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Professional Development through Team-Teaching: A Case Study of Collaboration between Native English Speaking Teacher and Non-Native English Speaking Teacher

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Abstract

With the spread of globalization and information technology, the status of English as a global language is undisputed and the impact of globalization on English education is phenomenal. In non-English speaking, Asian countries, the goals of EFL instruction have been developed within the discourse of globalization (Shin, 2003). English education is treated as a tool to keep up with the rapid globalization of the world economy. Enthusiasm for English language learning in Taiwan has been growing at an astonishing pace over the past few years. Consequently, the policy of English instruction has recently undergone drastic changes. One such change was the introduction of English language instruction into primary level. The other is to recruit Native English Speaking Teachers (NEST) to team-teach with local English teachers in elementary schools. Despite the controversy over whether or not NESTs should be allowed to teach in the elementary schools and what benefits they will bring to the local school systems (Shih *et al*, 2000, Dai, 2003), the Minister of Education (MOE) has announced to recruit NESTs systematically at the elementary school level in 2004 for the first time.

This study was intended to identify the strengths and weaknesses of both the NEST and the local teachers at one elementary school in Taichung in order to understand how their respective strengths can be maximized in team-teaching setting. In addition, the study also aimed to explore the practices and procedures involved in bringing up the collaborative relations between the NEST and non-NESTs as it is manifested in their course design, lesson plan, instruction delivery, student assessment, and professional development. In sum, the results of this action research has contributed to the theoretical underpinnings on team-teaching in the field of foreign language education and gained insights into the implementation processes of collaboration between NESTs and non-NESTs at the elementary school settings.

Key Words: Collaborative Teaching, Foreign English Teacher, Primary Level, and Case Study

中文摘要

隨著全球化以及資訊科技的傳播，英文作為一個全球性語言之地位已是無庸置疑，且對英語教育也有顯而易見的影響。尤其在亞洲這些非英語系國家，英語做為外國語之教育早已在全球化之聲浪下扎根(Shin, 2003)。因此，英語教育也被視為得以跟進在世界經濟快速全球化之下的一大利器。在過去幾年來，台灣的英語學習熱潮以驚人的速度成長，英語教學政策也因此在近年來有些巨大的轉變。而其中一項轉變就是英語教學向下延伸至國小階段。其他還包括招募英語為母語的師資到台灣協同當地英語教師進行國小英語教學。儘管在是否該為小學引進外籍師資，以及這項作法是否真可為地方學校帶來好處尚有爭議（施玉惠、張湘君、沈天、蘇復興、曾月紅, 2001；戴維揚, 2003），教育部已宣布在 2004 年正式引進外籍師資。

本研究深入瞭解外籍與本地國小英語教師的優勢及弱點，以進一步探討如何將其各自的優點結合以達到協同教學最大功效。此外，本研究透過外師及中師協同展現的課程設計、教案設計、課程傳授、學生評量、和專業成長來進一步探討其教學實施、程序、以及合作關係。這項行動研究的成果，預期將可在外語協同教學之理論基礎上有所貢獻，並且可深入瞭解兩種教師(英語為母語 vs. 英語非母語)在國小教育場景之合作。

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Background and Rationales (研究計畫之背景)

With the spread of globalization and information technology, the status of English as a global language is undisputed and the impact of globalization on English education is phenomenal. In non-English speaking, Asian countries, the goals of ELT (English Language Teaching) have been developed within the discourse of globalization (Shin, 2003). English education is treated as a tool to keep up with the rapid globalization of the world economy. Enthusiasm for English language learning in Taiwan has been growing at an astonishing rate over the past few years. In respond to the “English fever” (Krashen, 2003) prevailing in Taiwan, the policy of ELT at primary level has recently undergone drastic changes. One such change was to introduce English language as a compulsory school subject at the primary level. The other was to recruit Native English Speaking Teachers (NEST) to team-teach with local English teachers at certain public schools. Despite the controversy over whether or not NESTs should be allowed to teach at the elementary schools and what impacts they will bring to the local school systems (施玉惠 等, 2001; 戴維揚, 2003), the Minister of Education (MOE) in Taiwan has decided to recruit NESTs systematically into the elementary schools beginning in 2004.

