

8-2019

A Phenomenological Study of Co-Teaching's Collaborative Decision Making Process in Taiwanese Elementary School

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**A Phenomenological Study of Co-Teaching's Collaborative Decision Making Process in
Taiwanese Elementary School**

by

Aaron Beatty

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in English: Teaching English as a Second Language

August, 2019

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Abstract

Considering the prevalence of the co-teaching model in Taiwan, there is little research describing the partnership's decision-making process. This study uses the phenomenological methodology to better understand their lived experience making choices as a team. This project proposes the research question: How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom? Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two co-teaching partnerships in Taiwan English education elementary classroom. In this project, the five themes described are shared responsibility, team planning or lack thereof it, dynamic and expectation of roles, beliefs about classroom management and education, differences of belief and background, and unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. Using the theoretical framework of Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) particularly Language Teacher Identity, and Wegner, (1998) *Dimensions of practice as the properties of the community* allows for an understanding of the co-teaching decision making process for members in Taiwan elementary school. Analyzing the co-teachers' decision making in terms of co-teacher identity conflict, discourse socialization and negotiation provides necessary insight. Recommendations involve research for pre-service teachers involving Language Teacher Identity, but specifically with the growing numbers of foreign teachers arriving to Taiwan. The foreign teachers that are coming to teach in Taiwan need available information, and resources pertaining to discourse socialization, and agency in teacher identity. Further research is needed in regards to Language Teacher Identity conflict, agency, and negotiation, as it is an under-researched field for co-teachers to better understand and communicate about these issues. Additionally local education bureaus need to be more effective in dealing with inappropriate designations for foreign teachers in Taiwan with the local private school franchises.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Backdrop of education reform. In September 2000, the Taiwan Ministry of Education initiated reforms that included an English language-in-education policy. This implemented compulsory primary English Education for students as young as grade five nationally in Taiwan (Chen 2013; Tsao 2008). Classes were instituted to be for 90 minutes weekly during the two 20-week-per-semester annual school year. Initially in 2002, they were then meant to be started in the third grade. However, some cities and education bureaus as early 2002, and 2003 were designating their English programs to begin in grade one (Su, 2006). The Taiwan education landscape was inundated with influences from parental and societal belief typified as, 'earlier is better', and that native English teachers were better able to teach students to speak beautifully, and learn English more effectively than compared to a local English school teachers (Price, 2014). Also, there were many different influences and agendas from the governmental and bureaucratic push for competitiveness and internationalization for schools. This is despite the fact that most constituencies lacked proper funding, effective teachers and training, and logistical competence to meet the overall standards of the Ministry of Education (MOE), and local conventionality. Additionally, private schools and cram schools flourished. These private institutions and the public schools were often competing with one another. Price (2014) states, "parents were forced into a competitive situation, whereby children with a head start on ELE were perceived to gain an important competitive advantage later" (p. 582). There were multitudes of private schools that employed native English speaking teachers (NETs) for primary students, even as early as kindergarten and pre-school, though it was illegal for them to do so. Furthermore, there were top-down pressures of internationalization and competition and bottom-

up pressures from societal and parental beliefs attempting to garner what was best for their children in the advancing modernized contemporary society. Seemingly from one moment to the next the educational context and setting was changing and making alterations. Subsequently Chen (2013) concludes, “The political, sociocultural and economic context of Taiwan combined with different societal forces resulted in the hasty implementation of English language education at the primary level, and consequently caused profound impacts on the education system and many problems needed to be solved” (p. 162).

Perhaps these reflexive characteristics in Taiwan's educational context are indicatively implicit in humanity, education in general, and of course the co-teaching partnership. Phenomenology as qualitative research and philosophical inquiry intends to describe the phenomenon with rich detail. It maintains the aim of describing the ‘essences’ of a given phenomenon to discern meaning for the reader and the larger education community (van Manen, 1990). The kaleidoscope of subjective meanings, perspective, projecting, reflecting, and often speculating nature of our interactions are represented in the three fundamental elements of this paper in which I hope to create descriptions for the source of the research problem, and perhaps the subject of the research. This is represented in the discourse of the co-teachers, classroom practice, and larger elements outside of their purview. My approach intends to provide a descriptive understanding, of the inter-play of top-down or bottom up pressures, as they may manifest in the co-teaching decision making process. This project is meant to facilitate personal connection to the knowledge of teacher collaboration and its decision making process relative to the reader's intrinsic proximity, and to shed light on the importance of a smaller given topic, or to the essence and entirety of the experience itself. It is meant to give new insight, to a very important and interesting topic.

Statement of the Problem

The impacts of Taiwan's language policy and broad utilization of teacher collaboration polemically engages policy makers, educators, and a vast cross-section of society (Chen, 2013; Nunan, 2003; Price, 2014; Su, 2006; Wu, 2009). It has been challenging in Taiwan to find enough qualified teachers that meet the needs of the national policy and standards. Additionally troublesome for education boards is to get schools to comply with current policies. Further, many researchers on the topic of team-teaching have elaborated and described the functions of the variance of teacher collaboration models and their importance in different education contexts (Bell & Baecher, 2012; Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010; Liu, 2008). Also, there have been calls to research that have prompted comparative studies as in (Carless & Walk, 2006; Luo, 2010). Which reasonably describe, analyze and potentially offer insight into the co-teaching process in Asia. However, it is usually considered in the framework of a governmental program like JET in Japan, or EPIK in Korea, and they often do not appeal to the context of the broader realities of educational practices and situations across a given country. The context of these programs are quite typically very affluent, have different school resources, and a higher level of teacher professionalism, which in different localities are working concordantly to achieve their goals. Furthermore, there is a fair amount of research describing collaboration effectiveness, often asserting co-planning and other particularities of successful teaching collaborations (Barahona, 2017; Davison, 2006; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2015; Park, 2014). These studies are providing descriptions of teacher collaborations as this current research project. Again, they are clearly indicating co-planning, excellent professionalism, pedagogy, experience, and attitude as imperative factors for global success. However, they may not be emblematic representations of many or even most of the co-teaching contexts found across the whole of

Taiwan. The problem is that most co-teachers in Taiwan do not have a shared repertoire in their respective education backgrounds. This lack of shared repertoire, along with a lack of LET instructional participation, and often a lack of commitment, may produce dissonance in the partnership. Furthermore, cultural differences can often obscure intention and belief. Co-teachers in many cases are not prepared to negotiate in the necessary ways to maintain a successful partnership. The partnership often lacks understanding, engagement, and relevant training. This leads to breakdowns in trust and can be connected easily to learning outcomes. These ideas are the gap in the literature that needs to be addressed with this research project. This essay intends to describe essential components of teacher collaboration realities, positive and negative, more prevalent in Taiwan co-teaching contexts. In turn, this readership will allow educators insight and knowledge about Language Teacher Identity, and discourse socialization. These concepts offer valuable insight into teacher training, teacher practice, professionalism, and most importantly the learning outcomes of students in Taiwan and beyond. If school administrations and prospective teachers were more aware and committed to addressing conflicts of Language Teacher Identity the school experience of all community members would be much more meaningful and successful personally and academically. Additionally, it would actively require schools to reify school goals, set parameters for appropriate classroom instruction, and enlighten curriculum objectives.

Observations from life in Taiwan. My personal phenomenological interest in the project is a curiosity about the nature of partner decision making. I want to better understand why some of the unexpected experiences and outcomes are occurring. There are a myriad of different reasons to consider, and instead of constantly trying to figure them out, sometimes it is best and least confusing to simply acknowledge what they may appear to an observer to be. I

have limited access to Chinese and many cultural concepts of Taiwan. Here, I want to make an analogy and description of my understanding of a new place. When I first, arrived to Taiwan I had endless questions running in your head. I have experienced this in other countries but nothing has compared to Taiwan because it is so greatly different relative to my Midwestern, North American background and because I have lived here for six years. As I asked myself so many questions compared to the far lesser amount of answers that I was receiving, it felt as if I became more acquainted with being unfamiliar with definitive answers and reasons to the surrounding environment that I was living in. I have found this to be sometimes frustrating. However, it is rather interesting. As gradually over-time I came to understand general functions of the outside world simply from observing and not explicitly rationalizing or questioning. As I consider life in Taiwan with my wife, and sharing similar feelings about a recognized 'repose' in not knowing many reasons and answers to our surrounding environment, using my previous experience and background has been something that I reserve and potentially limit. Halting judgment begins to consciously become part of the conversation process, these issues of framing and redolent meta-cognizance via the suspension of conclusive analytical rhetoric. It is a very different yet interesting way to live in society when you are illiterate and non-proficient in the primary language. The cues and interaction that you pick up on are often decidedly different than from your previous experience. Furthermore, when you encounter a moment of frustration, and you express anger about a certain issue, often times it is discovered that it is your own deficiency or misunderstanding that promoted the dubious issue. It begins to make your sensibilities much more flexible. Also, it makes you more likely to be inclined to compromise; even when there are certain beliefs or systems you may be doubtful of, or are not particularly comfortable with. One adapts to reach positive outcomes in varied settings. I have become aware of the fact that

sometimes I consciously am deciding and engaging in thought that is more analytical, and other times I am strictly pondering and attempting to withdraw judgment for that possibility that I would be arriving at an incorrect assumption. Undoubtedly, I am a person who is judgmental, and I am a bit skeptical that analytical judgment may be reserved or suspended over a long descriptive process. I reckon analyzing and judgment are part of the typical cognitive process of description. However, I am quite comfortable and interested in the phenomenological aspect and process of *epoche* as describe and outlined by Moustakas, (1994). I believe that I can accomplish this fairly and effectively, and am potentially well-suited for this kind of inquiry and meditative thought to produce an efficacious result.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe the co-teaching partnership's decision-making process respective to co-teachers in Taiwanese elementary school. The “phenomenological approach involves a return to experience,” where importance is given to the value of describing over interpretation, yielding “the essences of the experience,” in turn to inform practice (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). At this stage in the research, the partnership's decision making process will be described and characterized through the confluence of three conceptual categories which are as follow, the co-teachers themselves, classroom practice and discourse, and the larger array of external aspects which I refer to here as instrumental factors. The last category includes but is not limited to school administration, student's parents, and surprise changes to schedule and or curriculum. These three categories suggest an outline or nexus to consider the phenomenon of the decision making process. This study earnestly intends to describe the common individual experiences of each interviewed co-teacher involved in the decision making process of a classroom and to then see what themes and experiences

characterize the experience and phenomenon of teachers making choices together. In turn, to further consider which invariant themes are essential to said phenomenon. The purpose is not to reinvent the wheel and discover whole new theories of teacher collaboration, but it is an effort of description and curious exploration. It hopes to potentially raise consciousness and call attention to different aspects of teacher collaboration not discernible in research ideas topics like ideal collaboration, personality difficulties, comparative and policy initiatives common to the research of teacher collaboration in an EFL context.

Research Questions

This research project is guided by one central question and two supporting questions:

1. How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom?
2. What causes a teacher to provide support to their co-teacher and interpose on their practice and or pedagogy?
3. How does it affect the outcome for the class?

Ontological assumption. The ontology I most often consider is a global relativism. It situates ideas relative in time and space, thirdly and concursively with societal convention and framework. It is however convenient to consider causal and effectual nature of life's culture on Earth. Ideas such as reality being inclusive to our own consciousness or its own independent reality are vastly unanswerable questions. It does not need an answer, only more consideration, if one is so inclined. My feelings in life about the questions of being are largely not radical, or faithful, though are not entirely devoid of the conceptually metaphysical. Again, in my experience, it is unanswerable, and simply justifies consideration. My approach for this project will be descriptive and holistic. Furthermore, it will be a social constructivist approach in terms of meaning reified in the interaction of different community members, actively shaping,

establishing, and advancing a constitutive idea in different conceptual frameworks as the process of knowledge. According to Wenger (1998), "the negotiation of meaning involves the interaction of two constituent processes, which I call *participation and reification*" (p. 52). This idea is perfectly encapsulated in the different moments of the co-teaching decision making process. It is clearly a negotiation of meaning within community members, with a common goal, as decisions are formed by various elements reifying gradations, further ambiguous potentialities, indeterminate subjectivity, expedient analysis, incalculable perceptions, re-explanations, and progressing judgments. How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom? "The negotiated meaning is at once historical and dynamic, contextual and unique" Wenger (1998); further he concludes: "Meaning exists neither in us, nor in the world, but in the dynamic relation of living in the world" (p. 54).

Epistemological assumption. Whether one believes that the object observed in their reality is dependent on their consciousness or in the observed object's elemental characteristics and meaning; it is assumed by this project that these are intrinsically woven into the fabric understanding, and would have no bearing on my choice of a social constructivist epistemological approach. According to Foley (1987), subjectivity may be the rationality of a belief discerned upon its intellectual plausibility further from a deliberate contemplation. Truth is often axiomatic in nature, sharing different meanings for different observers, through the passage of time and experience. However, it is not necessary to peruse circular ruins or labyrinths of solitude to let the data speak for itself. As Cresswell (2007) states, the essay will allow the data to be the star of the show. The descriptions that participants reveal may be entirely subjective and esoteric, or potentially and invariantly essential to the description of the co-teaching decision making process. For all intents and purposes of this research Rorty (1979), allows for a

community and or its experts to advance subjective meaning which fits into the larger frameworks of norm and belief. The analysis on the surface of the work will be opaque. Meaning ideally will be interpreted by the reader, and their beliefs of TESOL, relative to their beliefs about communal understanding.

