, & Sommerness, 2007), as the co-teaching approach is relatively new. However, as more and more studies come out, the results suggest that co-teaching can have a positive impact on student achievement (Murawski & Dieker, 2008).

A few special education and ESL researchers have found co-teaching to be effective based on student outcomes (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; Fu et al., 2007; Murawski & Swanson, 2001; Seaman, 2000; Young, 2006). Seaman's qualitative study (2000) revealed that ELLs had higher levels of on-task activity in the ESL – mainstream co-taught elementary class than students from the pull-out model. Several years later, Fu et al. (2007) found that co-teaching between an ESL and a fourth grade

classroom teacher during the Writer's Workshop resulted in substantial growth of two newcomer ELLs as writers. Additionally, several researchers (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; York-Barr et al., 2007; Young, 2006) used achievement test data to determine the effectiveness of co-teaching practices and found considerable academic gains in reading among students from the co-taught classrooms. Furthermore, in the Saint Paul Public School district (in Minnesota), where co-teaching has replaced all pull-out ESL services, ELLs have shown growth in passing the high school exit exam on the first try (Zehr, 2006). Finally, some researchers investigated co-teachers' perceptions about co-teaching and the impact of co-teaching on student achievement (Austin, 2001; DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Kohler-Evans, 2006). These studies found that co-teachers believed that co-teaching contributed positively to the academic development of their students. Even though not much data is available on the effectiveness of co-teaching, especially in the ESL field, the data that is emerging shows positive and promising results.

<div align="center">Necessary Elements for Effective Co-Teaching</div>

Many authors and researchers have described or made recommendations about the elements that need to be in place in order for co-teaching to be effective (Conderman et al., 2009; Cook & Friend, 1995; Cramer, Nevin, Thousand, & Liston, 2006; Davison, 2006; DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Fattig & Taylor, 2008; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Kohler-Evans, 2006; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Schumm et al., 2001; Villa et al., 2008; Young, 2006). The number of necessary elements identified for effective co-teaching varies among different sources from five (Conderman et al., 2009) to 50 different tips for

creating an effective co-teaching relationship (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). After

examining all the above mentioned literature, I created a list of ten essential elements of

effective co-teaching. I chose the elements that were most consistent in these sources and

were mentioned by at least two different researchers or authors. From these studies, the

essential elements for effective co-teaching are:

1. Administrative support

2. Professional development

3. Parity

4. Voluntary partnerships

5. Common planning time

6. Establishment of common expectations

7. Shared resources

8. Shared accountability for outcomes

9. Maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship

10. Implementing different models of co-teaching

Some of the other elements that are not included in the list of necessary elements

for effective co-teaching but have been mentioned by some authors are: teacher

flexibility, having a shared belief system, informing the parents and receiving their

support, and having a collaborative school climate.

Several authors have pointed out that administrative support is one of the most

critical elements of co-teaching (Austin, 2001; Conderman et al., 2009; Cook & Friend,

1995; DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Martinsen Holt, 2004).

Administrators can help co-teachers by providing appropriate training in regard to co-teaching and collaboration, assisting in planning and scheduling the co-teaching program, and by providing the necessary time and resources for making the co-teaching experience successful.

Another critical element of co-teaching is professional development (Cook & Friend, 1995; DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Friend et al., 2010; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Murawski and Dieker, 2008). In their study about co-teacher professional preparation, Cramer et al. (2006) found that university level teacher preparation programs rarely have any courses addressing co-teaching issues. However, data from co-teachers pointed out that the teachers benefited greatly from their schools' professional development training and planning time devoted to implementing co-teaching. For co-teaching to be effective, co-teachers need to receive professional development on: building collaboration and communication skills, assessing their readiness to co-teach, and instructional models of co-teaching (Cook & Friend, 1995). It is also very important that both co-teaching partners participate in professional development together (Friend et al., 2010; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; Murawski and Dieker, 2008).

Another necessary element of co-teaching is parity (Conderman et al., 2009; Kohler-Evans, 2006; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Schumm et al., 2001). Both co-teachers need to treat each other as equal partners regardless of their years of teaching experience, degree, or age (Kohler-Evans, 2006). In addition, to ensure parity, it is also important that both teachers' names are on the board, report cards, and any letters home (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). Since mainstream teachers and ESL teachers bring different areas of

expertise to the classroom, they need to be more flexible, learn from each other, and provide instruction based on each other's strengths.

Another aspect of successful co-teaching is that co-teaching pairs should be established on a volunteer basis (DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Kohler-Evans, 2006; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Simmons & Magiera, 2007). This aspect particularly has to do with personal and professional compatibility between teaching pairs. It is important that mainstream and ESL teachers want to be co-teachers; otherwise the co-teaching experience might not be very pleasant or effective. Murawski and Dieker (2008) even recommend that teachers volunteer to co-teach before the administration requires that teachers do it, because co-teaching is not going away and is becoming more and more popular in U.S. schools.

The element that has been addressed by almost all co-teaching researchers and authors is common planning time for co-teachers (Friend et al., 2010; Kohler-Evans, 2006; Martinsen Holt, 2004; Simmons & Magiera, 2007; Villa et al., 2008). Experts recommend that schools make common planning time a high priority. Kohler-Evans (2006) suggests a minimum of 45 minutes per week of mutual planning time. In addition, Simmons and Magiera (2007) suggest that not only should co-teachers have regularly scheduled planning time during the week, but also additional planning time during the summer and quarterly half-day planning sessions in order to co-plan effective instruction for all students. Another issue that comes up with common planning time is the number of co-teaching partners. In order to have time to plan and co-teach effectively, researchers

recommend that the ESL teacher has no more than three co-teaching partners (Mabbott &

Strohl, 1992; Rainforth & England, 2001).

Establishment of common expectations is another necessary aspect of co-teaching

(Fattig &Taylor, 2008; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Schumm et al., 2001). Fattig and

Taylor (2008) emphasize that this is a critical initial step in all new co-teaching

situations. The authors suggest that potential co-teachers meet and discuss their

philosophies and expectations in regard to classroom policies and procedures, teaching

styles and preferences, behavior management, and academic goals. As a result of this

meeting, future co-teachers will have an agreement about the expectations in their shared

classroom, which will provide a good start for the co-teaching experience.

A valuable aspect of true co-teaching is shared resources between co-teachers

(Conderman et al., 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). This involves sharing curriculum

and materials for everyday classroom use as well as sharing ideas and strategies that

facilitate student learning. Co-teachers should feel free to share activities that worked

well and were successful for students in the past, because it is the expertise of both

teachers that provides a better instructional experience for students (Garcia & Tyler,

2010).

Shared accountability for outcomes is another necessary aspect of co-teaching

(DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Conderman et al., 2009; Cook & Friend, 1995). If co-teachers

are viewed as equal partners in the classroom with shared resources, they should also

share accountability for student outcomes. Researchers suggest that co-teachers reflect on

their co-taught lessons (Conderman et al., 2009), provide feedback to each other (Austin,

2001), and gather formative and summative student outcome data to determine effectiveness of co-teaching (Kohler-Evans, 2006).

Maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship is another aspect necessary for successful co-teaching (Davison, 2006; DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; Gately & Gately, 2001; Martinsen Holt, 2004; Villa et al., 2008). Even if all of the above-described elements of successful co-teaching are in place, it takes time for the co-teaching relationship to develop. Like any relationship, a co-teaching relationship goes through various stages of development, and it may take from a few weeks to over a year for effective co-teaching partnership to fully develop and have positive impact on students (Davison, 2006; Gately & Gately, 2001; Villa et al., 2008). This is why it is important to keep the same co-teaching partners for more than a year when implementing co-teaching (Martinsen Holt, 2004).

Finally, as mentioned earlier, implementation through various models of co-teaching is important for successful co-teaching. Co-teachers need to focus on student needs and therefore try different co-teaching models, even within one lesson, to be able to make the most of co-teaching (Cook & Friend, 1995; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Villa et al., 2008).

