

Teaching English as a collaborative effort between the English Teacher and the Classroom Teacher

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Abstract

Mexico has been working with English in kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools since 2009, when the National English Program in Basic Education (2011). English teaching in elementary schools used to be the responsibility of a specialist in the language, who was independent of the Classroom Teacher. However, this separation can limit the linguistic opportunities and reduce the potential for learning.

This study explores English Language teaching as a collaborative process developed through the joint participation between the English Teacher and the Classroom Teacher, who share the same space and time. This work analyses how teachers negotiate roles, responsibilities, and pedagogical authority during the class. Elementary English teachers working in the State of Mexico were invited to participate. Focus groups were conducted virtually, and interviews were carried out via Microsoft Teams to know the challenges they face and how they are addressing them in their teaching practice.

This analysis focuses on how professional roles are constructed through the discourse and teaching practice and how collaborative work influences pedagogical decision-making. Findings suggest that integrating co-teaching between both teachers changes the learning environment and could not only boost children's learning, but also the teaching practice of both teachers. In addition, collaborative co-teaching supports contextualized learning and promotes shared responsibility for students' learning. Nevertheless, the study identifies tensions related to institutional structures, time constraints, and implicit hierarchies between English teachers and the classroom teachers

This paper contributes to current discussions on co-teaching and collaborative learning by proposing a relational understanding of English language instruction, emphasizing collaboration as a key for innovation in English language teaching and teaching practice.

Keywords: English Teaching, Co-Teaching, Collaborative Learning, Roles, Elementary English Teachers, Classroom Teachers