Given the fact that a huge amount of tax money will be spent to hire NESTs to collaborate with local English teachers, it is unequivocally important to have a well thought out plan and/or a research-based, locally-conceived case study for its implementation. An estimated figure of 150, 000, 00 NT dollars was reserved for the NEST project for 2004 fiscal year at the local government level. Carefully reviewing the contents of governmental implementation plan, I found out that research-based precautions were not taken into accounts and systematic monitoring and evaluation were not specified. Therefore, a research plan to provide direction for successful implementation and accountability for the desired outcomes is definitely needed. That is how this action research was conceived.

After reviewing the related literature and examining the purposes delineated by the local government, I decided to focus on the following two areas for the current study: the relative strengths of both NESTs and Non-NESTs in particular EFL context and the unfolding of the collaborative teaching between NESTs and Non-NESTs. This study, therefore, attempted to identify the strengths and weaknesses of both NESTs and local teachers at one elementary school in order to understand how their respective strengths can be maximized in a team-teaching setting. In addition, the

study also aimed to explore the practices and procedures involved in bringing up the collaborative relationship between the NEST and non-NEST as it is manifested in their course design, lesson plan, instruction delivery, and professional development.

It was suggested that the frustrations and ineffectiveness expressed by the former participants of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program could be attributed to the government's failure to articulate the purpose of hiring NESTs and to define the role they are expected to play in the school. Therefore, in conjunction with this investigation, a series of research-based, pre-service training courses were offered by the joint efforts of researchers and a local EFL advisory committee. It was hoped that these preparation courses will help eliminate all the obstacles and problems encountered by previous, similar collaborations between NESTs and non-NESTs in other countries.

Purposes(目的)

The current study intended to answer the following four questions:

1. What are the strength and weakness of both the NEST and the local teacher in this particular context?
2. What are the practices and procedures involved in bringing up the collaborative relationship between the NEST and the non-NEST?
3. How did the collaboration between the NEST and non-NEST occur in the levels of course design, lesson plan, and classroom teaching?
4. How did team-teaching contribute to participating teachers' professional development?

By responding to these questions, the results of this action research will contribute to the theoretical underpinnings on team-teaching in the field of foreign language education and to gain insights into the implementation processes of collaboration between NESTs and non-NESTs at the elementary school settings.

Review of Literature

This study was informed by the following three bodies of literatures: 1. NEST V.S. Non-NEST; 2. Collaborations between NEST and Non-NEST; 3. Local EFL contexts in Taiwan.

NESTs V.S. Non-NESTs in ELT

It is still hotly debated who serves as the most effective agent for ESL/EFL instruction. In Taiwan, and I believe this is to be true for most developing, non-English speaking countries that language institutes favor and appreciate NESTs. The reason is quite simple: NESTs attract students and help stabilize the enrollment rates. This is particularly true for private language schools, which mostly prefer to hire a NEST instead of a more experienced non-NEST. The arrays of expressions

used by a group of questionnaire respondents to describe the language of the NESTs include: "natural, authentic, living, perfect, expert, best quality, most correct, model, proper, fresh, current, best, and faultless" (Nizegorodcew, 1994: 31). Like it or not, "the myth of native superiority" (Gill & Rebrova, 2001) is pervasive in the field of TESL/TEFL around the world.

There are number of characteristics that differentiate NESTs from non-NESTs in the four areas of language learning experiences, culture, language, and pedagogy. **First**, in the area of language leaning, both Medgyes (1992) and Philipson (1996) maintained that non-NESTs are ideally successful models for second/foreign language learning for they have more insights about language and learning strategies, which help them anticipate more easily the linguistic difficulties students might encounter. **Secondly**, few if any non-NESTs can compete with NESTs in terms of linguistics familiarity, except in the area of grammatical awareness. For instance, "the native speaker fallacy" eloquently but unfairly describes the ideal English teacher as "a native speaker who has a feel for its nuances, is comfortable using its idiomatic expressions, and speak it fluently" (Philipson, 1996, p. 27). However, average native speakers may not be able to state the rules of grammar without deliberate study and thoughts. **Thirdly**, NESTs absolutely have upper hand in their target cultural knowledge while non-NESTs are far more familiar with the institutional culture and goals. This familiarity with institutional culture not only helps non-NESTs respond to students' needs better but also insulates them from institutional cultural shocks. On the contrary, the ignorance of local institutional culture and goals may handicap NESTs' effectiveness. Some local respondents from survey complained that NESTs' ignorance placed an extra burden on colleagues who have to spend enormous time and energy "babysitting" NESTs and helping them with a variety of practicalities. Thus, there is a need for pre-service workshops where non-NESTs are explicitly informed of the spectrum of teaching behaviors and styles that are generally agreed within the sociocultural contexts of the institutions, so that they can be attuned to the local teaching culture. **Finally**, differences were also found in their general attitudes to and actual teaching behaviors between NESTs and non-NESTs, such as classroom management, use of resources, instructional activities, error correction, fluency-orientation, or accuracy-centered instruction. Medgyes (1994, 2000) has compiled a comprehensive list of these differences based on research conducted in classroom settings. In Medgyes's book, *The non-native teacher*, the only one full-length book on this topic, he calls NESTs and non-NESTs are "two different species" (p. 27). Nevertheless, researchers would like to suggest that these differences should be seen as positive and complementary rather than negative and contradictory.