<div align="center">Gap in Research</div>

As this chapter indicates, there are many elements that need to be in place in order for co-teaching to be effective. While many authors and researchers support the use of co-teaching as a promising option for meeting the needs of English language learners, they also agree that more research is needed to fully substantiate co-teaching as an

effective option. A current gap exists in the limited number of studies that looked specifically at elementary ESL – mainstream co-teaching practices in the United States. Moreover, as Murawski and Swanson (2001) concluded, the co-teaching situations that researchers have examined so far focused on what are considered to be successful co-teaching experiences. In my study, I aim to gather and analyze data from all current elementary co-teaching situations during Reader's Workshop at this school. This approach may allow me to obtain information about both successful and unsuccessful co-teaching experiences.

Research Question

This study sets out to examine co-teaching practices that are currently being implemented between ESL and classroom teachers in one urban elementary school in a large city in the Midwest. Specifically, the following question will guide my research: What does co-teaching look like in one urban elementary school?

Summary

Originating from the field of special education as a way to provide inclusion for special education students, co-teaching has received growing interest among ESL educators. Since the number of students whose first language is not English is constantly growing in U.S. schools, one of the most effective ways to provide these students with both content and language instruction, as suggested by researchers, is ESL – mainstream co-teaching. ESL researchers are beginning to adapt information about co-teaching from the field of special education to the field of ESL. In particular, seven ESL co-teaching models have been introduced by Dove and Honigsfeld in 2010.

In spite of the fact that co-teaching has been implemented by special education teachers, little research is available in terms of the impact of this method of instruction on student achievement. However, the studies that focused on student outcomes showed positive results in both special education and ESL.

Many authors have addressed the necessary components of successful co-teaching. Among the best co-teaching practices are: administrative support, professional development, parity, voluntary partnerships, common planning time, establishment of common expectations, shared resources, shared accountability for student outcomes, developmental nature of the co-teaching relationship, and implementing different models of co-teaching. In the next chapter, I will describe the methods, data collection procedure, and data analysis techniques that I will use to answer my research question.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study set out to examine co-teaching practices that are currently being implemented between ESL and mainstream classroom teachers in one urban elementary school in a large city in the Midwest. Specifically, the following question guided my research: What does co-teaching look like in one urban elementary school?

My research was based on an anonymous questionnaire completed by ESL and mainstream co-teachers at this school in grades K-5 about their current co-teaching experiences during Reader's Workshop. I also conducted four recorded interviews with selected co-teachers in order to get a better understanding of the co-teaching practices currently being implemented at this school. Finally, I interviewed the school's principal about her vision and understanding of co-teaching.

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the methodologies that I used to answer my research question. First, the qualitative research paradigm will be described along with the justification for using it in this study. Then, I will describe the participants and the setting of this research and present the two data collection techniques that were used to find the answer to my research question. Finally, I will describe the procedure by which the data on current co-teaching practices in this school will be analyzed.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

The research that I conducted was mostly qualitative with some quantitative data. According to Merriam (2009), "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (p. 13). In my study, I did not have a hypothesis to test, but rather started with a research question that focused on understanding co-teaching experiences that co-teachers have at this school. Also, the purpose of my study was not to observe and measure co-teaching, but rather to participate in research myself by distributing and collecting questionnaires and conducting follow-up interviews. In addition, I got my data from a purposefully limited number of participants; teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching during the Reader's Workshop, rather than from a large random sample of teachers. Finally, I analyzed the data by interpreting and categorizing teacher responses, and I used descriptive language to present my findings. For analysis of the quantitative data from the questionnaires, descriptive statistics were used. No attempt is made to generalize the findings of this study to a larger context. According to several authors (Dörnyei, 2007; McKay, 2006; Merriam, 2009), all of the above mentioned characteristics suggest that qualitative research paradigm is the best choice for my study.

Case Study

The specific form of qualitative study that best fits my research is case study. Merriam (2009) defines case study as a thorough description and analysis of a unit that has boundaries. Co-teaching is a bounded unit, because it is focused on one type of

teaching model. It is also bounded because there will be a limited number of participants in this study: only teachers who are implementing co-teaching during Reader's Workshop in this school will be participating in this research. The aim of this research is to provide insight into how co-teaching is carried out in this school. I used three sources of data collection and provide a description of findings. All of these characteristics are consistent with the features of a case study.

<div align="center">Data Collection</div>

<u>Location, Setting, and Participants</u>

This research was conducted at an elementary school in a large Midwestern urban district. About 65% of students at this school are English language learners. In order to meet the needs of all these students, the co-teaching approach has been selected by the school's principal. In addition to having a high number of ELLs, this school has 97% of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. There are 40 elementary mainstream teachers, seven ESL teachers, and one ESL coordinator working at the school with grades K-5. Each ESL teacher works with classrooms from two or three grade levels, teaching or co-teaching ESL.

The school started implementing ESL – mainstream co-teaching in 2008-2009. At that time, only one ESL teacher was implementing this approach with fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers. In the following academic year, 2009-2010, school administrators required that all ESL teachers within all grade levels implement co-teaching. Finally, in 2010-2011 the school established a late-exit Spanish bilingual program for grades K-4. As a result of this, the school's ESL program has been divided

into the developmental bilingual strand (for ELLs in the bilingual program) and the

English Language Development (ELD) strand (for students in the traditional elementary

program). The school principal and the ESL coordinator decided that ELLs in the

developmental bilingual strand will be receiving ESL services through the subject of

science taught by two ESL teachers. This study will only focus on co-teaching between

ESL and elementary teachers in the ELD strand during the Reader's Workshop.

In the spring of 2010, all ELLs from kindergarten through grade five were

informally assessed by their ESL teacher for their language proficiency level according to

the "can-do" descriptions provided by the World-Class Instructional Design and

Assessment (WIDA) standards. WIDA standards differentiate six levels of language

proficiency: entering, beginning, developing, expanding, bridging, and reaching. In

2010-2011, ELLs with lower levels of English language proficiency (levels "one"

through "low three") were clustered at each grade level in two, three, or four classrooms.

ELLs with higher levels of English language proficiency (levels "high three" through

"five") were clustered in the remaining one or two classrooms. The school principal and

the ESL coordinator decided that ESL teachers working with students from the ELD

strand in 2010-2011 will be co-teaching for 60 to 70 minutes a day during the Reader's

Workshop with classroom teachers who have clusters of lower level language proficiency

ELLs. The remaining classrooms that have ELLs of higher level English language

proficiency receive ESL support for 30 to 40 minutes a day, and co-teaching is not

required during this time.

Therefore, the participants in this study will be 18 elementary mainstream teachers and four ESL teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching with lower level clustered ELLs during Reader's Workshop. Each ESL teacher works with two or three grade levels and co-teaches with three or four mainstream teachers only during Reader's Workshop. All four ESL teachers have new co-teaching partners this year, with three ESL teachers beginning their first year as ESL teachers at this particular school. Most of the elementary teachers were co-teaching with an ESL teacher last year, but only three of them will have the same co-teaching partner as before.

Data Collection Technique 1: Questionnaire

The first method that I used to collect the data needed to answer my research question was an anonymous questionnaire. "Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (Brown, as cited in Dörnyei, 2003, p. 6). By using this method, I was able to collect factual, behavioral, and attitudinal responses about current co-teaching practices in this school. According to Dörnyei (2003), this method also allowed me to collect the necessary data from the participants in a relatively short period of time.

In spite of the fact that this method allowed me to get the data very quickly, there might be issues with using this method. First, because the participants were filling out questionnaires on their own, they were not able to clarify any information about the questions. I piloted questions from the questionnaire before doing the actual research to address this issue. Second, because the questions need to be very simple and

straightforward, the answers might be simple and superficial (Dörnyei, 2003). To address

this issue, in my questionnaire I included more open-ended questions that allowed

teachers to provide more thorough answers. Third, teachers might be reluctant to fill out

and return the questionnaires. I talked to teachers in person and described the importance

of their participation in my research project. I also provided an incentive, chocolate, that

helped assure their cooperation in returning the questionnaires. Finally, social desirability

bias might be an issue with getting true data (Dörnyei, 2003). I decided to have an

anonymous questionnaire so that teachers would be more likely to provide truthful

answers.