Methodological assumptions. The basic approach to this project will be hermeneutical phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen 1990). It will be reasonably assumed that researcher and participants are to remain aimed at describing and recording their lived experience without predisposition of judgment. In the interviewing of the participants the research and interaction conducted by the researcher will be with an emic approach (Gass & Mackey, 2007). Additionally, it is assumed that participants will answer questions honestly, have confidence in research confidentiality, anonymity, and fair and ethical behaviour. Additionally, one goal of the elicitation process will be the induction of the Evocative State (Hogan, Hinrichs, & Hornecker, 2016, p. 4). This is a process where the participants are encouraged to visualize and speak as if they are in the actual moment, as they describe their feelings at the moments of a given memory.

Limitations

Some researchers suggest that the observer participation of the researcher is confounding to the results and that the bracketing of the researchers background cannot effectively exclude personal influence interpreting the basis of the resulting description. My general approach is not categorically discriminating against objective contemplation and observation, nor does it abnegate realism or indirect knowledge. The approach idealistically endeavors for the interpretation of the data to largely occur through the readership of the document itself. One

advantage that I will have in the data collection process is that I am already an insider in the co-teacher community, though participants may be allocated without prior casual relationship.

The project will work to strengthen and establish reliability through the adherence to appropriate elicitation process which does not interfere with the experiential documentation of the participant. There will be interaction and inevitable unavoidable contextual cues, arising through non-verbal and verbal communication. However, there will be clear acknowledgment of an inquiry, of a generic naturalistic interview proceeding, as is the stated goal to the participants themselves (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The validity and trustworthiness of the data should be affirmed by positioning the data as the focus of the general discourse of the project, and furthermore through the continued contemplation of the research process limitations of hermeneutical phenomenology.

Summary

The impacts of Taiwan's educational reform are wide ranging in scope. However it is generally agreed that the necessity to modernize and make education more equitable for all students experienced many confounding results as the initial education reforms weren't reportedly founded in research based planning, lacked logistics, and funding (Chen, 2013; Price, 2014). The policy implementation is also reflective of Taiwan's requirements of internationalization, competitiveness, and societal pressures to institute English learning for young primary school students as young as possible and also ideally with a native English speaking teacher (NETs), as compared to local English teachers (LETs), as they will be referred to for the extent of this essay. This is often typified as top down and bottom up pressures. It is my assertion this is the major source for the research problem of this research project. Therefore, the literature review indicates which teacher collaboration research topics that are often more

popular and elaborated such as collaboration models, teacher challenges, international comparative studies, and even descriptive research projects focusing on ideal effectiveness and co-planning. Moreover, the phenomenological methodology then addresses the need to highlight the co-teaching decision making process to show essential realities and systematization of commonplace practice in the context of Taiwan primary school. This is a clear descriptive effort to provide potential insight into the significance of the co-teaching partnership, typical practice, and hopefully to promote thought and development. The results sections forms data into thematic categories, shared responsibility, team planning or lack thereof it, dynamic and expectation of roles, beliefs about classroom management and education, differences of belief and background, and unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. These categories provide an outline of how to describe how co-teachers experience, their job positions, and the processes of the co-teaching decision making process, and attempts to describe the wholeness of the experience.

In Chapter 4 the results are presented following the form of set-up, quotation, and commentary to further context and participant description. In Chapter 5, the discussion section, the results are considered in reference to the research questions determining the demand for increase of resources and awareness for co-teachers in order to negotiate different discourse socializations, allowing for more and better team collaboration.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the co-teaching partnership and its decision making process as it pertains to teachers in Taiwan. Currently, there are many current models of teacher collaboration being practiced in some form in most education disciplines like Special Education, ESL, teacher training programs, and international school education initiatives (Bell & Baecher, 2012; Friend et al., 2010; Liu, 2008). Although collaborative methodology, discourse, and practice is quite varied, much of the research in turn is categorized in terms of collaboration effectiveness (Carless & Walk, 2006; Davison, 2006; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2015), teacher beliefs Su (2006), and international comparative studies (Lee & Cho, 2015; Luo, 2010; Wang & Lin, 2013). The effort of this study focuses entirely within the framework of the co-teaching partnership as encountered in Taiwanese primary school.

The rationale for co-teaching. Each individual has skills, and experience to bring to the table to enrich our daily lives. It is a teacher's professional virtues rather than language background that should be the evaluating principle of their effectiveness (Medgyes, 1992, p. 347). Appropriately, both teaching backgrounds have a lot to offer TESOL learners. NETs are experts of conventional language use sometimes using playfulness and humor in practice. Additionally, NETs often impress upon the partner LETs an improvement of English proficiency (Luo, 2010). Also, Luo, (2010) states that NETs model accurate English usage, culture, and students generally report motivation to learn from NETs. According to Storey et al. (2001) over a 2-year period, NET classes in low ability schools obtained higher listening scores than students taught by local English teachers (p. 49). Success in co-teaching paradigms conceivably is both a balance of influence and representation. According

to Medgyes (1992), LETs are imitable for ELE learners, and teach learner strategies effectively and of course anticipate language difficulties better (p. 346). The more proficient they are, the more efficient they can train their students, and model practice and strategy.

Capacities of NETs and LETs

As defined by Friend et al. (2010), the co-teaching partnerships in Taiwan most often resemble the teacher collaboration model of *one teach, one assist* (p, 12). This model of one teach and one assist is to indicate that the native English teacher (NET) is teaching the morning classroom hours, with fewer class periods in the afternoon. The NET is generally responsible for the planning of the class, at least in terms of daily lesson planning. Additionally, in terms of duties of the NETs, a fair amount of time was delegated for written correction and approval of students' daily work. Subsequently, the teaching responsibilities of some local English teachers (LETs) are quite limited in the context of Taiwan primary school and kindergarten. Further, some LETs have a much more limited amount of instructional participation in the classroom. LETs are often in charge of different administrative duties in addition to teaching. LETS are most likely to maintain a communication book, which is a logbook facilitating communication between the students' parents, the co-teachers, and of course ultimately the school institution. According to Cook (2008), "In co-teaching, the exact contribution that each person makes may vary, but together the educators create a learning situation that cannot be produced by a solo teacher (p. 9).

Prevalence of Taiwan's Co-teaching Model

Places such as Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong have been investing in and building, their compulsory English school programs for about the last twenty years. Su (2006) states "In Taiwan's case, due to the fact that English plays an important role in international business, communication, technology, education and travel, the government published a series of language policies and school curricula regarding English learning (p. 266). It is indeed difficult to imagine English education in Taiwan without the influence and potential resourcefulness of NETs developing communicative competence activities and input. The need for NETs in Taiwan society and government is clearly maintained and rationalized by the support of compulsory English, and the co-teaching model as the best way to succeed in today's global and political economic systems. According to Price (2014), "both private corporations, such as English First, and supra-national institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank, view English competence as an important indicator of whether a given country is an attractive place to do transnational business (p. 570)

However, there are detractors and reasonable counter-arguments for NETs to maintain such a high level of determination in the classroom practice and daily routine. As Ke (2014) points out, "homeroom teachers spend much time with students and are the soul of elementary education because the main mission of elementary education is character development"(p. 26). In addition to, and beyond maintaining traditional socio-cultural frameworks more reserved to Taiwanese society, is the idea of equity in learning, and the ability of the education ministry to establish reasonable standards nationwide, in conjunction with a vast array of educators. Accordingly, Bruthiaux (2002) explains "unsubstantiated faith in the supposed benefits of English language education for all may divert precious resources from urgent language education

for development tasks and ultimately benefit mostly the relatively well off at the expense of the poorest (p. 275). Regardless of the fact that Taiwan's literacy rate is very high, English in Taiwan's curriculum will undoubtedly favor certain students and socio-economic groups, and of course particular career trajectories. Additionally Chen (2013) states "the development of primary English education at the expense of other cultures, languages, skills, and qualities of Taiwanese students is highly undesirable (p. 159).

Instrumental Factors

The MOE (2000) issued long term goals for the English for all in Taiwan as follows, instill students with an international perspective, to utilize students' "critical period" in language learning most effectively, and follow the trends of the new era and to fulfill parents' expectations. The ability to meet these goals has been much more difficult than originally anticipated. According to Price (2014) "due to policies and discourses that make ELE a highly valued cultural capital in (and gatekeeper to) education and employment markets, 'English for all' is an imperative, not an opportunity" (p. 571). How do members in a society know what is best for their family's education? Accordingly, what will benefit your child, or their child? For example, are the neoliberal ideals of indigenization and internationalization mutually exclusive? Many liberal thinkers would of course say that it is not, and of course people don't want it to be. However, for some people in the Taiwan education system it simply is not possible to have both, as potentially people move and work in the city to better situate their family for future success. So what are the roles and goals of so many co-teachers in Taiwan? There are so many needs for different settings, schools, students, and teachers which inevitably lead to compromise, further facilitating unexpected compromise. Schools need to meet oversight standards. There are fire drills that malfunction, or repeat continually while the students laugh. The teacher may tirelessly

be reaching to fulfill the curriculum schedule. There are field trips, and rescheduled field trips that perhaps land on a highly anticipated activity for the students. There are always going to be unexpected factors in education. No amount of planning may avoid them. Good teachers can handle it with authority and grace, knowing their curriculum, anticipating, and simply enjoying flexibility in the dynamic discourse of primary school in Taiwan. Different schools, administration or any community member may have clear preferences for the manner in which they want to achieve the completion of their work, or of the communities shared work. Furthermore, it is not always possible for everyone's preferences to be experienced. It is a main responsibility, at the top of the list, which an educator can negotiate reasonably, affably, and professionally. Additionally, whether a parent is very active in their children's education, sometimes active, or never active at all in their child's school education experience, there are unexpected moments that happen because of it. In Yuh Fang Chang's 2008 article entitled, *Parent's attitudes toward the English education policy in Taiwan*, the author surveys Taiwan parents about their children's English education. Sometimes the poll results seem to be in contradiction to each other. However, seemingly these beliefs are tied to certain values that are stacked differently in the pyramidal nature of our beliefs. For example, nearly 80% of Taiwanese parents thought that English classes should be taught in English only. Still, nearly 70% of parents reported that they feel happy about the code-switching phenomenon in their children's language use. It suggests that certain values and frameworks for thinking about two ideas creates a logical dissonance which is a very normal part of everyday life no matter how largely unrecognized it is by people. To say again, nearly eighty percent of parents felt that English class should be taught in English only, when also they favor LETs with good language background over qualified NETs. It is likely a LET will use the first language in the classroom, as educators find it helpful

or necessary. Still, it stands in apparent contrast to the reported belief that they believe the class should be practiced in English. Parents certainly maintain influence with the teachers as we consider the individual needs of the students. Furthermore, certain parents have large amounts of influence that may be exerted towards their child's class and education. Occasionally a parent may influence the teachers for positive and negative outcomes and it certainly allows for meaningful co-teacher negotiations during the decision making process. This suggestion provides yet a possible example of the many influences that may alter a classroom's practice.

Summary

Chapter 2 reviewed the existing research at the nexus of three categories to provide context for the topic of co-teacher decision-making process, involving the co-teachers, the classroom practice, and instrumental factors such as school administration, parents and unexpected events. Firstly, the literature review indicates the generally acknowledged necessity of the *one teach, one assist* model commonly employed in Taiwan. However, the over-reaching goals of the English for all initiative in Taiwan have left many schools and students lacking in logistics and theoretical competency to achieve said goals effectively. The literature review indicates that the existing research covers teacher collaboration research topics that are often more popular and elaborated such as collaboration models, teacher challenges, international comparative studies, and even descriptive research projects focusing on ideal effectiveness and co-planning. It is plain to see that EFL research lacks the breadth of the necessary co-teaching research involving Language Teaching Identity, discourse socialization, and negotiation. Especially, considering how prevalent the co-teaching model is in Taiwan and in Asia in general, and how necessary it is to promote team teaching which engages teachers in collaboration.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants

There will be approximately two co-teaching partnerships that will be analyzed. Therefore, it will be four primary school teachers. They will be teachers from public and or private primary school institutions. There will be a table showing the demographics of the participants. The table will represent name or coded name, grade level of students taught, education background, experience as a teacher, years at current position, self-assigned level of L2 proficiency, marital status and whether married to another nationality, their sex, and age.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Level of Experience	Educational Background	Experience at Current School	Grade Level	Personal Assessment of Second Language Proficiency	Married to Foreigner	Male or Female
LET 1	45	5 years	Master's Degree	5 years	3	low advanced level of English	no	female
NET 1	40	7 years	Teacher's Certificate Master's Degree	3 years	3	low level	no	male
LET 2	28	1 year	Master's Degree	1 year	2	low advanced level	no	female
NET 2	42	18 years	Bachelor's of Communications	2 years	2	low advanced	yes	Female
LET 3	36	13	Bachelor's	10	1	intermediate English	no	female
NET 3	37	3 years	Civil Engineering MBA	2 years	1	minimal	no	Male

Recruitment. I will be using emails to send out an initial quasi survey as a 'feeler' to see if they are interested and qualified candidates. There will be word of mouth and a sampling

method referred to as snowballing (Babbie, 1995; Crabtree & Miller, 1992). Bailey (1996).

Relevant methods for sourcing participants will be documented.