Team Teaching between NESTs and NNESTs: Problems and Prospects

There have been strenuous attempts in recent years to deny the dichotomy between NEST and non-NEST (Swales, 1993) since most scholars who recognize the differences between NESTs and non-NESTs tended to conceptualize the differences negatively. Given predominately negative conceptualizations, some scholars (Medgyes, 1994; Medgyes, 2000; Gill & Rebrova, 2001) argued in favor of more positive interpretation of the different qualities existed between the practice of NESTs and non-NESTs. Among others, Medgyes (1992) suggested explicitly a more positive approach: “the ideal NEST and the ideal non-NEST arrive from different directions but eventually stand quite close to one another....in an ideal school, there should be a good balance of NESTs and non-NESTs, who complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses (p. 349).” Along with this line of inquiry, numerous studies have set forth to explore the potentials for NEST and non-NEST collaborations in EFL contexts (Dawson & Berezai, 1993; Jacobson & Fletcher, 1994; Gill et al, 1994; Wiseman, 1994; Sagliano et al, 1998). The results from these exploratory studies indicated that cooperation between the NESTs and non-NESTs has brought significant gains to both as well as to students. In light of these encouraging findings, I believe the national policy of recruiting NESTs into our primary EFL classes will bear fruitful results if true collaborations between NESTs and non-NESTs could take place in our local contexts. Nevertheless, in order for the collaborations to take place, it is crucial to be aware of the certain attributes that tend to distinguish NESTs from non-NESTs, so the positive natures of these differences could be valued and utilized to complement one another.

Moreover, as we try to cultivate the collaborative relationships between NESTs and local teachers, we should take heed to the experiences and lessons learned from other nations. In recent years, there is an increasing interest in documenting the collaborations between NESTs and non-NESTs in various contexts. Team-teaching is often discussed as most common form of systematic collaborations, but applications to other areas are also possible, such as course design, lesson planning, materials production, student assessment, and professional development.

Team Teaching between NESTs and NNESTs in the EFL Context

Team teaching, by its general definition, means “a situation in which two teachers share a class and divide instruction between them” (Richards et al., 1998). Reviewing the team teaching literature between NESTs and NNESTs in the EFL context, definitions varying in length are adopted to describe the term. Sturman (1992) specifies team teaching as “working together—not independently—in the same classroom, understanding each other’s pedagogic principles, even when it may be difficult to agree with them, and being sensitive to each other’s professional position in the classroom” (p. 145), and Bauwens and Hourcade (1995) define it as “a

restructuring of teaching procedures in which two or more educators possessing distinct sets of skills work in a coactive and coordinated fashion to jointly teach groups of students” (as cited in Carless, 2004b, p.3). In the latest team teaching research, Carless (2004b) defines it simply as “two teachers together in the classroom involved in instruction and/or management of the class” (p.3). To sum up, team teaching refers to a jointly effort made by two (or more) teachers who are present at the same time teaching the class together.