The questionnaire had three types of questions to give me a better picture of

current co-teaching practices: close-ended questions, Likert scale questions, and open-

ended questions. Questions for the questionnaire have been adapted from instruments

used in research with a similar topic (The Northern Nevada Writing Project Teacher-

Researcher Group, 1996). They are presented in Appendix A.

Data Collection Technique 2: Interview

The second method that I used to collect data was structured interviews with

predetermined questions. I conducted five interviews for this study: four with teachers

about their current co-teaching practices and one with the school's principal. An

interview is "a structured oral exchange with someone" (Freeman, 1998, p. 216). As

Merriam (2009) points out, in qualitative research interviewing is very often the only way

to collect data. Through interviews, I was able to gather information and perceptions

from the participants of the research, especially when behavior, feelings, and teachers'

interpretation of the situation cannot be observed (Merriam, 2009). This data collection

technique is suited for my study, because it allowed me to have better insight into current

co-teaching practices at this school as well as the principal's co-teaching vision.

As with any data collection technique, interviewing may have some possible

issues. One issue with interviewing might be that the interview questions are not very

clear and therefore are not understood by the participants (Merriam, 2009). If the

questions are not clearly worded, they will not elicit useful responses. For this reason, it

was important to pilot interview questions before the actual research took place. Not only

did I get some practice in interviewing other people, but I also received valuable

feedback about the questions themselves. In addition, it was important to have probes, or

follow-up questions, in order to elicit a fuller response to the interview questions. My

pilot study helped with this. Another possible issue with interviewing may be finding

time for interviews. One of the aspects of co-teaching is having planning time with your

co-teacher. Thus, the teachers might be busy co-planning, and as a result, it might be

difficult for them to find additional time to participate in the interview. The school's

principal also has little time to meet for an interview because of the different staff and

principals' meetings, professional development, and committee meetings that she is a part

of. It was helpful to provide interviewees with a chocolate incentive to provide them with

extrinsic motivation. In addition, I scheduled a meeting with the principal ahead of time

to ensure her availability for the interview.

The interview questions that were used in this research have been adapted from

research with a similar topic and methodology techniques. (The Northern Nevada Writing

Project Teacher-Researcher Group, 1996). Interview questions for teachers are presented in Appendix B, and principal interview questions are presented in Appendix C.

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

<u>Participants</u>

I distributed questionnaires in person to all elementary and ESL teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching during Reader's Workshop, because it would give me a good picture of how co-teaching is happening at different grade levels in this school. For most of the co-teaching pairs this is their first year working together, so I wanted to find out how much they know about co-teaching and to what extent they are using best co-teaching practices to develop their co-teaching relationships.

For the follow-up interview, my decision to select co-teaching partners was based on the teachers' willingness to participate in the interview and the researcher's comfort level with the teachers. In order to keep the size of this study manageable, only four co-teachers were interviewed: two ESL teachers and two elementary classroom teachers. Classroom teachers and ESL teachers participating in the interviews are currently co-teaching with each other. Each co-teacher was interviewed separately.

I scheduled a time for interviewing the principal in advance to ensure her availability to meet with me.

<u>Pilot study</u>

I piloted my questions for the questionnaire and for the interviews with the school's ESL coordinator who was the first person to implement co-teaching at this school (in 2008-2009). She has received professional development on co-teaching and is

also the head of the co-teaching/collaboration committee at this school. I believe that she gave me valuable and insightful feedback in regard to my questionnaire and interview questions.

<u>Materials</u>

As mentioned above, the questionnaire had close-ended questions, Likert scale questions, and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were delivered in person to all the participants by the researcher with a cover letter that explained the purpose of the study, the date by which the completed questionnaire should be returned, the researcher's contact information in case participants had any questions, and a self-addressed envelope so the participants knew whose mailbox they should return the completed questionnaire to. I also attached a chocolate incentive to the questionnaire to provide extrinsic motivation for teachers to help me with my research. The questionnaire was four pages long, and it should have taken teachers no more than 30 minutes to complete.

The interviews were conducted at the participants' preferred times. The time of each interview ranged between 20 and 45 minutes. The interviews were held behind closed doors to ensure confidentiality of responses. I audiotaped each interview using a tape recorder. Later, teachers' and the principal's answers were transcribed verbatim for analysis.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

After I received all the questionnaires back from teachers, I assigned a unique identification code to each of them. Dörnyei (2003) recommends taking each questionnaire and writing its sequential number on the front page. Responses to close-

ended questions and open-ended questions from the questionnaire were analyzed differently. I coded each answer to the close-ended questions and gave it a numerical score. The scores were then quantified, and a table was created. Responses to the Likert scale questions were also given a numerical score and presented in a table. Finally, responses to open-ended questions were categorized and classified using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009). Data from each questionnaire was compared to find patterns, or themes. Similar data was grouped together by theme, which later became a category.

Data that I obtained from the teacher interviews was transcribed verbatim, and each transcription received a code. Then, the constant comparative method described above was used for analyzing the data. After analyzing data received from both instruments, I used the constant comparative method to identify similar themes from both sets of data. Together, these data helped me answer my research question.

Finally, I transcribed the principal's interview verbatim and used the constant comparative method to compare the principal's vision with the results of the data obtained from the teachers and later compare all three sets of data with the necessary elements for effective co-teaching described in Chapter Two.

The data was analyzed and is reported in regard to each of the ten necessary elements of co-teaching: administrative support, professional development, parity, voluntary partnerships, common planning time, establishment of common expectations, shared resources, shared accountability for student outcomes, maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship, and implementing different models of co-teaching.

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research can be ensured not by replicating the study and finding the same results, but by having results that are consistent with the collected data (Merriam, 2009). One way to establish reliability is to have triangulation. In this study, I used methodological triangulation by employing two different methods of data collection: questionnaires and interviews. Another aspect of this study that makes it reliable is that I kept detailed notes on how the data was collected and analyzed, and how I arrived at my results. This is called an audit trail, a method in which an independent reader can follow the researcher's steps in collecting and analyzing data (Merriam, 2009).

Verification of Data

Freeman (1998) points out that triangulation is what makes research dependable. Internal validity of this study is ensured by methodological triangulation. As described earlier, two methods of data collection were used in this research: questionnaires and interviews. Information from the questionnaires gave me the big picture of co-teaching practices that currently take place in my school. Information that I got from teacher interviews gave me better insight into both successful and not very successful practices of co-teaching implementation. Finally, the interview with the principal gave me a good picture of the principal's vision and understanding of co-teaching.

Ethics

In order to protect the participants' rights and ensure anonymity, several safeguards were employed. Human Subjects Review Protocols from Hamline University and the school district were followed. A letter describing the study was given to all the

participants, and an informed consent was provided to each participant. The interviews were conducted in a separate room behind closed doors to eliminate any third party interference. All the collected data is kept confidential in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home. All interview data has been coded, and no real names were used in transcription of interviews. All collected data from questionnaires and interviews will be destroyed after one year.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described and justified the qualitative research paradigm, provided information about the participants and the setting, and described the data collection and analysis techniques that were employed. In the next chapter, I will present the results of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

      The purpose of this study was to determine what co-teaching looks like in one urban elementary school. In order to answer my research question, I conducted qualitative research at an urban elementary school in the Midwest based on an anonymous questionnaire completed by ESL and mainstream co-teachers in grades K-5 about their current co-teaching practices during Reader's Workshop. In addition, I also conducted four recorded interviews with selected co-teachers to achieve better understanding and gain more detailed answers to questions about the co-teaching practices currently being implemented at this school. Finally, I interviewed the school's principal about her vision and understanding of co-teaching.

Participants

      The anonymous questionnaires were distributed in person to 22 elementary and ESL teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching during Reader's Workshop. I received 82% of the questionnaires back. The number of participants is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Number of Participants

Teaching assignment	Number
Classroom teacher	14
ESL teacher	4
Total:	18

The teaching experience of the participants ranged from one to more than 15 years. As seen from Table 3, more than 50% of co-teachers surveyed have been teaching for more than 15 years.