Description of Participants

Instruments. Co-teaching partnerships that are interested will respond to me by email. An additional email will be sent to them to clarify the requirements and to ensure that they are willing to be recorded for their interview. Once, the partnership is chosen they will be sent a list of the open-ended interview question, and a clear written description of the research design, and its goals. This is to allow for more comfortability and trustworthiness in the process, and our working relationship. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in their school or wherever they are accommodating, but the classroom would be ideal. There will be two rounds of interviews that will last specifically for one hour. The interview will be audio recorded. Each participant will sign a consent form and be engaged by the researcher to talk about the goals of the study and the purpose and necessity of remaining non-prejudicial and distanced from our pre-understandings. Additionally, I will be using information visuals for each interview. This will be an open-ended interview section where the interviewee will be provided an opportunity to share their thoughts about the graphic. I will be using figure 1 which is a Venn diagram of the three conceptual categories chosen to represent the co-teaching decision making process. Also, in the second interview they will provide their observations and beliefs about the long-term goals of the English for all national primary school policy MOE (2000) depicted and presented to them.

The interviews will be audio recorded after the participants have signed a consent form, and filled out a demographic questionnaire. All interviews will be recorded between researcher and participants in a face to face meeting. These questions will be used as the basis for the interview, and the interview questions are as follows:

- 1) Tell me about a typical work day working with your co-teacher.
- 2) What do you like about having a co-teacher? And the difficulties?
- 3) What do you wish you would have known about your job when you first started?
- 4) Tell me about the decisions that are made in the classroom.
- 5) Use Figure 1 as a prompt. Describe to me how these different ideas interact with each other in your class.
- 6) Tell me about how you and your partner make decisions. Give examples.
- 7) Use Figure 2 as a prompt. When you look at these national goals, what kinds of decisions do you make as co-teachers that relate to these goals? Generally or specifically. Why or why not?
- 8) Follow up: Do you share a conversation with your partner about it?
- 9) In the last interview you talked about the relationship between category b and category c. Tell me more about it.
- 10) Do you find that you and your partner finish each other sentences equally?
- 11) Tell me about another decision that you made together.
- 12) Follow-up: Do you think that you and your partner feel it ended up good?

After each interview, the researcher will write field notes as a summary of the interview, general comments about the nature and feel of how the interview went, and potential themes to be explored. Following the interview, as early as possible a transcription will be produced which began a process to ascertain themes recorded in the interview.

Research Design

The analysis of this phenomenological research project will follow the process of gathering data particular to the concept of epoche, reduction, imaginative variation, and presenting the emergent descriptions. The epoche process is to remove the researcher and the participants pre-reflection, knowledge, and opinion to maintain openness to the phenomenon the researcher is attempting to describe and to learn more about. It is a process where we learn about the setting in which the experience takes place to gather a description of the experience through lens of the individual their self. After an interview transpires the recording is to be transcribed as soon as possible, as further theoretical and methodological notes are taken during the intermittent process of transcribing. The reduction process begins when all of the data that is to be analyzed is gathered. The interviewing process is hoped to achieve a locality of saturation in reference to the future categories to be induced from the data itself. The themes themselves will be produced and assigned to units of meaning based on the themes that arrive from the data representing experiential reflection avoiding retrospective opinions as best as possibly can be achieved. The themes are to be assigned following a process of horizontality as described by Chenail, Duffy, George, & Wulf (2011). The reduction process will proceed in an immersive effort to achieve a depiction of invariant universal themes. Lastly in the process is in the of synthesis of composite description which integrates the themes and their structures to depict a descriptive and thus interpretive meaning.

Trustworthiness of data. The considered trustworthiness of the research data is the equivalent of validity and reliability of data in a quantitative study. Moreover, Lincoln, and Guba (1985) outline how researchers may still implement the trustworthiness of the data by evaluating credibility in the place of internal validity, transferability in place of objectivity. To confirm

credibility, Moustakas (1994) suggests that the results of the analysis are sent to the participants for a certain approval of the interpretation or depiction of the data through the synthesis. They will be emailed the results to give feedback or corrections to be considered.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

I chose to use the methods of hermeneutical and transcendental phenomenology to describe and therefore provide a framework of interpretation as discerned through the reading of the document. As the interview data is represented, it is my intention to allow for many available frames of reference to be achieved, maybe even by the same reader. It is my feeling that ideas of traditionalism or imperatives of modernity cannot be left unaccompanied in the synergistic dynamics of partner decision making. This is not to say it is always complex, however often simply elusive to a ‘triangulation’ of a given explanation, perhaps at times surpassingly fluid due to the nature of description, and understanding.

The process of transcendental phenomenology, which developed by the philosopher Husserl is responsible for much of the process of interviewing, examining the interview data, phenomenological, and reduction of the data. Moreover, this researcher remains mindful of contemporary research themes, and finally utilizes a composite textural description exploring the invariant themes of the topic (Moustakas, 1994). The process has also involved the three steps of reading, writing, and reflection. The information in this chapter then is to describe the data collected and the experience of making decisions with a co-teacher in Taiwan. There are theme descriptions subsequently in this chapter to help with the understanding of the accounts, and my presentation of the data. Furthermore, and rhetorically, I am not presenting the data to show what is true, or necessarily evidence of particular overall beliefs. It is a measure of particular beliefs of participants at the time of the interview, and may deserve a non-judgmental recognition, as the researcher and participants endeavored through the process of our interview sessions. It has been

my hope that interpreting the data in terms of both partners in the same set of data would have new potential and informative insights.

The idea of essential themes has been central to the project as well (van Manen, 1990). Basically, if the experience could be applied to a teaching experience of the same grade level without a co-teacher, then the data would be excluded. This leaves much of the process an equivalent to transcendental phenomenology effectively, however this method of phenomenology does not exclude data that wasn't represented by the whole body of participants. In this regard it is similar to a case study, using phenomenological methods of data interpretation and presentation. There are six categories of themes to be identified and presented named as: shared responsibility, planning or lack therein of it, dynamic and expectation of roles, beliefs about classroom management and education, differences of belief and background, and unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. Further description will be presented with the beginning of each theme.

Themes

The following sections were written to represent the data in terms of the participants relating to their experience and describing their experiences as an elementary school teacher with a co-teacher almost exclusively following a model of *one teach and one assist*.

The first theme, shared responsibility presents data of the camaraderie and general feeling of necessity of how the sum of two teachers is greater than ability of one teacher alone. The second theme, planning, demonstrates its general acceptance of importance and the lack of planning typically practiced. The third theme, dynamic and expectation of roles, explores the general feelings of what the teacher roles are, and some of the interaction involved. The fourth theme, beliefs about classroom management and education, expresses observations and beliefs

about common practice in classroom management and the dynamics of interaction. The fifth theme, differences of belief and background, demonstrates further ideas of pedagogy, professionalism, and backgrounds. Finally, unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment, reports on behaviors and incidents potentially outside of typical experience, and reported feelings regarding their partnership and or role as a co-teacher.

Shared responsibility. The first theme establishes the general belief and need in the international programs of private elementary schools in Taiwan to maintain a co-teaching model. The LETs certainly provide a role of administrative and school representation for the students, parents, and administration. It is often referred to as the bridge between the NETs and the parents of the children who attend the school. This obviously is important in terms of the possible language inability of a given NET. Additionally, people in Taiwan may feel that NETs are too direct in communicating to the above-mentioned constituents. Finally, the participants unanimously reported their appreciation of the co-teacher and their support when asked what they like about having a co-teacher.

I like that there is someone to back me up. Because we are teaching in a second language and there are sometimes misunderstandings, or misinterpreted things. And I like that the co-teacher is sometimes there to say, no, no, no. That is not how it happened. I was there and this is how it happened. (NET 2)

Every time I think about it, it is the shared responsibility that I like about it. We work long hours, like eight thirty to almost five o'clock. Having a co-teacher you share responsibility. I don't have to be in that classroom, like all of the time. (LET1)

The co-teaching partnership undoubtedly shares a wide-ranging area of responsibility. The responsibility shared is generally considered by NETs, and all of the participants in this project, that without the support of one's LET, that the NETs position is insecure. It is a necessity for a harmonious success and trajectory for the class, and their future with the school.

All of the partnerships reported about the need to touch base with each other, and that this helped to maintain the relationship. Often this was done by asking if there were any scheduling changes, or any unexpected feedback that they should know about on a routine basis. Also, one partnership was particular in their need to help each other cope with emotions involved in class management. This need to show they helped each other cope was expressed to show the partnerships general level of care and concern for each other, and not indicating a necessity of an immediate regulation:

I am glad that we can face a problem together like this. It is not about the kids. It's about solving each other's frustrations sometimes. She helps me to deal with my emotions as well. When she says to me, "You need to rest, or you need to go for a walk." (NET 2)

One LET shared an interesting observation about maintaining the relationship and showing how even small amounts of interest and enthusiasm together with the NET and their class can encourage positive attitude that can be shared by all of the class members. Take for example this idea of enhancing the classroom 'vibe' by simple initiations of interaction and involvement, potentially non-verbal:

...the teacher will kind of think that as the second teacher starts to take part and get involved into the classroom vibe. My co-teacher would feel kind of like that I am giving him some positive feedback. When you are interacting with the whole class, when they are playing a game and start to give some interesting comments, showing some interest in their activities right now. Or when the interaction between the teacher and a student is kind of funny and you kind of also laugh at that. Like you are still paying attention to whatever is happening in the classroom instead of burying your mind into whatever you are doing at the moment. (LET 1)

This data suggests how not everything of course is suggested through the process of explicit and spoken interaction. So much of the experience of daily interaction was often described by the lack of speaking to great lengths. Decisions are sometimes made through glances and eye rolls, and very often through the general consistency and routine of the class,

and of course the routines of the partnership's interactions. All of the participants at some point in the interview process spoke to some length about how little they speak to each other as they become caught up in their busy work day, this comment about how little they speak to each other was specifically not referring in some retrospective evaluation of being good or bad.

Like any partnership there is a need to maintain and effectively understand each other. This perceived need is not always that they agree or share similar procedures of how to deal with inconsistencies that occur. It is important for the successful partnerships to show a level of understanding for aspects of their partner that they may not agree with, which is to say an unconditional acknowledgement of their feelings:

We just talk and I try to relate to her, and we try to understand each other's position so she won't put me into trouble. She trusts me and I am very thankful for that. (LET 2)

This comment illustrates that even when there is a potential incident of disagreement, there is a common need to take steps to understand, and to show a level of reassurance. It is reported by all of the participants that all problems of the partnership must be recovered by the partnership itself, and does not need to be introduced to the administration. At which point it is generally considered a rebuke of your ability and professionalism to resolve the issue as a team.

Team planning or lack thereof it. There is not a lot of team planning that occurs as it relates to the curriculum of the partnerships' classes. There were a couple of reports about the partnership interjecting with each other to modify subject material to meet the needs of the students in terms of vocabulary acquisition, or fluency practice. However, the curriculum is entirely planned by the NET, at least in the data provided by the participants of this project. There is a general lack of awareness to the commonly revered methods and best practice of team planning established by research (Barahona, 2017; Davison, 2006; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2015;

Park, 2014). Furthermore, there is a lack of awareness and acknowledgement by the administrations of the teachers' schools to provide time for such planning, or they do not believe pre-semester planning provides successful outcomes. Here is a typical response for how much time or to what extent the teachers planned together before the start of the semester:

We are sitting a half a meter apart from each other but we are both head down typing, printing, running, getting ready. So I don't get too much time to talk to them. (NET 2)

There is planning that occurs due to scheduling and making sure that the communications book is recorded correctly. Of course there are conversations about when and how they are going to turn in their necessary work to the administration. The general attitude of the planning is that the LET is the administrative side and the NET is the acting teacher. The NET will plan the class discourse unless there is a factor that intervenes outside of the NET's purview.

Considering team planning, it is surprising how not very much information is exchanged explicitly between the teachers about pedagogical beliefs, or deliberations and expansions of procedure between teachers when they first start working with each other, as all of the participants reported a minimum or just a total lack of preparatory conversation before a new semester. It is sometimes due to the LET's lack of English comprehension, confidence, and general feeling about communicating with their co-teacher. Sometimes it is because the NET assumes an authoritative role in the partnership and does not expect to share a lot in the decision making process. These co-teacher roles are not standard or intended to be. They are most often loosely defined by seniority, reputation of the teacher, and work experience. Also the perception of the roles appears to change over time as well. Moreover, in this next example we see where a NET took the opportunity to talk about their role expectations for the coming semester:

So when the next teacher tried to explain the procedure with me, he wanted me to get involved with the decision making. I was a little bit surprised. Because my thought was whatever you do I will just follow along. My American co-teacher told me that, "I think all of the ESL teachers are very professional and I respect your profession. So I want you to tell me what you think and how you want me to do things too. Let's work together and make the class work." That's at first. I was very surprised that he told me all of that. (LET1)

The conversation made an impression on her, and appeared to have encouraged a curiosity and trust with her co-teacher. Indeed, the lack of team planning and awareness of it was surprising. The lack of planning may partly be due to the pedagogical differences of the teacher involved, their perception of the role, and concern that they would effectively engage their partner. Also, the lack of planning is simply evidence that there are other tasks to be finished, and suggests a lack of confidence in efficacy of team planning.

From the perspective of the NET, the lack of planning may be from notions that they will not be understood, or that there may be differences of axiomatic beliefs. The hesitation likely from both partners may be that they just do not see a necessity to confer with each other before the semester. Also, many of the NETs lack graduate school, teacher certification, experience or professional development. Some teachers also just seemed more naturally inclined to collaboration and team planning for whatever reasons or correlations.