In the East Asia countries where English is taught as a foreign language, Japan is the first country that systematically recruits Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs, mainly English teachers) in a large scale to assist Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs) teach at schools nationwide. Team-teaching has been practiced for more than a decade in Japan since the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) first launched in 1987. Team-teaching seems to be welcomed as shown by the increasing numbers of participants in the JET program each year. However, through trial and error, Japan has learned important lessons as to how to best implement team-teaching between NESTs and non-NESTs. In 1994, the Minister of Education, Science, and Culture in Japan believed that students and local teachers would benefit from the team-teaching in the following areas: students will have increased chances to use English to communicate in the classrooms and the teachers will have better opportunity to develop as professionals by expanding their presentation repertoires and designing instructional materials with NESTs (Tajino & Tajino, 2000). Nevertheless, to accomplish these, open-minded cooperation and communication between the two teachers are the prerequisite. That is, they need to work together in preparing lesson plans, providing instruction, giving practices, and evaluating students after classes. In practice, this is far more difficult to achieve than it is assumed. Tajino and Tajino (2000) reported that both NESTs and non-NESTs are confused about their roles in team-teaching. As a result, it is not uncommon to see NESTs functioning as ‘human tape recorder’ while non-NESTs serving as interpreters between the NESTs and students (Kumabe. 1996). Similar challenges were reported from Korean classes where NESTs and non-NESTs collaboratively carried out the lessons. These results indicated that to overcome the unease among the collaborating teachers, it is the teachers who first need to develop positive attitudes toward intercultural communication (Tajino & Tajino, 2000). Therefore, a transparent and open discussion of key classroom issues, core teaching competencies, and designated roles for both teachers is imperative to create the professional common ground necessary to identify the developmental objectives of the collaborative teaching.

Turning to the EPIK program, although a few participants had positive experiences of team teaching, problematic cases were more pronounced. Similar to the obstacles discovered in JET, Korean teachers revealed reluctance to cooperate

with NESTs because of incompatibility and their lack of confidence in communicating with their native-speaker counterparts in English. In Carless' (2004b) another study investigating team teaching between native and non-native English teachers in Japan and Korea, he further summarized challenges of intercultural team teaching, suggesting that pedagogical, interpersonal, and logistical factors being the three main challenging areas in the collaborative relationship. In the pedagogical dimension, the lack of teaching experiences of the NESTs, confusion about the role and responsibility distribution of both parties, and the flawed English ability of the NNESTs were viewed as barriers to team teaching. In the interpersonal dimension, a lack of open-mindedness, enthusiasm, and mutual trust undermined the partnership. In the logistical dimension, shortage of preparation time and heavy workloads of NNESTs emerged as drawbacks of team teaching. While the above areas are considered challenging, another rather common problem being pointed out in several studies is that, not realizing the purposes of team teaching, some NESTs would treat NNESTs simply as "interpreter" or "classroom management assistant", and NNESTs utilize NESTs as "human tape recorders" or "game machine" when they teach together (Tajino & Tajino, 2000; Liou, 2002; Lin, 2002). Such a scenario may appear to some that the NEST and the NNEST are working together just fine, however, the collaboration of this kind actually stays in a very superficial level and is not viewed as true team teaching in which power and responsibility are supposed to be equally shared by both parties. Therefore, for effective team teaching to take place, in addition to overcoming the challenges mentioned above, flexibility, respect, mutual trust, positive attitudes, willingness to compromise, and development of relationships inside and outside the classroom are considered to be even more fundamental (Sturman, 1992; Wada, as cited in Reiko and Lee, 2001; Tajino & Tajino, 2000; Carless, 2004b; Gill & Rebrova, 2001), as Carless (2004b) suggests, "intercultural team teaching rests, to a large extent, on the interpersonal sensitivities of participants" (p. 18).

While the hindrance of collaborative language teaching seems prominent and needs much effort to tackle, the results of these inquiries are not all that discouraging. Good team teaching was still found to be practiced among some participants, and a number of benefits were derived (Carless, 2004a, 2004b). First, when the NEST and the NNEST work together in the same classroom, not only do students have more exposure to different cultures and the target language, but can be provided with more support and feedback from two teachers. Second, team teaching fosters professional development, especially in developing local English teachers' English communication skills and pedagogical competence, resonating Gorsuch's (as cited in Carless, 2004a) finding that such cross-cultural cooperation helps the local teachers diversify their instructional strategies and enhance their English proficiency. Last but not the least,

NESTs and NNESTs can complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses in that NESTs being experts in linguistic and target cultural knowledge while NNESTs being insightful and sensitive to the local educational system, students' backgrounds, needs and learning difficulties. On the top of learning lessons from our neighboring countries, it is equally important to take the local EFL contexts into consideration while discussing the development of team-teaching partnerships between the NESTs and local Taiwanese English teachers.