Table 3

Teaching Experience

Teaching experience	Number of teachers	Percent of teachers
1-3 years	2	11%
4-10 years	2	11%
11-15 years	4	22%
More than 15 years	10	56%

Seventy-two percent of the respondents felt that their overall co-teaching experience has been successful this year, and only one participant stated it has not been successful. Some of the comments that teachers gave about their co-teaching experience this year were: "We are more comfortable with each other's style and with each other's strengths and weaknesses." "I really enjoy co-teaching with my ESL teacher." However, one teacher stated that "it is hard not to be too bossy or step on someone's toes." The

results of the teachers' perceptions of successfulness of their co-teaching experiences are

presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Teachers' Perceptions of the Successfulness of their Co-Teaching

		Yes	Somewhat	No	N/A
This year	Number	13	2	1	2
	Percent	72%	11%	6%	11%
Previously	Number	10	5	0	3
	Percent	56%	28%	0%	17%

Note. N/A = no answer.

Definition of Co-Teaching

When asked to provide a definition of co-teaching, all the participants cited that it

means two teachers providing instruction to the same group of students. Two-thirds of the

respondents also added co-planning to their definition of co-teaching, and two teachers

mentioned that it means co-planning, presenting the lesson together, and also assessing

the students together. Some examples of teachers' definitions are:

"Co-teaching is two teachers collaborating to teach all students." "Cooperatively

planning and teaching with another teacher in order to meet the needs of all students."

"Two teachers teaching *all* kids with responsibility for planning, teaching, and assessing

a group."

The teachers' definitions of co-teaching were similar to the principal's definition.

During the interview, the principal stated that co-teaching implies spending time co-

planning, presenting the lesson together, and having co-accountability for student outcomes.

Co-Teaching Practices

The data I am reporting in this section was collected from 18 teachers through anonymous questionnaires and four recorded interviews. No discrepancies in the data were found in these two data collection techniques except that the answers that teachers gave in oral interviews were fuller, more detailed, and gave me a better understanding of what co-teaching looks like in these teachers' classrooms. The collected data is presented according to the ten essential elements of effective co-teaching described in Chapter Two. In each essential element category, the corresponding question or questions from the questionnaire are presented first, followed by teachers' responses from both the questionnaires and the interviews, and then lastly, the data obtained from the principal during the recorded interview.

Administrative Support.

Question number	Question
5	Does school administration support co-teaching model? In what way?

Figure 1. Question about administrative support from the questionnaire.

About two-thirds of the teachers surveyed felt that there was administrative support for co-teaching in the school. The most common responses of how the teachers felt this support were "School administration encourages co-teaching." "They brought it all together." "Administration feels it is highly effective." One teacher commented,

"They support it so much that they mandate it!" Other teachers felt that examples of administrative support included having common time to co-plan with their co-teachers and receiving professional development on co-teaching.

The one-third of teachers who felt that administrative support for co-teaching was lacking, mentioned that " Administration [only] supports a co-teaching model on paper." "There is no follow-up as far as how it is going", and that teachers do not have common time to co-plan with their co-teacher.

Principal. The school principal included the co-teaching model in her vision for the school. Her purposes for implementing co-teaching at this school are to build the capacity for teachers to learn from each other, align learning and instruction so that ESL and regular classrooms are connected, and to provide more support for students. To achieve this vision, the principal mandated the ESL – mainstream co-teaching model at all grade levels beginning the 2009-2010 school year.

Professional Development

Question number	Question

9	Did you participate in any training to prepare you to co-teach?
	    □ Yes
	    □ No
	If yes, were you there with your co-teacher? □ Yes □ No
	How long was it?
	What was it about?

23	What would you like to change in your co-teaching?
27	What suggestions do you have for improving current co-teaching practices at our school?

Figure 2. Question about professional development from the questionnaire.

The majority of teachers surveyed responded that they had participated in professional development with their co-teacher. Teachers reported spending between 15 minutes to two hours in professional development this year. All teachers stated that the topic for professional development in co-teaching was various ways to co-teach, and thus they learned about different models of co-teaching. The teachers' comments about this professional development were: "We were shown a video about different models of co-teaching." "One meeting at the beginning of the year about the different structures of co-teaching and collaboration."

Forty percent of the teachers surveyed reported receiving no training on co-teaching, and it turned out that all of these teachers were regular classroom teachers. One teacher also commented on why he or she reported receiving no training on co-teaching: "We watched a video, about 10-15 minutes. I don't call that training. It showed examples of co-teaching models."

About one-third of teachers expressed that they wanted more training and professional development for co-teaching.   For example, one teacher said, "I'd like to see more formal training [in co-teaching] for everyone… some common training." Other comments from teachers were: "I don't have enough professional development on co-teaching." "I wish we had more training… I think we're in desperate need of more training." "I feel we should have had real training before starting to co-teach.", "I think more people would be willing to change to this model, but there needs to be more professional development around it." Also, one teacher would like to have more opportunities to see co-teaching in action and another feels that there needs to be more

follow-through on the expectations of co-teaching. One teacher commented that professional development for co-teachers could be on-going, while yet another teacher suggested that it happen three times per year.

A few teachers reported that they had attended staff development on co-teaching but not with the person with whom they co-teach. One of these teachers attended a two-day training during the summer and stated that it would be good to get the same kind of training with her co-teacher.

Principal. The school principal said that the teachers have not received enough professional development on co-teaching and that "…a couple of days a year… to look at co-teaching or collaboration are important." However, she gave no specific indication that this would always be the reality. She described her belief that successful co-teaching is based more on positive relationships between co-teachers and co-accountability rather than specialized training or workshops. The principal also mentioned the other initiatives and issues that classroom teachers in the school face and warned against piling on too much training and development at one time. Her approach in regard to professional development for co-teachers is "to do things a little bit at a time."

Parity

Question number	Question
17	How do students know that both teachers are teachers in your classroom?

Figure 3. Question about parity from the questionnaire.

When asked how students know that both teachers are teachers, the survey found two kinds of responses from the teachers. Most co-teachers said that they simply informed students of the fact that they are both teachers in the classroom: "I introduced my co-teacher to the class by explaining that she is a teacher and we share the class during reading." "We told the students from the start of the school that we are both their teachers." "From the very beginning of the year, it was introduced that way to the kids."

Only a few teachers mentioned that they conveyed the message that both teachers are equal teachers by taking turns with their co-teacher leading lessons throughout the week: "We both lead lessons." "I lead the whole group lesson at least once a week."

Principal. The principal stated that there is an expectation of co-planning and co-teaching in the school. She said that this involves doing some "pre-work talking about roles and responsibilities" as well as discussing how decisions will be made and "how the relationship will come together."

Voluntary Partnerships

Question number	Question
6	Why do you co-teach?
7	If co-teaching were not a requirement at this school, would you choose to co-teach? □ Yes □ Maybe □ No
8	How were you matched with your co-teacher?
23	What would you like to change in your co-teaching?
27	What suggestions do you have for improving current co-teaching practices at our school?

Figure 4. Questions about voluntary partnerships from the questionnaire.

Half the teachers believe that their co-teacher was assigned by the administration. Typical responses from teachers were: "The co-teacher was assigned to my classroom." "I did not have any say – we were just matched up." "I assume administration matched us – I was never asked for input."

Some teachers stated that they did not know how they were assigned. Examples of teachers' responses are: "I don't know." "I am not sure how we were matched."

Two ESL teachers think that their assignment was based on the grade level with which they chose to work: "I got to choose my role this year out of maybe four or five different options. It was not viewed as who I was going to work with; it was more what grades."

As seen from Table 5, when the teachers were asked if they would choose to co-teach if it were not a requirement at this school, 67% of respondents answered positively.