Addressing the LETs and team planning, the lack of awareness or desire as it may be, may simply derive from the ideas they are certain they do not share with the NET. However similarly, the LETs seem to be unaware of the best practices of team planning. In the interview data the LETs either had nothing to really comment on about pre-semester planning conversations, describing how they are too busy and lacked time, or surprised by a NET's desire to initiate the planning conversation. For whatever reasons, the planning may be avoided by both

partners, by the participants in this project, and likely by the majority of co-teachers in private elementary schools in Taichung.

Dynamic and expectation of roles and interactions. Participants in this project did not share the same roles and assumed authority dynamics regardless of gender, nationality, or any of the demographic categories of the participants. There may be some generalizations about role responsibility to be made between NETs and LETs but it would be exceedingly difficult to generalize the authority dynamics of different partnerships considering the demographics of co-teaching as a whole. The expectations of the different roles may also change over time. In this next example we do find a reported definition of the two roles as they typically constitute their perceived or legitimate authority in terms of the job position:

Sometimes I think NETs think that the LETs are more important, but for LETs we think the NETs are more important, because NETs teach more and the kids are influenced by them. In our classroom my NET has more authority because she is stricter and stronger, but I think for many classes the LETs are more authoritative, because they communicate with kids parents directly. My NET told me once that you are in a very interesting position, because when you tell something good about me they will believe it. If you tell someone something bad about me, they will believe it. Luckily, I am a good person. (LET 2)

This belief about role importance, may be the participant's beliefs as reported in the comment, are more rhetorical in nature than as descriptive in general terms. However, the statement does a remarkably good job describing the priority of the individual teacher respective to and in conjunction to the responsibility of a successful partnership, the necessity of supporting each other. Another participant when asked about by role responsibility, one teacher rebounded with the pseudo mantra, "Happy students, happy parents, happy parents, happy school." The roles and the beliefs of their inherent authority is cohesive and continuous as long as there are

not any contentious objections by teachers, student, parents, and administration, about classroom discourse or the reflected unity of the partnership.

Sometimes an explanation is necessary to the NET for an issue that they do not anticipate. The LET is often concerned about how the NET is being perceived by the students, parents, and school. It is necessary for their safeguarding from critique, and also the management of the partnership. Take for example this instance of an intervention offered by the LET, after the NET has had been involved with a classroom management issue with student:

I talked to him after work. Like, “Hey that boy you have to make peace with him afterward, because if it goes back to the parents then there will be trouble.” So, he needs to make peace with that boy. (LET 1)

The LET had presumably been clued into some level of discomfort and disagreement that the boy may be passing on to the parents. So, the LET will provide this intervention to allow for mitigation, reacquaintance, or possibly even an apology if it is deemed necessary by the partnership. However, the LET did note that the NET did not always need to respond outright as it may be that the request simply allowed for the incident to remain on the NETs ‘radar’.

One potentially negative aspect of the LETs job is the feeling of being a sandwich’. This is where they may feel that they have been drawn into an untenable situation, left holding the pieces, and forced to continue conversation that they may not want to be involved in, and feel like they should not be held accountable for the NETs actions. All of the LET participants reported feelings as such. For instance, we can see in this response when the participant was asked what she wished she would have known before she started the job:

I wish I could have known that I have to be a representative for my co-teacher, and I have to be a bridge between the parents and the NET. I only teach one subject and most of the time we have to know each other very well. I have to know where and what my NET is teaching. (LET 2)

Conversely, the NET may have felt a nagging resentment and disillusionment with the idea that the LET has the necessity of representing her, and in a way that he or she may not agree with. This was only expressed by one of NET participants, though this would be a fairly common sentiment in a minority of NETs. For example:

Maybe we think that we have the power, but all we are doing is coming to teach the kids. And they create that facade that we are supposed to be responsible for them, but we are not. So, whenever you cross that facade, it is not real. They just want us to feel that way so that we work harder or feel more responsible, but it is not real. (NET 2)

The comment shows the participants uneasiness with how her role as it is presented to her, and the actuality of how she is perceived by her coworkers and administration. She finds this to be frustrating and bewildering. While it may not represent the feelings of many NETs, regarding the perceived responsibilities as compared to what they actually are, it may be this dynamic is amplified in instances where there are erosions of trust or unanticipated outcomes that have unsettled the partnership.

The uncertainty of how to deal with different situations with different teachers is to be expected, and not exclusive to elementary co-teachers. However, their feelings and how they respond to the situation because of the nature of their shared roles often is essential to the experience. There can be high turnover rate for these teacher positions for the NETs. However, considerably less for the LETs, though many LETs may leave after the first year. From the perspective of the NET, there likely is not an established manner to deal with fairly regular incidents of dissonance that can occur. Furthermore, even with a teacher that you have worked with for some time, you can never be certain how the co-teacher is going to respond. It potentially may be this uncertainty that stifles the initiative to act accordingly to the situation. For example, when a LET is unsure of the NET's expectation:

Maybe you think the reason that you do this, is you think not about right and wrong. Because I think this way, and I think that I am doing something to help the students. But the co-teacher may think that by doing this you are not helping. You are actually making it worse. (LET 1)

As reported by one LET the comment refers to an interruption of any sort as in topics of language mechanics, classroom procedures, or classroom practice. The NET may not agree with the LET's assessment, or immediately feels that the LET does not understand. The cause of potential friction could be that the NET does not understand the LET's intention. Additionally, these interjections by one teacher during another's class time are generally considered a faux pau and happen or not in varying degrees of frequency depending on the setting.

Subsequently, are the issues of "good cop, bad cop" classroom management topics. These converse styles of management may create a number of difficulties for teaching partnerships in addition to the perceived benefits of the soft and firm role parity quite often employed by teaching partnerships. It has been one NET's experience, but reported by two of the participating partnerships, of how their classroom management decision may be negated or compromised by their co-teacher without the possibility of explanation. Perceived transgressions between partners are rarely, if ever, spoken about directly to their partner. Take this comment for example about when the NET feels students sometimes interpret any contradiction in how the partnership is working together:

And I can't figure out whose job it is. And so the kids are getting these two conflicting scenarios. And of course the kids are going to ask the adults to solve it for them. Or they are going to manipulate the adults to solve the problem the way that they would like to solve it. They are pretty smart you know. They tell half of the story, and then the teacher climbs down the other kids throat. And when you ask more questions you are like, "Oh, hang on." (NET 2)

This is not to assert this is the reality, nor is it to deny the possibility of the suggestion. It represents an essential belief albeit contemplation of the participant. It simply gives insight to the

feelings and beliefs of the teacher. It was also one of the NET's contemplations about how the role as perceived by her partner, had been changing during this year working together, and that this was partially representing her changing beliefs about the role responsibilities of their partnership. Moreover, the LET has been changing the course of the decisions made by the NET.

Beliefs about classroom management and education. The majority of the interview data was about the topic of classroom management. One partnership had different opinions about how to manage the class in regards to yelling at the students to enforce an acceptable level of behavior, which the LET favored, and other typical methods of correction. Another partnership focused a lot of their thought about some students that were caught cheating, and the NET was not allowed to manage the situation as she would have preferred. This second partnership's NET is the show of authority in the class, and often feels her authority is undermined by the dynamic of the relationship and or by the beliefs of her partner.

The first partnership commented extensively about turn taking in the class, especially the LET in this teacher team. She lays out in excellent details her beliefs about the differences in classroom management style between her and her partner. She then continues to elaborate about some of her perceptions and observations about her partner's beliefs. The students for this partnership were in the third grade and the interaction between the NET and the students is something of an issue for the LET. In these next two examples, the LET is commenting about the NET's classroom procedure concerning turn-taking in speaking discourse:

And it's like what. You don't think that you should deliver some kind of penalty when you just gave a reminder, and because if the students are asking if they interrupt, but it is kind of in a polite way. He will just let it go. And of course if some students interrupt in a really rude way, then the American teacher will think we would give them a penalty, but if it comes in a polite way... (LET 1)

The LET, doesn't feel or is not permitted to interject when the students are speaking out of turn with the NET. She finds it necessary to intervene with the students and manage their behavior. Here she describes some of her feelings on the matter of the NET not correcting what she considers to be behavior in need of being corrected:

I really hate interruptions. and our students tend to be quite negative about a lot of the things. The teachers say, for example, 'Take out your practice book.' 'Aah, I hate the practice book.' They will comment very negatively, on almost everything the teacher says. My NET doesn't try to stop that. (LET 1)

The students may indeed exhibit behavior that the partnership does not share the same specific feelings and beliefs about appropriate behavior concerning discourse. The NET allows for some less traditional expression and casual turn taking in the class, and the LET finds it to be a major flaw for the class. In general, the LET is not generally willing or finds it unfeasible to often speak directly to the teacher about the topic. Typically, she spoke to the students in her own time to try to reach them in her own way.

However, there were times that the LET spoke to her co-teacher about certain students speaking out of turn and their potential influence on the rest of the class. The issue is of course quite prevalent and routinely needs to be addressed in typical classroom management situations. Here in this example the NET agrees to be stricter and even raise his voice with some students:

I talked to him many times. I particularly pointed to a few students and said that these students, need a more strict way to handle them. Otherwise they are getting out of control. He would say, "Yeah, you think so?" Yes, because we have subject teachers and when they come to our classroom the subject teacher cannot bear our students. They just think our students are intolerable. (LET 1)

Even though the partnership has different beliefs about appropriate student interaction, they are both able to speak about it, and work on some resolutions or improvements. Their

behavior and interaction with each other remain positive or at least maintains coherence and respect.

However, the intervention doesn't fundamentally resolve the issue for the first partnership. There are differences in the background and beliefs of the respective teachers that are 'dialoguing' through the issue of the student interaction. Though the original reasons for those beliefs or classroom practice preferences are not being directly spoken about in their conversation. It remains an issue of turn taking, when it appears to be more of an issue of familiarity with communicative competence practice being developed in the classroom. For example:

He likes to interact in the classroom, and with the students. He doesn't see that as an interruption. Most of the time, he sees that as an interaction. That's the difference.
(LET 1)

Later when the teacher speaks to him about approaching some students differently and stricter, he is supportive and complies, however it appears to often remain unresolved. There are of course different correlations and causations for the perceived negative behavior of talking out of turn in this particular class. Though LET 1's contemplation of the issue seems to represent a pedagogical difference between the teachers in their partnership, the contemplation may indicate the issue the teachers are dialoguing about is not necessarily about beliefs of appropriate student interaction procedure with the teacher. Case in point, the actual issue is about traditional Taiwan ideas of etiquette in speaking and addressing your teacher. It is about the idea of whether students should be able to make decisions and influence the teacher openly in the classroom. Finally, the issue is about the necessity and value of communicative competency practice, and the role of the greater assortment of Western classroom norms in the Taiwanese classroom.

Alternatively, the NET from the second partnership is very frustrated by the fact that her coteacher, changes or modifies the input delivered from the NET to the students. Typically in day-to-day life there is a measure of ‘altering’ that occurs when people relay information to each other as is to be naturally expected, or when altering a message as an informant in the first language to the students and potentially parents. Take for example where the NET has asked one of her students to drink less sugar in the morning, and the LET is worried that the student may misrepresent this to their parent:

Basically taking like my words and making it like baby talk. But I guess we reach the same goal if he stops drinking chocolate milk. Result no more crazy boy. (NET 2)

This comment is intended to demonstrate the participants feelings about some of her partner’s communications. There are mixed feelings about this idea of her co-teacher anticipating and mollifying her interactions or intentions with the students. However, it potentially serves as a levee in the students’ and parents’ beliefs and opinions of her, also it apparently serves as a buffer in potential feelings that a parent may have about the state of the class, and the larger reputation of the school. There are times when presumably the NET is the scapegoat, and there are times when the NET may be insulated from controversial feeling from student and parent. Many co-teachers are of the opinion that parents can be or that certain parents can be very demanding and unreasonable, unexpectedly at times. Here in another example, she speaks of how her LET uses a particular kind of communication when interacting at times with parents:

It's amazing how I think maybe it is right to for the teacher to in Chinese you say, “da jen” like you give them a little injection before you give the bad news. Sometimes I think it is better to do that because, the parent is not there. They don’t always see the moment. The attitude you were saying it with and whether you were smiling or frowning. And the kid you know, sometimes misinterprets that. (NET 2)

The LET may represent information in a manner which is expected to be well received. In the comment above it is simply, to use a common idiom, she is “buttering them up.” The communication book, a chat service called ‘Line’, and phone conversations allow the parents access to talk to the LET most of the time, even on weekends. These conversations, even though generally about their child's schooling, may vary and are as diverse as any conversation reasonably. Of course, it allows the LET the opportunity, to understand and anticipate the parent, walk back anything that the parent is not comfortable with, and potentially to make small omissions, or employ rather mundane rhetoric to communicate things to the parents that the LET knows will not be well received. These interactions are not out of the ordinary, however are still essential to the decision-making process of co-teachers, because all of the parties involved in the issue are not privy to the same understanding and or information. This is to say that sometimes the parents or NET may not understand the reasons determining a given result in its entirety, which at its best has avoided disaster and at its worst has left some people with feelings of confusion or possibly frustration.