Taiwan's ELT (English Language Teaching) at Primary Level

Since English language instruction was introduced at 5th and 6th grades nationwide in 2001, people here in Taiwan have been fervently talking about learning English at earlier age in order to obtain 'jump start' at academic race. For the past four or five years, we saw a virtual blizzard of articles concerning EFL at primary level, accompanied by a flood of reports from newspaper, popular magazines, television reports, and running commentary from politicians and policy makers. English language instruction in the elementary schools becomes the focus of intense hope and heated criticism. Prescriptions for English teaching at the primary level were often of the quick-fix variety with little recognition for the particular contexts and needs of elementary school children in Taiwan. Consequently, numerous prominent scholars began to voice their concerns over the implementation of this new English language policy in the areas of teacher preparations, teacher qualifications, curriculum planning, textbook adaptations, and pedagogies (Liaw & Chen, 1998; Shih, 1999; Chen, 1999; Liaw; 1999, Zhan, 2000). Following up the implementation of nine-year integrated curriculum in English, investigation results indicated there was great regional discrepancies existed in different cities and counties with regard to curriculum planning, textbook adaptations, and teacher qualifications (Shih et al, 2001, Dai, 2002; Chang, 2002). In late 2002, the government announced that it would begin to hire NESTs on a large scale, partially to alleviate the problems associated with huge gap in teacher qualifications and resource availability between cities and rural areas. Pros and cons of recruiting NESTs into elementary schools have cross-fired but unable to reach consensus. Opponents of hiring NESTs at primary level are concerned about the foreign teachers' qualifications, perpetuation of western identity associated with linguistic colonization, psychological resistance from the local English teachers, and cultural/linguistic incompatibility between NESTs and non-NESTs. Proponents of this innovation, nevertheless, assert that the direct contacts with NESTs will greatly enhance the communicative competency of Taiwanese students and the presence of native speaker broadens the horizons of local teachers and students. With overt public skepticism and opinion divisions, this policy was halted temporarily at national level.

However, a couple of city and county governments went ahead recruiting NESTs

into the primary EFL classes to collaboratively teach with locally trained, certified English teachers. For example, in 2001, Shin-Zhu cities started hiring NESTs; in 2002 private Cambridge elementary school in Taipei staffed with 28 NESTs. One in-depth investigation has conducted with Shin-Zhu's public elementary schools (Lin, 2002). Findings from this exploratory study showed that NESTs eventually dominated the English instruction that was to be collaborated with local English teachers. Lin (2002) asserts that the government should clearly spell out why we hire NESTs and explicitly define what their roles are in the classrooms. This finding coincides with the previous empirical results. That is, single most problematic issue is the fact that the implementing governments do not clearly identify why they hire NESTs and how NESTs are to contribute to their elementary schools. Furthermore, Lin also suggests that the format and detailed strategies for team-teaching should be modeled and demonstrated to both NESTs and local teachers to facilitate their collaborations. Dai's (2003) recent paper titled, "Equity, excellence, and effectiveness: Solutions for current English teaching problems", he also advocated hiring NESTs into elementary schools to achieve world class English for Taiwanese students. He did caution about some of the potential problems affiliated with NESTs such as teacher qualification, cultural differences, lack of EFL training, and classroom management. In short, a series of well-organized, research-based, context-sensitive, and profession-oriented, on-going training courses is imperative for the successful implementation of team-teaching between NESTs and local teachers.

Methodology

The study employed a case study approach that explores and examines the unfolding of the collaborative relationship between a NEST and a NNEST during their semester-long team-teaching. The design of this study is qualitative in nature. Rich descriptions of this team-teaching case were acquired through semi-structured interviews, teacher's reflective notes, and field notes from classroom observations, with the help of questionnaire survey technique to facilitate the monitoring of development in participating teachers' collaborative relationship. More detailed research methods is described below.

Participants and the Setting

A local English teacher and her native English-speaking partner participated in this study on a voluntary basis. Each of them filled out a survey to for the baseline data needed for this inquiry. Below are the two teachers' background information and a description of the setting. Throughout the study, pseudonyms are used to assure the confidentiality of the teachers and the school. They will also be assured of confidentiality and human subject rights.

Mrs. Lee. Mrs. Lee, the local English teacher, has been teaching in this school for two years and has been teaching for a total of nine years. She was a homeroom teacher for the past seven years in another elementary school, and it was until she came to this school that she started to teach English. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education. Currently she is teaching the 4th graders.

Miss Jones. Miss Jones, the native speaker of English, is a certified primary teacher from America. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education and used to be a homeroom teacher of first graders for two years in the United States. Although she's an experienced teacher, this is her first time to teach children who learn English as a foreign language.