Table 5

Number of Teachers that would Choose to Co-Teach

	Yes	Maybe	No
Number	12	6	0
Percent	67%	33%	0%

A few participants mentioned that one of the ways to improve co-teaching would be not to mandate it and that those who do decide to co-teach should be able to select with whom they will be co-teaching. The teachers said, "[The administration should] look more closely at how teachers are matched, consider teaching styles, classroom management." "Let teachers decide who to co-teach with, or at least have some input."

Principal. All ESL teachers, with the exception of the last one hired, were asked by the

principal what grade level they wanted to work with. The principal said, "People made

requests for people they wanted to work with. If that was the case, we tried to honor

that."

Common Planning Time

Question number	Question
10	Do you have common planning time with your co-teacher during the day? □ Yes □ No Please explain
11	How much time do you spend co-planning with your co-teacher per week?
12	Did you have any planning time with your co-teacher before the start of the school year? □ Yes □ No If yes, please explain
23	What would you like to change in your co-teaching?
27	What suggestions do you have for improving current co-teaching practices at our school?

Figure 5. Questions about common planning time from the questionnaire.

As seen from Table 6, only about one-third of teachers reported that they have

common planning time with their co-teacher during the day: four classroom teachers and

two ESL teachers. Teachers who do not have common planning time (about two-thirds of

the participants) commented that "It would be very helpful." "There should be a more

organized meeting time, but we do not have common preps or lunches." "We have to

plan after school, usually after our duty day due to other required meetings after school.

We do not share a common prep because the ESL teacher works with two other grades."

Table 6

Number of Teachers that Have Common Planning Time with their Co-Teacher

	Yes	No
Number	6	12
Percent	33%	67%

The majority of teachers (about 56%) spend between 30 to 45 minutes co-planning each week. Two teachers (one classroom and one ESL teacher) spend about an hour and a half co-planning each week. These two teachers reported that they do not have a common planning time during the day, so their co-planning happens twice a week after school: "We meet on Monday and then plan for a good hour or so, and usually on Friday we touch base about how the week went and what we need to get ready for the following Monday." Both of these teachers have been in the teaching career for one to three years.

About one-third of teachers co-plan 15 minutes at the most per week, and they said that a lot of the planning is happening "On the go." "In informal passing conversations." "After school some days." Two teachers stated that they co-plan for no more than five minutes per week. They said, "We usually just touch base briefly once per week." Figure 6 shows the number of teachers and the amount of time they spend co-planning per week.
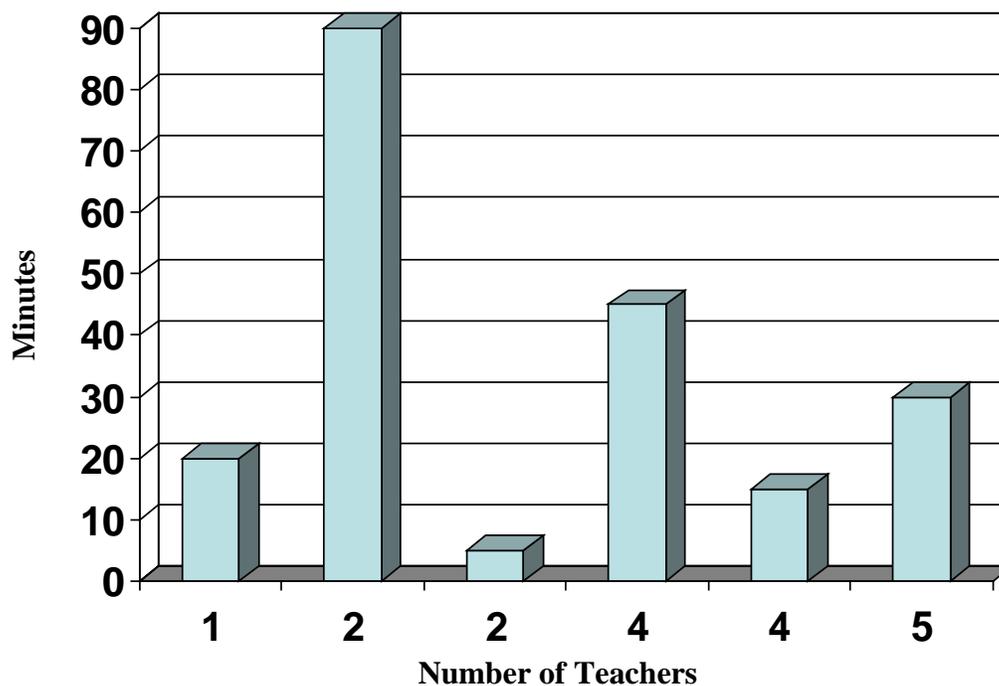
Figure 6. Time co-teachers spend co-planning per week.

When asked, if there was any co-planning before the beginning of the school year, about half of the participants said they did not spend any time co-planning before the school year began. The other half of the teachers found time in-between workshops and meetings during the teacher workshop week to plan and prepare for the first week of school. Some teachers spent a little time co-planning during the workshop week, while others co-planned for about two hours.

Two ESL teachers mentioned that they co-teach with five or six different teachers, and therefore it is difficult for them to find enough co-planning time with all of their co-teachers. Thus, one teacher commented, "Finding time to meet has been challenging."

Sixty percent of the participants cited that they would like to have more common planning time, which would include co-teachers having the same prep hour during the day. The common response to the question about what the teachers would like to change in their co-teaching was: "More time to plan." One specific suggestion on how to get more common planning time given by the teachers was: "Maybe one hour of sub time twice a month." Another suggestion was to have more co-planning time before the school year starts.

  Principal. The principal's vision about co-planning between co-teachers during the school year is that teachers ideally would spend two hours per week co-planning and that they should be committed to co-planning. She is very much aware of the lack of time for co-planning issue. In the interview she stated, "I know we do not have it, I do not know where to get it from, especially now that they shortened end of the day time." [Note: students' day was extended by 15 minutes in 2010, while the end of the contract day for teachers remained the same.] The principal understands that in reality the lack of time to co-plan results in a lot of "on-the-fly communication" and planning. In her opinion, the co-planning should be initiated primarily by the ESL teachers, because they have more flexibility since classroom teachers must be with their students all day long.

As far as co-planning before the beginning of the school year is concerned, the principal said, "I think it would be good to spend a day or more planning. If you are really going to do a good collaborative unit, you probably need a couple of weeks."

Establishment of Common Expectations

Question number	Question
19	How do you establish common expectations in the classroom with your co-teacher?

Figure 7. Question about establishment of common expectations from the questionnaire.

When asked about establishment of common expectations with the co-teacher, six classroom teachers mentioned that they discussed and developed the expectations together with their co-teacher. Examples of teachers' responses were: "We have discussed it, but mostly it has been an expectation from the very beginning." "We created expectations during reading time together." One classroom teacher commented, "We had to sit down and talk about behavior expectations because if one person has a different set of expectations, it is confusing for the kids. I think I probably had more to say about expectations because the kids are in here all the time every day, so the routines that we set … they need to follow that into the time that these other teachers are here too… I just wanted to keep it consistent with the kids most importantly so it does not get out of hand."

On the other hand, three out of four ESL teachers responded that they simply adopted the expectations that the classroom teacher has. Their comments were: "I support the teacher's behavior plan." "I mostly adapt to their classroom expectations." "I observe what the classroom teacher does." Likewise, three classroom teachers reported that their ESL co-teacher spent time observing them teaching the expectations to their class at the

beginning of the year and therefore adapted the classroom teacher's expectations. Examples of these classroom teachers' comments were: "We did not, she just adapted mine." "My co-teacher spent some time observing in the classroom prior to starting."

Only two teachers reported that they modeled and taught the expectations to the students together with their co-teacher. In their questionnaires, these teachers wrote, "Modeled together in front of kids." "Both teachers lead lessons, discipline, teach students rules of class and treat each other with respect."

Principal. The principal's view on having a successful co-teaching model with common expectations is that there needs to be work done before the actual co-teaching. Thus, according to the principal, teachers should discuss, "What are your norms? What are your shared agreements? What's your role? What's my role?" All of these things would help establish a successful co-teaching model.