The NET from the second partnership has very strong feelings about how her opinion to speak directly to the issue with the parents is muted by the process of communication with her co-teacher. Her initiative may well stem from a reflexive result caused from the “good cop, bad cop” classroom management style. Take this comment for example where she complains about her co-teacher, and perhaps the larger school system, and that her co-teacher is changing or omitting her communication to parents:

My experience in Taiwan is that most schools try to keep the parents away from the NETs as much as possible, because we are too direct, and often too criticizing. In their opinion if we tell the parents what we want to tell them about their children. That’s why our comments get screened. If we talk to the kids, then they will go talk to them again to give them a little more Chinese perspective on what you told them. (NET 2)

This participant has lived here for 18 years in Taiwan, speaks Chinese conversationally very well and has lived with her Taiwanese partner for a number of years. Surprisingly, she still feels uncomfortable and unsure of intentions directed towards foreign teachers. It may also be that sometimes schools are deliberately keeping NETs uninformed to the real reasons of different school procedures. Also, the above comment represents simply her personal belief and experience. Two of the three NETs expressed a lack of faith in their school and Taiwanese education as it applies to them.

Next, one LET expresses quite extensively about how she has come around to understand some of her partner's beliefs and practice in the classroom. She plainly has found that not yelling at the students for classroom management to be particularly cathartic in her own practice, and in terms of implications for student behavior and education in general. She does express some concerns about how to change the beliefs potentially of the class's parents:

That is the power of routine and consistency, of penalty and very firm and very calm classroom rules, repeating. That just start to develop the student's spontaneous self-control. You can see the self-control start to grow in the students. Without you know, we just control you from the outside. I am just giving you a frame from the outside and you have to fit in this frame. But instead of giving them this outward frame their self-control is growing out from the inside. (LET 1)

Here she shares her current beliefs about what is necessary to transition a classroom from a more traditional Chinese style classroom teacher student interaction model to something more progressive:

You have to sacrifice their academic performance and that's because when the classroom is in chaos, not much can be learned, in such a classroom setting. In the private school classroom the curriculum is really heavy. So you kind of have to talk to the parents more. Like, "Yes, please allow them to make more mistakes," which means they are getting bad scores. We are allowing them to make mistakes on their test. You know so that it is like allowing kids to fall down, before they fall down." Like I don't want to remind you before you fall down. You will get to know that it is painful. So you learn that next time I want to learn to walk more carefully. I want to see where I am going. The painful part is

that you have to try to convince the parent to see the mistake as the way you see it. It's something they have to learn so that they can start to think for themselves. (LET 1)

The teacher wonders about change, and that to change a given idea in education it will take changing the belief of the participants involved. It is not always easy to change the beliefs of those involved because they have a vested interest in the status quo of the classroom model as it is now today. If one were to change this model for the members that are succeeding, it means uncertainty in comparison to the success of community members that maintain the status quo.

Finally, three teachers from the three partnerships, express concern that students are not being expected to demonstrate responsibility for their behavior. The students have a heavy class workload and a lot of homework for some students as well. However, it appears in these examples, they are referring to something about their partner, which they have spoken to them about, though is left unresolved:

I am not sure. In a way I feel responsible to make sure that the students are learning what I am teaching, and making sure that they can all pass the exams. But sometimes I feel like that the kids should take some responsibility themselves. (NET 2)

His way is to bring up more fun activities to please the students and so I see all of that. Personally, I don't agree with that I don't think that the classroom vibe has to be loaded all on the teacher. I think that students must do their part, of making the vibe more positive. And the teachers work is to train the students to work more positively instead of compromising the teacher's way to please the students, in the hope that they can get more positive. That's the part I don't agree with. (LET 1)

I don't have to panic or I don't have to be this strong with the children. And then she wants to control the whole thing, and tell the kids that you are not always the boss or you don't always do what you want, and get what you ask for. (LET 2)

The teacher's comments about student responsibility do represent the idea that their students need to be more responsible to achieve the objectives of the class. The participants comment to show that they need to finish their homework appropriately, that students need to show due diligence in their classroom interaction in accordance to the rules, and to remember

that the teacher is the center of authority in classroom decisions. Indeed, these are important issues in the classroom setting, and are further representations of society as a whole, the social structure's needs and implications. All three of the comments refer to a perceived deficiency of the classroom that needs to be resolved, and the teacher is uncertain of the level of responsibility the students are meant to assume.

Generalizing the NET participant's beliefs about classroom management and education according to their presumed perceptions is impossible. The extent of the variance of belief or preference of anyone participant does not fall neatly into the categories of NET and LET, and accordingly to the demographics of the participants. However, and especially for NETs with limited experience teaching in Taiwan, they generally don't know what the preferred norms of classroom discourse in Taiwan are, and then of course the norms vary accordingly to different settings as well. However, the lack of access to an understanding of those norms coupled with not being potentially included in communication on certain issues may indicate reasons why many NETs resign from their commitments and involvement in the orientation of the partnership. Furthermore, when there are breeches in trust, and reticent countenance from their partner, there may be feelings of resentment that interfere with partnership success.

Furthermore, from the perspective of the LET, especially one who has chosen this as a career path, the difficulties of her or his job position are not unusual or often unique. From their perspective they know the differences between the pedagogies of Taiwan and Western style and philosophy inherently through the process of observation, but sometimes and maybe even generally do not garner the same value and beliefs about the implications of "Western" education. However, this perhaps typical divergence of belief, or lack of conventionality, does not suggest that the LET will not support the class or its practice. Of course, there are what are to

be considered good teachers, and not such good teachers, which of course correlates to the reasons of the LET's support of the partnership. If everyone is happy, then the LET is happy, and the LET has a part to play in everyone's level of satisfaction. Of course, every community member plays its role in such measures, but the LET's role is the keystone.

Differences of belief and background. The participants represent a variety of nationality, educational level, and background. However, their beliefs do not necessarily correspond to nationality or education level. This section is quite particular in expressing beliefs about interaction in the classroom. Sometimes a difference in belief represents a divide for co-teachers in which their emotions or practice cannot be openly shared. Other times, differences in belief merely represent tolerance, while others, suspension of their beliefs, accordingly and regarding their partner's practice. Finally, there are times of course when the teachers intervene with each other. Intervention is typically talked about in a 'last resort' sort of tone, even not really a possibility, for all of the participants, and needs to be avoided so there is not an erosion of trust, or effective termination of cooperation.

Here the LET participant is quite clear in her apprehension to intervene with her new teacher. However, it is a very diverse topic and a topic that the participants of this study were not very forthcoming about regarding inquiries on this subject. Often dissonance in a partnership is a reflection of your own performance and job reputation.

He has such a good reputation that he must have some way to manage the class, though he is very different from me, or from my previous experience. So I, as I said there, even though I look at the class all in chaos, but I know to hold my tongue. I don't want to intervene. (LET 1)

Next, the participant shows how she feels that her co-teacher's beliefs and practices reflect his background as a US citizen. For the participants in the study there are many beliefs shared between foreign teachers and Taiwanese teachers. The differences though are seen with varying importance, and all participants would actively consider these characterizations to be supported through the individuality of the teacher. The ability to consider their partner's behavior as a collective observation or equally individually is fluid and usually ill-defined. However, this participant clearly shares her feelings about how an American approach to the classroom is not always necessary or adequate:

That's the way I did it. I still try to get him to be in charge, but if there is anything that I don't think, because he has been away from Taiwan for a while, he just came back. Maybe he is still in a US mindset and Taiwan has its own educational culture. We have our different needs. (LET 1)

In the following excerpt the LET shares some of her beliefs about nationality generalizations of hierarchy in the classroom. It is quite relevant in terms of her intentions of interaction between the teacher and students:

I am quite used to kids, you know respect the teacher like they are on different levels. Yes, we are equal as human beings but our position in the school, just like the principal is higher than the teacher, teachers are higher than the students. There are hierarchical places. For a British teacher, it is very clear. You talk to me as a student. I talk to you as a teacher. I have the authority you don't. But for Americans teachers you know they let the kids be on the same level. They are totally equal. Like the kids can challenge teachers on anything. And the kids can easily alter and change the teacher's decision, by showing if they like it or not. (LET 1)

The LET's beliefs about how students should interact with the North American teacher are explicit but not absolute. Beliefs and procedures of best practice aside, it is demonstrating a weakness of the co-teaching partnership. What happens when the teachers do not share similar beliefs about common classroom procedures, and are not typically able to have casual much less pedagogical conversations about issues comparable to effective interaction with the

teacher? Additionally, when issues may arise about more profane day to day issues of classroom practice, sometimes it may be that there are higher order issues of belief being ‘played out’ unknowingly through more indirect kinds of conversations and rhetoric on the topic of, for example, student teacher interaction. Seemingly, the conversation about student interaction, is also a discussion of communicative competency practice and or contrastive educational norms. This inability to have clear conversations may often leave the partnership disagreeing without signaling to their partner that they are in disagreement, and potentially what they are disagreeing about. Adding up these moments of disagreement without acknowledgement may allow for the breakdown of partnerships without the co-teachers’ ability to explicitly describe the situation, their beliefs, and general confusion of feeling. These breakdowns of effective co-teaching partnerships are not the majority of experience, however they are not uncommon. The teachers that remain in co-teaching must circumvent or elevate above such factors, as outlined by Davison, (2006). However, circumventing the “unacknowledged” issues will likely develop a division in the communication faculties of the partnership, and sometimes promote disparity concerning appropriate classroom practice beliefs, resulting in cognitive dissonance, accordingly as the unresolved issues and the partnership’s communication ability interface with their respective hierarchies of belief.

Unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. Teaching as in life and has so many expected twists and turns. There are experiences that can only happen with a co-teacher because of the nature of a partnership in comparison to teaching a class by one self. The interdependence can be often advantageous, and sometimes it can leave a teacher to feel a range of feelings from doubt to disillusionment. The partnership’s level of trust typically does go through

periods of highs and lows, and some partnerships do arrive to states of dysfunction, where there is a lapse of professionalism, communication, and participation.

Though many co-teachers in Taiwan have many critiques of the *one teach, and one assist* model of teaching as in Taiwanese private elementary school “international programs”, most of the participants remained generally objective in describing their experience and belief in a way that showed great confidence in their partner, and was not negative in the description of the partnership’s discourse, even though there may be differences of belief. The second partnership showed mostly appreciation and admiration for each other. However, particularly the NET, was quite forthcoming about the shortfalls of their situation, and the larger eco-system of co-teaching in generally in Taiwan. Also, the second NET, was quite concerned about past experiences that she had experienced and which she considered sometimes typical and unfair. Additionally, she posed many questions in our second interview about her identity as a teacher in this partnership. She wondered if she has assumed too much of a responsibility for the character development and responsibility development of the students, and whether or not her school wants her to pursue these goals, when she feels that she is sometimes censored. She and her partner rely on a good cop bad cop style of team classroom management, and sometimes she felt her intentions undermined by her partner. Take for example:

...I said to them if you guys are going to keep turning in this kind of homework, I am going to start rejecting it. Then you are going to have to redo it. I don't think that was an unfair statement, or anything, but immediately afterward my LET said, "Well, your NET teacher doesn't want to be mean, but she wants to keep encouraging you guys to keep on working hard. And I thought to myself, I could have said it that way if I thought it was going to work. It's not like I haven't done it that way many times before. I am just actually putting my foot down here and telling you guys I am going to start rejecting your homework. And then it felt like I wasn't allowed to say that. It was completely where I don't have the decision to say I don't accept this homework and it is disrespectful.
(NET 2)

However, the participant's tone during the interview at this point is not terse and reactionary. The participant's general feelings seem to include worry and sadness about her job position and working relationship with her partner. If this partnership's morale is irreparably compromised it indicates that the partnership will likely come to an end, so the stakes feel and appear to be very high to the NET. She demonstrates her need to reconcile her feelings about it, and actively seeks counsel from her Taiwanese partner in how to approach the issue and think about it effectively.

The same participant told a story where one of her previous co-teachers, who she felt had unfortunately been a little unstable, became angry with a student and threw her plastic water bottle which resulted in the bottle breaking. Then in front of the class, insisted to the student, that the student being yelled at had actually broke the bottle herself. Also, this LET teacher from the story was going to call home to her mother to tell her about the student breaking the bottle, though that was a falsehood. However, this is not about the purported misdeeds of her co-teacher but about how the NET felt isolated and insecure in how to react to the issue and communicate the problem to other people at the school and her administration as the NET:

“Oh no, now I have to call your mommy and tell her that you dropped your water bottle,” like putting all the bang on her right. And the girl kind of looked behind her and the teacher said, ‘No, no, no, don’t look at your friends.’ “Everybody saw that she dropped it right”, and all of the other kids are like just nodding their heads. ...And I was just like I, I mean, what does she know about solving problems. So eventually I made the mistake of talking to another coworker. This person went and told management. But of course I was the only person there and she knows that I did that. So obviously I made an enemy for life. (NET 2)

Next the NET told a story, related to the same incident, about how her co-teacher upon learning that the NET was responsible for telling the story about her deceit to the parent and student, and told this to another coworker, who then mounted a campaign against her:

And I would get called into the office and they would go, “We have had a complaint about your tardiness.” And that is when I started to get the message that I am not welcome here anymore. It felt to me like management was taking her side. And when I left she was still working there. I mean a lot of foreign teacher know they have to keep their co-teachers happy, or else. You become the enemy. When, and you know it is a very high school situation when they start chatting about it. Absolutely nothing you can do about it. Absolutely nothing. (NET 2)

The intention to be highlighted is the feeling of alienation reported by the NET. She feels and reports after certain kinds of altercations have transpired within the partnership, it has irrevocable implications for the co-teachers and their respective positions at the school. Furthermore, it is the participant’s belief that the LET decided to exclude the NET, and expressed this to others. This decision to exclude a NET in such a manner was something the participant reported to happen occasionally, as she has experienced over the course of teaching career in her previous partnerships and what she had observed in other partnerships as well.

In another section of my interview with the second NET, I asked her what she would like to ask of her current co-teacher about their difficulties, if she felt she could. She feels she has been having difficulties with her co-teacher as she is undermining her decisions in front of the class, and has a general change of attitude about the NET’s classroom management since earlier in the current school year. However, specifically here she is commenting about how the LET is changing course and walking back the NET’s decision to start rejecting homework that isn’t finished properly, as in the first quote under this heading. Take this example:

I would just ask her, "Do you think I was being too direct or too aggressive? Or when you repeated my words in a softer way, why did you do that?" What is going on in your mind you know? And try to not sound confrontational or aggressive, just to get a honest response. But it is so hard, because as soon as I bring the question up, I created a problem. (NET 2)

The participant's belief here shows that there is an acknowledged discrepancy between the co-teachers. In this example it is not a statement of blame, outwardly a quandary of meaning and intent of her partner. The excerpt does highlight the issue that the participant absolutely feels isolated in her appeal to understand. The NET's belief is that if she approaches her co-teacher, or any colleague of hers, that it signifies the demise of the trust in their working relationship or worse.

The inability to act, speak out or express oneself about discrepancy with your partner is a common sentiment in co-teaching, however not in a general day to day sort of implication. More in terms of the individual's uncertainty if they are correct, or if it will be well received. In this example we see the teacher hesitated to get involved in the NETs classroom management style:

My first year was the most difficult for me, because I suddenly held my opinion and I held my tongue, and his liberal way of classroom management sometimes can lead to a little bit of disorganization, or a disorganized way. Everything is flying about. But the kids surprisingly did pretty well, and their scores. So, the kids did okay. (LET 1)

The teacher indicates that despite her proximity and level of appreciation to the classroom practice and discourse she was observing; she simply did not want to interfere. There are times when not becoming involved and avoiding classroom issues may have a beneficial outcome instead of creating any points of conflict between the two teachers. The first year of teaching is obviously a time to be observant and perhaps to be cautious, however the statement does demonstrate common beliefs and strategies of co-teachers likely at any time in their teaching career.

Concerning the perspective of the NET, there are no useful generalizations about how NETs are going to respond to their co-teachers when speaking to them, or making decisions with them. NETs may of course have a very limited understanding of the socio-cultural fabric of

Taiwan. However even experienced NETs in terms of language and understanding may experience mercurial changes in their partnership, as similarly new teachers may be involved in a successful experience from the beginning. There are many pressures experienced by a teacher in a school year, and for a co-teacher, they need to manage these factors through internalizing ideas and externalizing them. To be a professional and successful co-teacher takes a certain combination of teacher attributes for them to be able to solve issues without externalizing the problem as the fault of their partner. Also, if their partner is the source of consternation arising in their classroom setting, then that they would have the ability to express solutions that are acceptable and receivable by their partner is particularly necessary for the long-term success of a partnership.

The LET has the difficulties of managing everyone's expectation simultaneously. The LET is commonly faced with external factors that are not the preferences of her judgment. The LETs responsibility is to make sure a given issue never occupies too much of what an outside party would consider an untenable negative outcome. They routinely deal with beliefs that they do not agree with, and need to make sure there are acceptable outcomes. Even if they are uncomfortable with activity in a classroom, they will likely just monitor the situation, not interfere and wait to see the outcome.

Research Questions

The central question for this phenomenological research project was: How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom? This question will largely be considered in reference to the recorded data of the theme *Beliefs about classroom management and education*. I chose this as a question to focus on the moment or the nature of making decisions together in order to have the ability to identify and consider aspects of belief, inform how this interaction within a

partnership, and ideas of outcome could be explored. The possible mechanics of the decision making itself is exclusively not the research project's final discussion. Indeed, the discussion is largely about participant beliefs, strategies, and coping mechanisms that inform the decisions to be addressed, and the resulting outcomes of co-teacher decision making and interaction.

The second research question was: What causes a teacher to provide support to their co-teacher and interpose on their practice and or pedagogy? The data from different themes may provide beneficial consideration for the discussion but the themes of *Shared Responsibility*, and *Dynamic and expectation of roles and interaction*, will largely be referenced. From one partnership there was much data about a willingness to speak to each other and to interject with each other to reasonably promote the continuity of their partnership. Furthermore, both partners and clearly the LET was demonstrative of her reservations and her needs to interject about the intensity of classroom management or the directness of the feedback. However, the reasons of interjecting in their partners practice are wide ranging in scope, and may lack meaningful generalizability, at least for the current research project. However, the contemplations and discussion are insightful to the teacher beliefs which are informing decision making of co-teachers and their consequent interaction.

Finally, the third research question: How do the decisions made by the dissonant partnership affect the outcome for the class? Data will be used from the themes of *Team planning or lack thereof it*, *Unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment*, and making references to the introduction of the research paper and the background of English for all initiative, which began in 1998, to suggest the cascading effects of under researched decisions which were made, how they continued to be advanced, and are represented in some of the

inefficiencies or inadequacies of the co-teacher paradigm, as they are represented in private elementary schools in Taiwan today.

Summary

The presentation of the data in the findings section are written to remain with a high level of unbiased intention and some of the comments are interpretive in nature. However, this essay is an effort to further allow for the contemplation of ideas about teacher belief and interaction. The data is revealing not as a result of showing the inner workings and mechanics of the decision-making process, but largely reveals specific beliefs of individuals that inform the decision making process and interaction of the respective participants. Again, certainly the findings and even the discussion is not to assert the truth of the situation or of a reality. The data is intended to provide an example of a co-teacher's belief to further comprehension, advance research topics, or to be helpful in considering co-teacher practice and policy, and perhaps increasing awareness of established norms of best practice for co-teachers, present or absent, from the experience of the participants of the study.

The first theme of *Shared Responsibility* corresponded to the first prompt of the first interview in which they were prompted by: Tell me about your typical work day with your co-teacher, everyone responded with appreciation and reverence for the unity of the partnership. The data for the second theme, *Team planning or lack thereof it*, describes the role responsibility of the co-teaching partnership generalized in terms of Taiwanese *one teach, and one assist* model of co-teaching, the decisions that may be made together to adjust the curriculum, and the lack of pre-semester planning, often not acknowledging ideas of proper classroom procedure, and there was little to no conversation about objectives or goals for the coming school year. Thirdly the theme, *Dynamic and expectation of roles and interaction*, is well named in terms of describing

the breadth of the data compiled under this category such as role responsibilities, authority dynamics, interventions, and larger expectations of the respective roles. Fourthly the theme, *Beliefs about classroom management and education*, is the lion's share of the data covering beliefs about classroom management, student correction, curriculum, students, parents, or administration. For the quinary theme, *Differences of belief and background*, are belief differences that are essential to co-teacher partnerships. Lastly, the theme *Unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment* touches upon the co-teachers' potential feelings of doubt and mistrust that are sometimes experienced. Chapter 5 will present an examination of the important discussion topics developed from the findings, and discuss the interview data from the findings, and then relate them to the central question of the research project, as well as the two secondary questions. Additionally, study limitations, implications of research, implications for practice and a conclusion will be presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Chapter 1 intended to further understanding and provide a backdrop of the implementation of the English for all initiative implemented by the Taiwan MOE in 2001, and within the next few years posteriorly, many education bureaus had established mandatory English for students starting in the first or third grade. The push for internationalization and competitiveness demanded many more foreign teachers to be introduced to the education system. Also, private schools and cram schools grew in abundance. In response to Western teachers being so involved in the education of Taiwan, there are different models of how to effectively incorporate the foreign teachers into the school. One popular method is the *one teach, one assist* in which there is a local English teacher, and a foreign born native English speaking teacher working together to manage the class. Chapter 1 highlights some of the reasons and indicates the reason for this research project, which is to better understand how decisions are being made between the one teach, one assist teaching partnership. The project has used the qualitative research methods of hermeneutic phenomenology, to better comprehend the dynamics of the co-teaching partnership. One central question and two additional questions were surmised:

1. How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom?
2. What causes a teacher to provide support to their co-teacher and interpose on their practice and or pedagogy?
3. How do the decisions made by a dissonant partnership affect the outcome for the class?

Chapter 2 demonstrates a review of the pertinent literature to support the understanding of current co-teaching comparative studies, best practices, and ideas about teacher identity and its relationship to teacher roles. A theoretical framework is also discussed in the literature review

as derived from the book *Communities of Practice* (Wegner 1998). Wegner's theories are helpful as they adequately represent the different members of the co-teaching classroom, and how these members relate to meanings and practice there within. The hermeneutical research method is paired with constructivist nature of Wegner's theories of community specifically, *Dimensions of practice as a property of community*, as outlined by Figure 2.1. This theory will be used to discuss issues of background difference, and how they relate to the practice in the class, and how both prospective teachers believe and feel about the conclusion of such classroom practices.

Chapter 3 details the research methods most closely associated with hermeneutical phenomenology. The method is a way to explore structures of experience and consciousness through the process of reporting stories and beliefs about past experience, to gain further insight into, as in the case of this project, the relationship of community members, their practice, learning and belief. Van Manen, (2014) offers this outline as directions for research:

1. Turning to a phenomenon, which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
2. Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;
3. Reflecting on essential themes, which characterize the phenomenon;
4. Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
5. Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
6. Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole.

Reasons for selecting the participants are shown in Chapter 3, and all are co-teachers in Taiwanese private elementary school. The collection of data is recorded and transcribed from six participants in two interviews occurring for roughly one hour. The data was transcribed and then coded using ideas of inductive reasoning, emergence, and a familiarity of contemporary research

topics of the field. The transcriptions were then read and reread finding patterns and themes to help better understand the research question.

Chapter 4 the presented the findings of the research activities. The participants assisted in remaining objective and unbiased in our effort to accurately describe their beliefs and experiences. The themes are named sequentially as listed: shared responsibility, team planning or lack thereof it, dynamic and expectation of roles, beliefs about classroom management and education, differences of belief and background, and unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. The research questions were reviewed with brief explanations of how the findings will address the research questions.

Discussion

The outline of this discussion section will be that first I will answer the research questions with the findings data from any of the themes that may address each of the three research questions. I will explain the results, following each research question, and situate the relationship of these findings according to previous literature. I will follow this discussion section with implications for research section, an implication for practice section, and of course conclude the project.

The first research question for the project is: How do co-teachers make decisions together in the classroom? All of the participants were members of partnerships that were outwardly successful, professional, and considerate as it pertained to their school and jobs. There is one participant particularly that allowed me to understand and gain some insight to the original curiosity for the project, which was, “Why are there incidents of dissonance in co-teaching,” in a rather East meets West sort of way, and “Why is it so difficult to understand the reasons why such occurrences are happening?” As upon much reflective thought and meditation upon such

an occurrence, it most often remained very ambiguous, in terms of the causation and even the result. Furthermore, these conversations actually were in conventional speaking terms amongst co-teachers unclear. I found that when trying to describe the reason for the decision with confidants, the decision-making moment itself, the outcome, and often the trajectory of the decisions can be quite incongruent. Additionally, I found that generalizations such as traditionalism are misinterpreted for the necessities of modernity, for example, or comparatively the necessities of the given situation will inductively point to traditional foundations. Furthermore, the possibility for ambiguity is endless and reflexive. Perhaps traditionalism and modernity are sometimes gambits, upon reaching the goal of one, the omega becomes the alpha reflexively pushing and redefining each other, in larger processes of progress and regression in societal and educational advance. These issues of duality are diagrammed and explained extensively in the book *Communities of Practice* (Wegner, 1998). The above-mentioned participant pointed out to me that we sometimes have different axiomatic beliefs about education, and in turn our beliefs have different meanings, as in the idiom, “We speak the same words with different meanings.” However, in place of words, we are talking about beliefs associated with appropriate behavior and interaction between teacher and student in Taiwan elementary school. Furthermore, to continue with another idiom, “To just call a spade a spade,” meaning and communication is actually unreasonably and unknowingly quite difficult for partnerships as their axiomatic beliefs and meanings are not understood thoroughly in the same manner between co-teachers.

Another participant was particularly effective in demonstrating how ideas of authority, classroom management, and even a difference of approach to educational goals were quite different as shared in the partnership, however the team is well recognized in general and an

effective teaching partnership. Her comments about student interaction with the NET and her beliefs surrounding these interactions directly addressed my curiosity in meaningful ways. Again, at times when co-teachers are speaking and making decisions together they may be speaking about something quite “run-of-the-mill,” however effectively there are larger pedagogical issues that are being addressed by the partnership, with one or both participants unaware of the larger pedagogical issues being discussed and their relative implications, in regards to the backdrop of long-term goals and practice . Basically, in the co-teacher classroom setting it occurs that the LET is sometimes uncomfortable with the classroom interaction between the students and NET, at which point he or she ideologically may withdraw their support from the class activity. This ideological withdrawal of support as it would remain unresolved has a variety of outcomes. For example, where the NET may be relatively unaware of the lack of support that is transpiring, and or how to address a new situation of classroom management when the disunity of the partners allows for undesirable behavior to continue under this umbrella of uncertainty, whether it is actively exploited by the students or just simply exists. I found these meditations, if reasonably true and applicable in conventional terms, correlate to the central question and provides needed insight.