Shared Resources

Question number	Question
18	Do you share classroom resources (paper, pencils, etc.) with your co-teacher in your classroom? If yes, please explain.
21	What (if anything) have you learned from your co-teacher?
22	What is going well in your co-teaching?
24	Do you see any benefits for teachers in co-teaching? Why or why not?
25	Do you see any benefits for students in co-teaching? Why or why not?

Figure 8. Questions about shared resources from the questionnaire.

Almost all of the participants stated that they share classroom resources, such as paper, pencils, markers, with their co-teacher, because, as one teacher stated, "The resources are for the students." Another teacher commented that "It is a "what's mine is yours" mentality." The surveyed ESL teachers responded that they know that they are welcome to use any of the resources in the classrooms that they go to, but they usually bring a cart or a bucket of their own materials to use while they are co-teaching in the classroom. For example, one ESL teacher said, "I usually bring my own [materials], though I know where things are in most classes. They have been generous with space." Only two respondents said that they do not share resources with their co-teacher.

Almost all of the teachers in the survey felt that their co-teachers are their best resource and that they become stronger and more confident educators as a result of co-teaching. A lot of teachers responded to the benefits for teachers in co-teaching question in a similar way: "Teachers learn from each other, which allows for professional growth." "I know this model makes me a better teacher and pushes me professionally." "It is always good to be supported, encouraged, and inspired by a colleague." Teachers also talked about how they learn from each other, pick up what the other misses, and trade ideas and techniques. About 40% of the participants, all of whom turned out to be classroom teachers, indicated that they have learned good strategies for educating ELLs from their ESL co-teacher: writing language objectives, building vocabulary, providing sentence stems for students, and supplementing oral directions with written.

All of the teachers surveyed also indicated they thought that sharing resources has a positive effect on student achievement, because it allows for more differentiation

and more individual attention to the students from the teacher. As one teacher said, "The kids do not have to leave their regular classroom for their ESL instruction. This is huge. These kids do not need more transitions and wasted time in their day. We are able to maximize their learning time with this model."

Principal. The principal did not mention sharing classroom resources during her interview. However, she mentioned that when co-teaching is happening, teachers are learning from each other all the time and bouncing ideas off of each other. She said that in the long run this will not only increase student achievement on standardized tests, but also increase ELLs' English language proficiency.

Shared Accountability for Student Outcomes

Question number	Question
20	How do you share accountability for student achievement outcomes with your co-teacher?

Figure 9. Question about shared accountability for student outcomes from the questionnaire.

About one-third of teachers did not know if or how they shared accountability for student outcomes. A typical response from these teachers was: "I am not sure." Ten teachers stated that they participated in a variety of activities that brought about shared accountability. These activities ranged from analyzing data together to discussing assessments and adapting instruction accordingly. Examples of teachers' responses are: "We share assessments, observations, and student work with each other." "We both take ownership of student achievement." "We look at data, meet to share progress, attend

problem solving together." One teacher mentioned that "technically it [accountability] does fall on the classroom teachers."

Principal. The principal said, "I think there should be accountability for outcomes… I think often classroom teachers really own that, but those who are not classroom teachers do not necessarily own that." She also mentioned that she gets frustrated when some classroom teachers are unsure of how a student is doing because they are always working with the other co-teacher. Her expectation is that both co-teachers should know about all the students in the co-taught classroom.

Maintaining and Developing the Co-Teaching Relationship

Question number	Question
2	How long have you been co-teaching?
22	What is going well in your co-teaching?
26	Name three qualities that you think are most important in a co-teacher.

Figure 10. Questions about maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship from the questionnaire.

About half of the respondents have been co-teaching for less than two years. Three teachers have been co-teaching for four to six years, and three teachers stated that they have been co-teaching for 18-20 years.

When describing the co-teaching relationship, one teacher said, "I think the more we work together, the more we are able to teach to the students. This became apparent when my student teacher taught his full-time. He said to me, "You two make it look so

easy." And I think it is because we are getting more and more used to each other's style of teaching."

Answers to the question from the interview about how long it takes to develop trust in the co-teaching relationship varied substantially. Some teachers thought that it usually happened within a couple of weeks to a month. Others felt it was closer to four months or even as long as one year. As one teacher stated, "Right now I am feeling I have people I can communicate with fairly well, so I would say by the end of the year." This teacher also emphasized that it is possible that in some cases a good co-teaching relationship may never happen.

Within the surveys the three most identified important qualities in a co-teacher are flexibility, openness, and good communication skills. Other qualities identified included professionalism, dependability, and positive attitude.

Principal. The principal commented that some co-teaching pairs are able to establish a good co-teaching relationship right from the start while others may take years to develop. She also said, "The other part it needs is an honest relationship and willingness to take risks with each other and to talk about why is this working, why isn't this working, and to have those professional conversations" and that in general a "…relationship needs time to grow."

The qualities the principal sees as being important in a co-teacher are good listening skills, being a risk-taker, flexibility, and honesty.

Implementing Different Models of Co-Teaching

Question number	Question
13	What subject matter do you co-teach?
15	Please describe what co-teaching looks like in your classroom.
16	Does it look like this every day? □ Yes □ No If no, how does it change?

Figure 11. Questions about implementation of co-teaching from the questionnaire.

According to the participants' descriptions of co-teaching that is going on during

Reader's Workshop, there are four co-teaching models being implemented: one lead

teacher, one teacher on purpose; two teachers teaching same content to one student

group; two teachers monitor and teach multiple student groups; and two teachers teaching

the same content to two student groups. All the respondents mentioned that their co-

teaching looks the same every day.

About one-third of the teachers use the "two teachers teaching same content to

one student group" model of co-teaching, more commonly known as the "team teaching"

model, in which both the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher co-teach the mini-lesson

for about 20 minutes to the whole class. The classroom teacher usually focuses on the

content objective of the lesson while the ESL teacher focuses on the language objective.

Here is how one teacher described what is happening during the mini-lesson, "Both of us

are at the front of the room teaching the mini-lesson. First, we go over the lesson

objectives, then we teach and model the mini-lesson. Towards the end of the mini-lesson,

my co-teacher goes over the language objective and her sentence stems that she wants the kids to use in their guided and independent groups." After the mini-lesson, the class breaks up into small guided reading groups taught by both the co-teachers separately in the same room. Thus, during Readers' Workshop, two co-teaching models are implemented by these teachers: team teaching during the mini-lesson and lesson closure, and parallel teaching during small guided reading groups.

Another third of the teachers implement the "two teachers monitor and teach multiple student groups" model of co-teaching, which is more commonly known as "station teaching". In these classrooms, students switch stations every 20 minutes, which allows the co-teachers to work with all the students in the class. One teacher described what co-teaching looks like in the classroom, "Students are working at literacy stations. Myself and the co-teacher are working with students in small groups on guided reading or other literacy skills. We each work with each group for about 20 minutes."

Finally, about one-third of the surveyed teachers only mentioned having guided reading groups during their co-teaching time with the ESL teacher. These teachers did not provide enough information for the researcher to determine whether these groups were flexible or changing and whether the co-teachers teach the same content to these groups of students. Therefore, it was impossible to determine if these teachers are actually implementing co-teaching.

Only two teachers mentioned using the "one lead teacher, one teacher on purpose", more commonly known as the "one teach, one drift" model of co-teaching. In

these classrooms, teachers mentioned alternating teaching the 20-minute mini-lesson during the Reader's Workshop.

Principal. According to the principal, "Co-teaching can be all kinds of things: It can be teaching simultaneously. It can be working in small groups and each doing the same thing or different things. It can be making use of the different levels of expertise so that the kids are grouped one way with this person and another way with this person. It means that you co-plan and align instruction and that you're working together and supporting each other. And also co-owning the kids, meaning you both are accountable for their learning." The principal also stated that every co-teaching pair probably has a preferred way to co-teach, but in her vision, co-teaching models should be flexible and not stay the same every day.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the results of my data collection on co-teaching practices that are happening during Reader's Workshop in one elementary school. In Chapter Five I will describe my major findings, the study's limitations, recommendations for teachers and administrators, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

In this research I attempted to answer the question: What does co-teaching look like in one urban elementary school? In this chapter I will present major findings of this study along with its limitations, implications for teachers and administrators, and suggestions for further research.