This discussion of discourse, participation, shared repertoire, and negotiation of the partner’s teacher identity is consistent with the results of research about Language Teacher Identity (LTI) in preservice teachers here in Taiwan, analyzing identity development and identity conflict (Tseng, 2017). In Tseng’s research project she based much of her theoretical framework of LTI from the work of Varghese et al. (2005). As in *Community of Practice*, situated learning occurs in a participation in the class discourse by all of the community members to appropriate meaning and members identify through the discourse, and the realizations made from the

discourse. In Wegner's Figure 2.1 we see the referential associations between the concepts of *joint enterprise*, *mutual engagement*, and *shared repertoire*. To me it appears that most often, due to the lack of classroom engagement allowed to the LET, in a typical classroom it is difficult for there to be an engagement and practice in the class discourse as the NET outlines and directs in the classroom. Secondly, the LETs often may not have any previous experience and share in the different characteristics of the NET's Language Teacher Identity, or have agency to negotiate effectively discourse patterns of the NETs due to differences of background and general approach to EFL teaching. There likely may not be a *shared repertoire* shared by the partnership, and there may possibly not be any interest in negotiating and identifying with, for example, CLT as it pertains to the participation of the LET in the private elementary school international program found in Taiwan and elsewhere. Any kinds of boundary encounters as discussed in research about NEST and NNEST preservice teachers in Tseng (2017), and allow for negotiation of meaning and appropriation, are greatly lessened as due to the aforementioned lack of *mutual engagement* of the LET that sometimes occurs in daily class discourse, in conjunction with the NET. In some cases, the attitude of the NET may represent potential obstacles for the identity negotiation and discourse socialization, of the LET, depending on their level of commitment of mutual engagement. Furthermore, I believe that his or her duties and necessities as a LET entails a certain proximity to Confucian Heritage Culture, as to anchor a young student's learning in an international style class, and provide cultural balance in the minds and thoughts of the instrumental factors, as in parents, administration, and further the students.

The second research question is: What causes a teacher to provide support to their co-teacher and interpose on their practice and or pedagogy? The LET may often be considered the mediator of agreement. They are monumental in terms of how the NET observes their school

environment as they inform the NET about administration, parents, and students, necessities of rhetoric and general approach to the job at hand. There are reports of LETs interjecting with NETs for several different occurrences such as, student perception of the teacher, grammar correction, classroom management and classroom behavior of the students. These are the likely reasons of a teacher intervention; however, the research project doesn't provide much insight into why one teacher intervenes in the discourse of another. There are interventions, in co-teaching practice, that are motivated by the different and conflicting Language Teacher Identities of the partners. However, the methodology of the research may not have been specific enough in intent to report findings as in previously mentioned, participants possibly were not adequately prompted, or pedagogically motivated interventions may not be a common occurrence for co-teaching partnerships. The process is also quite tacit and may not be well remembered retrospectively in interview as well. What it is that makes you intervene with your partner is a question that would presumably be more directly and thoroughly addressed through survey and questionnaire, later to be followed by an interview. However, there are some findings on the topic to be discussed.

One clear example is the LET telling the NET that he had better go make peace with that boy that he had previously interacted with in class time. In this example the motivation appears to be mostly precautionary, as the LET is worried that student may carry on about an unresolved issue with their parents. The next example is when the LET is bringing down her NET's general intensity and emotion while managing the students. The LET and NET, in this second example, have experienced boundary encounters in the discourse of the classroom, particularly in the directness of student feedback, and the handling of perceivably poor homework being turned in to the NET. The LET has responded by lessening the intent of the NET, by altering her message

through changing the rhetoric, content, and advising her on management. Finally, there is the example of NET telling the LET after she yelled at the student that the student is likely more afraid of him. This indicated to the LET that the intention of her partner was to tell her the yelling was ineffectual, and then they never spoke about the interaction again.

The discussion of the second question may be well considered in light of authority discourse socialization, and a capable agency to renegotiate teacher identity adequately in a teaching environment that is not explicitly aware of Language Teacher identity issues, or able to speak to it effectively (Ilieva, 2010). The authority discourse socialization, agency, and proximity to other discourses, for a given co-teacher in Taiwan, appear generally as a very topsy-turvy consideration at different points in their development as a co-teacher. Especially considering how the dynamic of authority is sometimes changing with new partners or even within the same partnership. This uneven footing and not being sure of what is best for the discourse, or what will be acceptable to others, often provides reason for the unsure feeling that a co-teacher may have about an issue. Additionally, there may be pressure on the co-teacher as to how they perceive instrumental factors which are interacting in a given community. However too often, the co-teacher does not likely want to intervene with their counterpart, even when they likely should, in an appropriate way for everyone considered. Furthermore, if it is generally considered that both partners need to bring to the table their assets and strengths to the partnership and the classroom context, it is important to consider how those assets or characteristics may contribute to recognizable patterns and generalizations to be considered in Language Teacher Identity negotiation and discourse practice. This is to say there is a suggestion that private schools and beyond have not adequately invested time and resources in determining acceptable practices for curriculum, in reference to NETs and class objectives and goals.

The third research question is: How do the decisions made by a dissonant partnership affect the outcome for the class? There is an observable belief in speaking with co-teachers about a “no going back” kind of feeling about the relationship if there is a point of conflict. However, there are successful negotiations of discourse and identity daily for members of the co-teaching community, and negotiation undoubtedly happens consistently. Additionally, there are many points of interest in this consideration of the NEST and NNEST dichotomy as often considered in contemporaneous research. As in Wang (2011), Carless (2002), or Tajino and Walker (1998) there may be uncomfortable feelings of resentment that some LETs experience as a result of marginalization, being considered a translator, interlocutor of parents, or simply a student disciplinarian. Some LETs will leave after their first year, as the job duties are lacking in what they had envisioned for their self as an educator. As for the NETs, they may lack teaching experience, development of professionalism, lack of a general cultural understanding and language that is necessary to be an effective teacher in Taiwan, or the rest of Asia. These ideas are certainly an important backdrop for resolving co-teacher identity conflict, discourse socialization and negotiation. As in Luo (2010), it is explicit that meaningful communication results in successful team teaching in any given stage of a co-teaching partnership. Furthermore, as in Davison (2006), there are many necessary attributes and procedures to be attained in the journey and development in successful team teaching. This process is the responsibility of educators and researchers to meet the needs of successful classroom discourse, meeting the constitutional objectives and goals of the learning community. These needs are often not being met, and it appears that it is due to the abundant supply of NET teachers, and the entrepreneurial designation of private school attitude about school objectives which are often reserved for the maximization of profit, while presenting a veneer of modern education initiative. It is quite

difficult to ascertain how the conflict of co-teaching partnerships is affecting the outcome for the class. Indeed, the scope of the question is far too broad and dependent upon theme and rhetoric. Furthermore, to answer the question is difficult to evaluate even per individual basis without earnest and adequate curriculum designed to meet contemporary goals and objectives of the individual schools, as well as national goals reasonably.

Limitations

There are three main limitations that have been identified in the research process and deserve to be mentioned. The first is that data is described through the process of interview and has been described by the researcher. Excellent qualitative research is a skill that is developed as a practitioner and participant of the researching community over time, and this researcher offers humility and desire to be insightful and add to the larger knowledge of academics. As an amateur researcher I took it upon myself to educate myself about philosophy, technique, and to meet the appropriate forms of rhetoric, discourse, and theory that underpin efficacious qualitative research. Initially, the researcher had endeavored to simply describe and allow for the interpretation of the results to be exclusively maintained through the readership of the document, in effort to let the data speak entirely for itself. However, it was decided that the context of the results could be further explored through the researcher's description as an insider and NET co-teacher. This is to say that the data and its description should be considered as a marker in time and place, of observations and belief of co-teaching in private elementary school international programs in Taichung, Taiwan.

A second limitation was that it was difficult to gather information about the decision-making process in a way that allowed the participant to recall their experience without retrospective concession. In the intention of having the participants speak in the present tense

when reporting a given recall, reported speech became cumbersome and discarded by participants by the necessity of recollection which was upending their available cognitive capacity. This factor mostly determined the idea that the data would be about belief compared to sequential interaction and speech recalled by the participants. However, the research was intentionally recalled by interaction and speech first, followed by retrospective belief. Additionally, the idea of extracting from a naturalistic data set in comparison to specific prompts arose as an issue. Being that the focus of interview process was the decision-making process of the co-teaching, this idea of inconsequential data was circumvented by pursuing questions as in, “Have you ever learned something surprising from your co-teacher?” This allowed for negation or affirmation, and then the participant could proceed with a recall. This was effective, and this general strategy was used to elaborate and expand the stated questions and themes of the designed questions for the project. Also, it allowed for more specificity while supporting a level of non-specificity in the trajectory of the inquiry.

Finally, the participants often could only provide as much opinion or thought as they felt appropriate. Participants may have been answering questions in ways that involve innumerable contemplations and necessities of loyalty and reputation. Often responses were reflections of larger patterns of rhetoric and beliefs of co-teachers. This was in great part unavoidable and should be considered in the generalizability of the project and discussion. As it is necessary to protect the identity of the teachers and the class, the participants would apparently alter data to maintain confidentiality, and certainly reputation. Nevertheless, these limitations are the project in so many ways, as the project is then a fair representation of their beliefs situated in relation to their natural setting.

However, the hermeneutic phenomenological approach for this research project was necessary for two main reasons. The first reason was that I was not reasonably able to address some of the topics or to identify them, before I began my research. This desire to understand the co-teaching decision making process was the central point of inquiry. Therefore, by stepping back and interviewing participants of the co-teacher community, this allowed for a more elaborated description to inform potential inquiry or action resulting from the research process. Secondly, it was discovered that as the backgrounds and pedagogy of teachers vary, and are often different identities between their respective proximity to Confucian Heritage Culture and communicative language teaching, members of co-teaching are arriving to possible conflict and confusion due their ability and necessity to negotiate and situate with their partner's Language Teacher Identity as it relates to discourse, and that without resolution, these considerations are often leading to confusion and beyond. This qualitative interview approach helped me to identify and describe an issue explicitly, as previously I had been unable to understand effectively and describe. These feelings, conflicts, and confusion are often avoided by the partnership, for the possibility of losing their partner's trust. However, over time this avoidance leads to eventual and unintended outcomes, that teaching professionals ideally would be able to negotiate effectively. If co-teachers were able to understand and communicate about these issues, if schools were more active in maintaining awareness, or the co-teachers were more easily ready to negotiate different discourse socializations before they started as a co-teacher, it would allow for more and better team collaboration.

Implications for Research

There are studies that address identity construction, discourse socialization, and teacher beliefs about potentially competing discourses specific to Taiwan elementary school (Tseng,

2017; Wang 2011). These areas of research have investigated pre-service teachers to advance and promote understanding of the above-mentioned topics, before teachers potentially set out on their teacher career. Presumably, understanding pre-service teachers is as an ideal time to demonstrate agency for the co-teachers relative to the comparisons of Community Heritage Culture, and practice of communicative language teaching, allow for learning, negotiation, and acquisition of different discourse and pedagogy which is necessary to be a successful EFL teacher. The implication of this research only highlights and provides potential avenues to raise awareness of the importance of meaningful communication between co-teachers to achieve successful collaboration outcomes (Davison 2006; Lee & Cho, 2015; Luo, 2010). However, research about co-teaching in Taiwan, in general, and Language Teacher Identity of current teachers across Taiwan elementary school is just absent. Especially when considering how much resource is being invested in bilingual education. Currently, according to the newspaper Everington (2019) reports there is a goal to become a bilingual country by 2030, and Taipei alone will be recruiting an additional 5,000 teachers. Presumably, they are to be trained by the MOE upon their arrival. There will be many more teachers that are recruited to work across the country, in private schools, and of course after school academies. What are the measures to be taken so that these new co-teachers are available and have agency in discourse socialization? How will teaching in Taiwan affect career trajectory and discourse socialization on newly recruited teachers from abroad? Furthermore, how is it affecting the students' ability to negotiate, understand, and situate their learning in an accelerating modern context?

The results from this research project certainly address and demand the need for resources to be made available to co-teachers about Language Teacher Identity in preservice teachers in Taiwan, and the current teaching demographic of Taiwan. This information is

necessary, of course, for the development of the teacher, but certainly an increased interest and understanding in discourse socialization, would cascade through the education system, and provide potentially improved outcomes and development for the learner. Research to be done on existing teachers, across the spectrum of teachers in Taiwan, would not only further understanding of foreign-born teachers and their discourse socialization, it would support the education system as it is developing now. Research on existing teachers would also feasibly and intentionally indicate topics that are to be demonstrated to preservice teachers and how to situate Language Teacher Identity, and discourse socialization (Chen & Cheng, 2014; Ilievia, 2010). Concrete efforts to improve these ideals could balance past policy decisions and inadequacies, which are reportedly not based upon research method and belief (Chen, 2013; Price 2014).