Major Findings

This study indicated that some of the necessary elements for effective co-teaching are in place at this school. These elements are: parity, shared resources between co-teachers, and maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship. There were no discrepancies found in what the teachers reported, what the principal's vision is and what the literature says about these elements of co-teaching.

On the other hand, based on this research, I have concluded that there are some elements where there are discrepancies between the principal's vision for co-teaching, the reality of how it is actually being implemented, and how both match up with best practices.

Administrative Support

In 2009, the principal mandated the implementation of co-teaching at all grade levels. However, it was implemented without adequate support. From the interview, it was clear that the principal understands that she does not have the resources to fully support co-teaching at this school.

Through my research, I found that one-third of surveyed teachers would like to have greater administrative support in their co-teaching. These teachers mentioned lack of time for co-planning, lack of follow-up, and lack of modeling of good co-teaching. What the teachers felt was lacking is consistent with best practices for co-teaching: administrative support should include appropriate training for co-teachers, assistance in planning and scheduling the co-teaching program, and time and resources for making the co-teaching experience successful.

Professional Development

Both the principal and staff believe that there has not been enough professional development on co-teaching. However, the principal gave no specific indication that there would be more training provided this year despite the fact that 40% of teachers, all of whom are classroom teachers, pointed that they had received no training on co-teaching.

Voluntary Partnerships

In this case all partnerships were mandated by the administration and only ESL teachers were asked about their grade level preference. Assigned partnerships are contrary to best co-teaching practices.

Common Planning Time

Ideally, the principal would like teachers to have two hours per week to co-plan. This is in alignment with best co-teaching practices, which suggest a minimum of 45 minutes of co-planning time per week. However, one-third of teachers surveyed stated that they spend 15 minutes or less co-planning per week and 60% of teachers would like

more co-planning time. Sixty seven percent said that they have no common planning time with their co-teacher.

<u>Common Expectations</u>

The principal's vision and best practices match almost perfectly in this category. However, the reality in the classrooms is much different in that one-third of surveyed teachers reported that the ESL teachers simply adapted the classroom teachers' expectations.

<u>Shared Accountability for Student Outcomes</u>

The principal's vision is based on the best practice that shared accountability is an important aspect of successful co-teaching. The discrepancy in this category is based on my findings that one-third of surveyed teachers are unaware of how or if they share accountability with their co-teacher.

<u>Implementing Different Models of Co-Teaching</u>

Both best practices and the principal's vision describe effective co-teaching as being based on implementation with multiple co-teaching models depending on student needs. There are four different co-teaching models being implemented at this school. However, in the school's classrooms each co-teaching team seems to have settled on one model which they use almost exclusively every day.

<u>Other Findings</u>

It was very interesting for me to find out that even though there are discrepancies in seven out of ten best practices for co-teaching, 72% of co-teachers feel that their co-teaching experience has been successful this year.

In addition, it was very encouraging to learn that 40% of the participants, all of whom are classroom teachers, learned good strategies for educating ELLs from their ESL co-teacher, such as writing language objectives, building vocabulary, providing sentence stems for students, and supplementing oral directions with written.

Also, it was interesting for me to learn that even if co-teaching were not a requirement at this school, 67% of teachers would still choose to do it, and nobody stated that they would not want to do it.

Finally, after interviewing the school principal, I was impressed that she knew a lot about co-teaching and what elements should be in place in order for co-teaching to be effective and produce expected results.

Summary

At this elementary school, three out of ten necessary elements for effective co-teaching practices are in place: parity, shared resources between co-teachers, and maintaining and developing the co-teaching relationship. However, in order to improve co-teaching at this school, more work needs to be done. As found by this research, the two most identified areas for improving co-teaching at this school are providing professional development and training to the co-teachers and supporting co-teachers by scheduling more common planning time during the day for co-teachers.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is the small sample size of participants: this study only looked at how co-teaching is carried out in grades K-5 in one school, and it looked specifically at ESL – mainstream co-teaching during Reader's Workshop. In addition, the

results of this study are based on teachers' perceptions of how their co-teaching is going, not on actual observations of the co-teaching practices being implemented. Furthermore, not all the participants responded to all the questions in the questionnaire or gave very short answers to some of the questions. For example, some teachers did not describe what co-teaching actually looks like in their classroom, but only mentioned that it was done through having small guided reading groups.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

For Teachers

One recommendation for co-teachers is to try to implement more than one co-teaching model, sometimes even within the same lesson. Co-teaching will not look the same every day if it is focused on students' needs.

Another recommendation for teachers is to be committed to co-planning in order to co-teach successfully. According to best practices for co-teaching, teachers should co-plan at least 45 minutes per week. Co-teachers at this school who do not currently have scheduled common planning time may choose to devote time to co-planning on one day after school for 45 minutes or meet for ten minutes after school every day.

Furthermore, it is recommended that co-teachers seek ways to adopt co-accountability. Even though ESL teachers are more accountable for ELLs' progress in the English language and mainstream teachers are accountable for ELLs' content knowledge, I believe that at this school both co-teachers should be equally accountable for the students' reading scores because this is the subject they are co-teaching every day. One way to adopt co-accountability is for both co-teachers to discuss and fill out report cards

in the subject of reading together. Another way to share co-accountability is to have both co-teachers attend data meetings with administration where both co-teachers will share their feedback on each student's performance in reading.

To follow the best practices for co-teaching, co-teachers may need to begin discussing and implementing common expectations. However, unless ESL teachers get some time before the beginning of the school year to discuss and develop common expectations with each classroom teacher that they are co-teaching with, I do not think it is realistic at this particular school. Even though it is contrary to what literature says about best co-teaching practices, I believe it is reasonable for ESL teachers at this school to adopt the expectations of classroom teachers with whom they are co-teaching because ESL teachers are only co-teaching for 60-70 minutes in each classroom. One suggestion on how the school could possibly implement this necessary element of co-teaching is to have all classroom teachers and ESL teachers develop school-wide expectations together at an all-staff meeting.

For Administrators

One recommendation for the school principal is to provide more training on co-teaching, especially for teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching. Training could be provided three times per year, at the beginning, in the middle, and in the end of the school year as part of the school professional development. Another suggestion is to incorporate training on co-teaching and collaboration into the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) that this school currently implements. All teachers at this school currently meet once per week for an hour to receive professional development from the

TAP mentor, and I think it would be reasonable to have every sixth TAP meeting focus on co-teaching and collaboration.

Another recommendation for the school principal is to provide more common planning time for co-teachers both before and during the school year. There are several ways that additional common planning time during the school year could be achieved, especially for the teachers who do not have any scheduled common planning time during the day. First, TAP mentors could take over the class co-taught by the ESL and mainstream teachers once every two weeks for one to two hours, therefore providing time for the two teachers to co-plan. Another suggestion is to provide a substitute teacher to cover the co-taught class for two hours once per month. Furthermore, ESL teachers could have a different prep time on two days of the week. Thus, on three days they would have common prep time with one grade level that they work with, and on two days they would have common prep time with another grade level. Finally, the principal may want to decide to sacrifice service time to ELLs and cut ESL services once per week for an hour to provide the time for ESL teachers to co-plan with co-teachers that do not currently have a common planning time with them.

Based on the necessary element of voluntary partnerships, the principal at this school may want to allow more staff input on what the co-teaching pairs are. I think that it will help teachers feel more supported by the administration if they can choose their co-teaching partner. One specific suggestion is to give surveys to both ESL and mainstream teachers at the end of each year asking them with whom they would like to co-teach next year.

Finally, I believe it is important to provide more modeling of good co-teaching to teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching at this school. Co-teaching pairs would benefit from coaching by a co-teaching expert on how to improve their current co-teaching practices. In addition, it would be beneficial for co-teachers to observe other co-teaching practices both at this school and at other schools in the district and in the state.