Implications for Practice

The results of this study can be used to increase awareness in exploring Language Teacher Identity for prospective teachers EFL, professionals, and new arrivals in after school academies. Recommendations for schools are quite rudimentary and important. Many, and including the largest and most financially successful of the franchises, are following ideas of business as their main considerations for the model of the school and education. This researcher has witnessed schools perform large functions of deception from the local MOE bureaus that are nothing short of fraud, all in an effort to circumvent educational guidelines that are then being posted on the wall to advertise the school's educational goals. This lack of accountability is also an initial point of curiosity and inquiry for the project, and the accountability of the private schools would be an excellent source of research. The private schools here, as far as I have seen, and I have been actively asking, do not provide long-term goals, objectives and mission statements to focus outcomes for the student population. I insinuate and deduce that these

directives are not clearly elaborated in part and simply because they are avoiding any sort of accountability from parents and instrumental factors that would potentially scrutinize the efficacy of the school's outcomes. Perhaps franchise owners do not see any value in educational goals. The lack of goal setting then leaves a vacuum of directives that are a necessary foundational first step in developing agency for all community members in identity and discourse socialization. As I mentioned before, there is such a willingness to deceive and avoid initiatives of the educational boards that the schools themselves are indicating that they are not adequately aware of their own needs of identity and discourse socialization, indicating to me institutional barriers that need to be researched and effectively addressed by academics explicitly to raise awareness for the school business owners, and to be used as leverage of potential exposure to their larger customer base.

Furthermore, it seems necessary that the school would outline which activities they approve of for the different categories and components of their curriculum. If the school established standards and practices, providing for flexibility and growth, then the co-teachers would be able to negotiate the different discourses and have more agency and confidence to participate and identify with discourses that are not originally part of their background as when they were a student. This acknowledgement of appropriate practice and procedure would mitigate unavoidable conflict as suggested by Carless (2004; 2006), potentially empowering for the co-teachers to approach critical attitudes in their comparative identities as co-teachers, to negotiate meaning and appropriation, through the successful resolution of tension and conflict (Chen & Cheng, 2014; Wang 2011). The private and public schools need to develop staff and work responsibilities, where it is an ongoing necessity of the job position to look for and anticipate problematic areas of negotiation of discourse socialization and Language Teacher

Identity. Ideally, it would be the school director; however, it should pertain to the whole of the learning community. Private international preparatory schools absolutely need to develop their learning goals and objectives in concordance with the appropriate educational boards and ministries. This need is stated boldly and with much needed alacrity. The co-teachers do not necessarily need to be informed how to practice and meet the desired goals; they need to be trained to understand how to negotiate and participate in Taiwan schools.

Lastly, it is a shortcoming of my project that I often centered upon the NET teacher in consideration. This idea is because I do not have in depth knowledge of LET teachers, and their thoughts and beliefs, so this researcher hesitates to describe their motivations and necessities as a co-teacher. This research indicates the LET in Taiwan is a quite marginalized position, specifically in terms of young teachers who desire to be educators. The increased role of the LET for EFL instruction would offer distinct advantages for the concepts of negotiation of Language Teacher Identity, and discourse socialization. The LETs could ideally share in the curriculum most often designated to the NET allowing for an inherently balanced approach of responsibility. The increased role would allow the NET to better approximate what is a typical procedure and practice of Taiwan teachers. It would also necessitate team planning, and increase instructional collaboration, and many of the goals and implications of best practice team teaching (Barahona, 2017; Davison, 2006; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2015; Park, 2014).

Conclusion

This research project was initiated to describe the decision-making process of co-teaching partnerships in Taiwan elementary schools in an effort to better understand unanticipated outcomes of co-teaching interaction. The phenomenological interview process and interpretation of co-teaching participants recollections and beliefs about their lived experiences, and their

patterns of practice and discourse were recorded. The results of the data were then encoded and organized into six themes: shared responsibility, team planning or lack thereof it, dynamic and expectation of roles, beliefs about classroom management and education, differences of belief and background, and unanticipated outcomes and vague disillusionment. The goal was to create a better understanding of the co-teacher's discourse socialization, and their teacher identity. One LET's interviews highlighted her difficulties reconciling interactional discourse patterns of her NET with the students illustrating for the researcher the significance of Language Teacher Identity, and discourse negotiation and socialization.

Using theory drawn from Wegner (1998), concerning mutual engagement and shared repertoire, and theory by Varghese et al. (2005) concerning identity in practice and discourse description and interpretation relating to interview findings were written. Many of the findings do align with Taiwanese research about identity conflict and co-teaching model educational significance (Tseng, 2017; Wang 2011). However, this research is centered on preservice teachers and Language Teacher Identity, and discourse socialization, and does not represent the larger and typical realities of co-teaching in Taiwan.

This research calls to increase research in Language Teacher Identity and discourse socialization across the spectrum of co-teaching in Taiwan as it presents itself today. This effort could reasonably support contemporary considerations of co-teaching teacher development to offer auxiliary solutions for conflict resolution, teacher identity, and negotiating discourse. In turn, potentially providing for increased understanding and further implications for how to inform pre-service teachers as well.

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Appendix

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Level of Experience	Educational Background	Experience at Current School	Grade Level	Personal Assessment of Second Language Proficiency	Married to Foreigner	Male or Female
LET 1	45	5 years	Master's Degree	5 years	3	low advanced level of English	no	female
NET 1	40	7 years	Teacher's Certificate Master's Degree	3 years	3	low level	no	male
LET 2	28	1 year	Master's Degree	1 year	2	low advanced level	no	female
NET 2	42	18 years	Bachelor of Communications	2 years	2	low advanced	yes	Female
LET 3	36	13	Bachelor's	10	1	intermediate English	no	female
NET 3	37	3 years	Civil Engineering MBA	2 years	1	minimal	no	Male

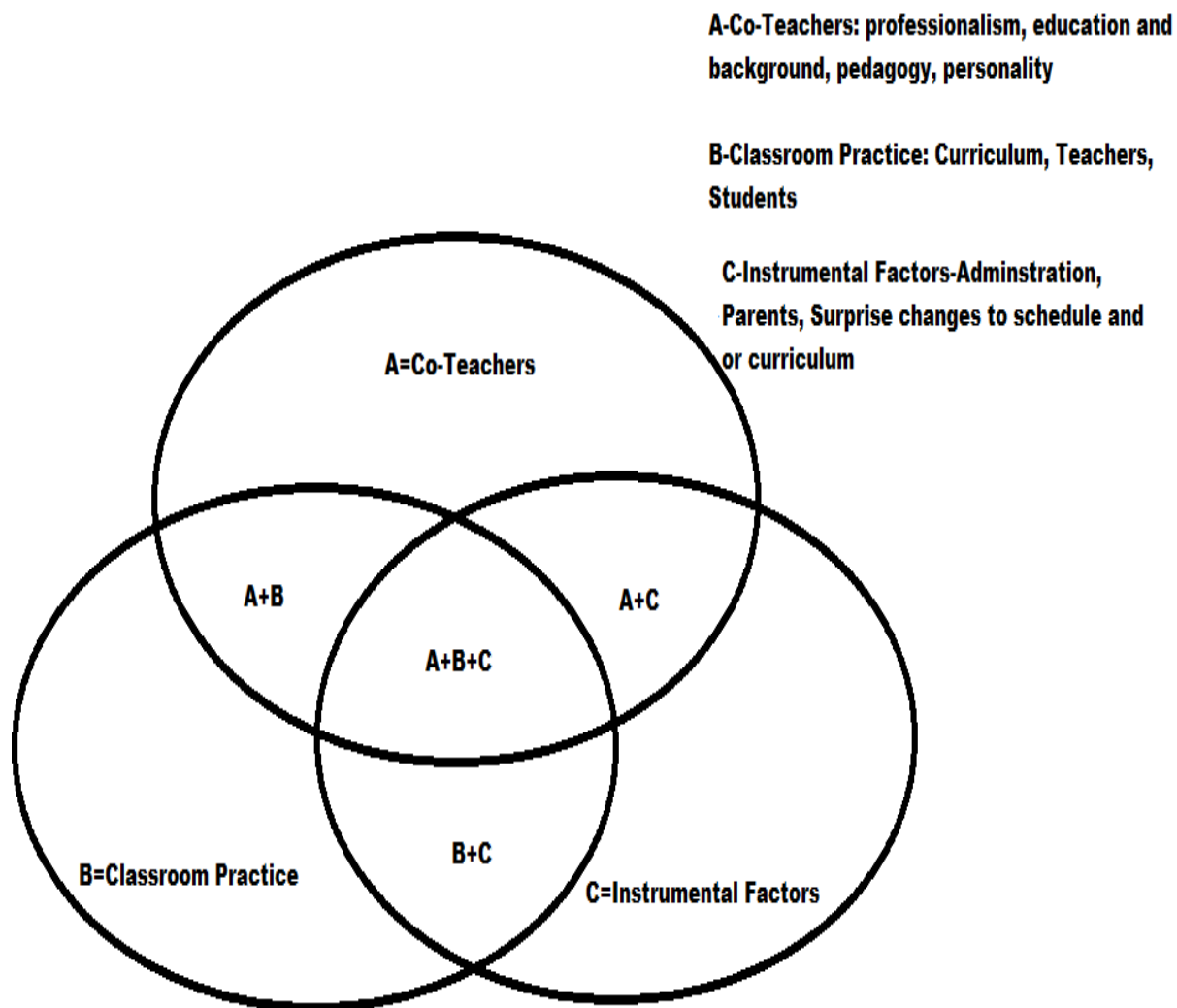


Figure 1 . Confluence of conceptual categories.

The objectives of the Taiwan National English curriculum for grades 1–9 are as follows:

1. Improve students' basic communicative competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
2. Prepare students to make effective use of English language and knowledge.
3. Choose topics relevant to students' daily lives, needs and interests.
4. Help develop students' autonomy in learning English.
5. Address cross-cultural issues (e.g. social customs).
6. Incorporate reading, writing, speaking and listening into class activities.
7. Incorporate the use of technology in classes.

Figure 2. Objectives of the Taiwan national English curriculum.

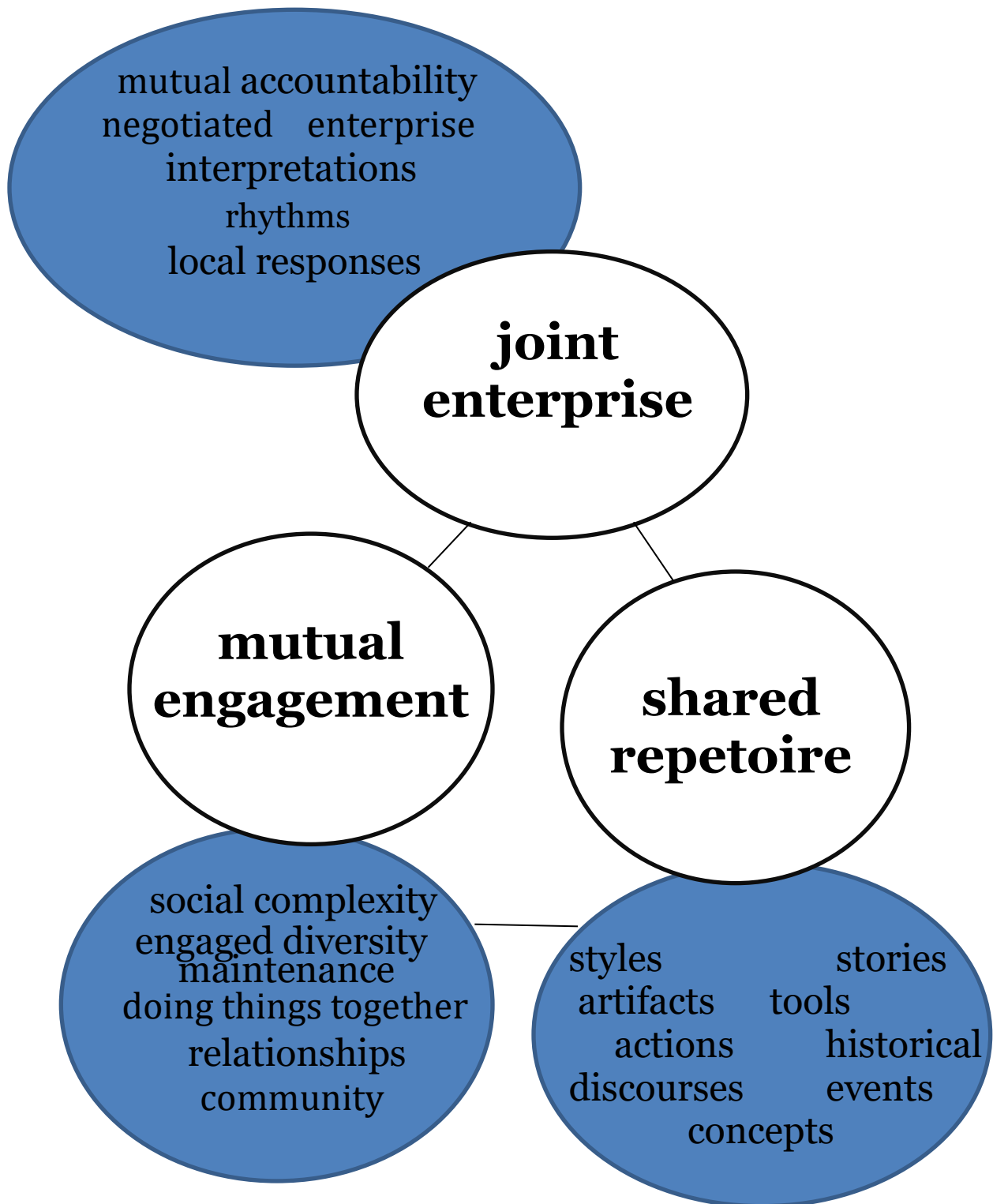


Figure 2.1. Wegner dimensions of practice as the property of a community.