Further Research

This study had a very specific group of participants: only teachers who are co-teaching ESL during Reader's Workshop in grades K-5 in the ELD strand participated in the study. Further research can be conducted on what ESL – mainstream co-teaching looks like in the developmental bilingual strand in grades K-4 during the subject of science at this school. Also, it would be interesting to find out what ESL-mainstream co-teaching practices are happening in grades 6-8 at this school. In addition, further research could be done on the impact that co-teaching during Reader's Workshop has on mainstream teachers for the rest of the instructional day. It would be interesting to find out whether mainstream teachers at this school are modifying their instruction for ELLs and incorporating language objectives when they teach math, science, social studies, and writing. Finally, this research did not focus on determining the effectiveness of the co-teaching practices currently happening at this school. As mentioned in the literature review, there is very little data available in the field of ESL on the effectiveness of co-teaching (DeFrance Schmidt, 2008; DelliCarpini, 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008; Martinsen Holt, 2004; York-Barr, et al., 2007). Thus, further research

could be conducted to determine the effectiveness of co-teaching and its impact on student achievement at this school.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

The implementation of co-teaching requires a major commitment on the part of both teachers and administrators. Even without all the other issues facing urban schools today, implementing co-teaching is a major challenge. At this school, the principal has a good vision for co-teaching but does not have the resources to fully support co-teaching. As seen from this research, three of the best co-teaching practices are in place at this school, but there are discrepancies between the principal's vision, the teachers' descriptions of what co-teaching looks like, and best co-teaching practices in seven out of ten different areas. The principal is fully aware of the challenges teachers face with their daily work and with the overload of meetings. Nevertheless, if co-teaching is to be truly implemented in this school, both the teachers and the principal will need to improve their co-teaching by trying to implement all ten of the necessary elements for effective co-teaching to the best of their abilities.

APPENDIX A

How Is Your Co-Teaching Going?
*(Confidential Questionnaire about
Co-Teaching ESL during Reader's Workshop)*

1. What is your definition of co-teaching?

2. How long have you been co-teaching?

3. How much time <u>per day</u> do you co-teach?

4. Has your co-teaching experience been successful for you?
   <u>Previously</u>   <u>This year</u>
   □ Yes   □ Yes
   □ Somewhat   □ Somewhat
   □ No   □ No

Please explain:

5. Does school administration support co-teaching model? In what way?

6. Why do you co-teach?

7. If co-teaching were not a requirement at this school, would you choose to co-teach?
   □ Yes
   □ Maybe
   □ No

8. How were you matched with your co-teacher?

9. Did you participate in any training to prepare you to co-teach?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   If yes, were you there with your co-teacher? □ Yes   □ No
   How long was it?
   What was it about?

10. Do you have common planning time with your co-teacher during the day?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   Please explain

11. How much time do you spend co-planning with your co-teacher <u>per week</u>?

12. Did you have any planning time with your co-teacher before the start of the school year?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   If yes, please explain

13. What subject matter do you co-teach?

14. Do you discuss any other content areas with your co-teacher?
If yes, what content area is it?

15. Please describe what co-teaching looks like in your classroom.

16. Does it look like this every day?
   □ Yes
   □ No
If no, how does it change?

17. How do students know that both teachers are teachers in your classroom?

18. Do you share classroom resources (paper, pencils, etc.) with your co-teacher in your classroom? If yes, please explain.

19. How do you establish common expectations in the classroom with your co-teacher?

20. How do you share accountability for student achievement outcomes with your co-teacher?

21. What (if anything) have you learned from your co-teacher?

22. What is going well in your co-teaching?

23. What would you like to change in your co-teaching?

24. Do you see any benefits for teachers in co-teaching? Why or why not?

25. Do you see any benefits for students in co-teaching? Why or why not?

26. Name three qualities that you think are most important in a co-teacher.

1.
2.
3.

27. What suggestions do you have for improving current co-teaching practices at our school?

28. I am:
   □ a classroom teacher
   □ an ESL teacher

29. How many years have you been a teacher?
   □ 1-3 years
   □ 4-10 years
   □ 11-15 years
   □ More than 15 years

Today's date _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your input is greatly appreciated!

Please return the completed questionnaire in the attached envelope to the mailbox of Daria Hendrickson.

APPENDIX B

Teacher Interview Questions

1. How long have you been co-teaching with your current co-teacher?

2. What is co-teaching to you? (What does it mean to you?)

3. What elements do you think are essential for implementing a successful co-teaching model? (Do you think there is something that should be in place? Should co-teachers share resources? Have common expectations? How should they share accountability for outcomes?)

4. How much professional development have you received on co-teaching? (Have you received any? Did you get it with your co-teacher? How much professional development do you think there should be? Do you want more professional development?)

5. How was your co-teaching relationship formed? (How did it develop? Do you think that you have the trust developed with your co-teachers? How long will/did it take to develop the trust between you and your co-teacher?)

6. What qualities do you think are most important in a co-teacher? (Why do you think they are important? Do you notice them in your co-teacher?)

7. How much time did you spend with your co-teacher planning together before the school year began? (After the school year began?)

8. How do you plan your lessons? Is there a scheduled time when you do this together? (Where do you meet? Who initiates the meetings to plan together? How much time do you actually spend co-planning?)

9. How much time do you co-teach together? (How long are you in each classroom with one co-teacher?)

10. In what ways do you structure that time? What kinds of activities happen during that time? (What does it look like? Does it look like this every day? Do your groups change? Do you work with all students in the class?)

11. What are the challenges that you have in your co-teaching experience?

12. Has co-teaching affected you as an educator? In what way? (Has it changed you in any way? Have you learned anything?)

13. How would you describe your co-teaching experience? (Are you enjoying it? Has it been successful? How did you feel about it when you just started co-teaching? Has your attitude towards co-teaching changed since you first started implementing it? If you were asked if you wanted to do it, would you choose/continue to do it?)

14. What recommendations could you give about how to improve the co-teaching practices in this school? What would you like to see changed? (What should be the next steps in improving co-teaching at this school?)

APPENDIX C

Principal Interview Questions

1. What is the purpose of implementing co-teaching at this school? (Your vision?)

2. How long has co-teaching been implemented at this school?

3. What is your definition of co-teaching? (What does it mean to you?)

4. What elements do you think are essential for implementing a successful co-teaching model? (Do you think there is something that should be in place? Should co-teachers share resources? Have common expectations? How should they share accountability for outcomes?)

5. How much professional development is necessary to become effective co-teachers? (Do you think co-teaching pairs should receive professional development together? Do you think current co-teachers have received enough professional development already?)

6. What does it take to form a positive co-teaching relationship? (How long does it take for a co-teaching relationship to develop? How long does it take to develop the trust in co-teachers?)

7. What qualities do you think are most important in a co-teacher? (Why do you think these qualities are important? Have you noticed these qualities in any of co-teachers who are currently implementing co-teaching? How are co-teaching partners matched?)

8. How much time should co-teachers plan together before the beginning of the school year? (After the school year started?)

9. How should co-teachers plan their lessons? (Should there be a scheduled time when co-teachers plan together? Where should they meet? Who should initiate the meetings to plan together?)

10. How much time should teachers co-teach per day?

11. What kinds of activities should happen during that time? (What should it look like?)

12. In your opinion, what are the challenges that co-teaching experience brings?

13. Can co-teaching affect educators in a positive way? (How? How can it change educators?)

14. How would you describe co-teaching experiences that are currently happening at this school? (Are teachers enjoying it? Has co-teaching been successful? Has it improved student achievement? Has the teachers' attitude towards co-teaching changed since they first started implementing it?)

15. What has gone really well in regard to co-teaching practices at this school?

16. How do you think we can improve co-teaching practices in this school? (What should be the next steps? What kind of support should there be for co-teachers?)

17. Should there be a minimal set of common co-teaching standards (guidelines/practices) that all co-teachers should be required to follow?

18. How will you monitor the co-teaching model's effectiveness?

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