North Oak Elementary School. This school was established in 1998, a suburban elementary school located on the skirts of Taichung City. It accommodates around 2,100 students and 100 faculty members. English education is one of its school-based curriculum, and is introduced to students from the 1st to 6th grade. For the 1st and the 2nd graders, they receive one English lesson per week; for the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th graders, they have two English lessons per week. As for the implementation of team teaching, to make the administrative work simpler and to accommodate both teachers' working schedules, only four out of the total nine 4th-grade classes received team-taught English class by Mrs. Lee and Miss Jones. Of the two periods of English classes per week for the participating 4th graders, one will be team-taught and the other one will remain to be carried out by Mrs. Lee alone. That is, the participating teachers taught four classes together that counts up to four collaborative teaching hours per week. So each class received approximately a total of fifteen team-taught lessons over the 16-week period. Besides, for this venture to proceed smoothly, Mrs. Lee and Miss Jones set aside four hours a week for pre and post class discussion.

Data Collection

In order to capture the nuances and essences of four cases, data will be collected from multiple sources: videotapes of team-taught English classes, interviews with teachers, analytic discussions between Mrs. Lee and Miss Jones, and teachers' reflective notes. During their eighteen-week long semesters, both the NEST and the local teacher kept their original drafts of lesson plans and syllabi. Notes were taken at face-to-face, pre- and post-planning sessions with their partners. Team-teaching

classes were periodically videotaped. E-mail message exchanges between teaching partners were also collected for later analysis.

Information was also gathered by employing a common technique used by historians, the first-person account. Using the data collected, both participants reflected upon and explore the research question as it relates to a couple of their past team taught courses.

Data Analysis

The interpretation of the case study data intended to achieve two major purposes. First, the analysis aimed to include a full range of collaborations, i.e., syllabus design, lesson plan, course instruction, etc. Second, reoccurring themes emerged from the areas of syllabus design, lesson plan, course instruction, and teacher development were identified.

Results

In this section, results of current study will be presented as potential answers to the four research questions posed alongside this project for establishing the collaboration between the NEST and the local Taiwanese teacher.

In general, Mrs. Lee and Miss Jones thought positively about this cross-cultural collaboration and perceived gains in their professional development, especially to Mrs. Lee, whose sense of efficacy has grown in almost each dimension under the inspection. Team teaching promotes Mrs. Lee's sense of efficacy. Before that, Mrs. Lee expressed that her teaching was very much confined by the school curriculum and the textbook used. The exam-driven style and insufficient class hours not only made her feel pressured, but also gave her a sense of powerless. She had no choice but to rush through the lessons, so that she can get students ready for the school tests. Some students hence become test-oriented, caring so much about whether what they learn today would be tested tomorrow. As a result, Mrs. Lee felt troubled and didn't see much room for her to diversify her instruction. In addition, her limited English teaching experiences also affects her sense of efficacy. As she noted:

I usually go straight from the book. I'd lead my students through the text, and explain the meanings and the grammatical points to them. If it were not for all those tests that the kids have to take, I would prefer using children's books as a means of instruction. They are much more fun to teach, and you know, they have that repeated nature. After the kids read the stories, they would acquire the major sentence structure... Anyway, the reality is, I am all tied up by the school curriculum. I really don't like that. Well, don't you think the sentences in our textbook boring? It's difficult for me to come up with different ways to teach so far. The other thing is I am still young in teaching English. If I can have more autonomy and more experiences, I think I will become better.

Gladly, team teaching helped enhance Mrs. Lee's instructional strategies. By working closely and collaboratively with Miss Jones, their English lessons became

more interesting and diversified. In her words:

When I taught by myself, I wouldn't bother to come up with so many classroom activities. You know, I have eight classes to teach, which means I have to teach the same thing eight times a week. It's just boring. But since Miss Jones came, she would suggest us use various methods and activities to teach, which I think is great. To truly cooperate, we spent time discussing the lessons and the details, and so the instruction became more diversified than before. I also found it more enjoyable to teach.

Miss Jones's Accounts of Team-Teaching

Based on her past teaching experiences in the United States, Miss Jones revealed a great deal of confidence in her ability to engage the students before she taught English in Taiwan. During the interview, Miss Jones stated that being very positive with the students is her number one strategy to keep students engaged. She encourages her students a lot, reassures that they're continuing to do better, and makes sure her feedback is not always negative. Besides, if the students are doing under expectation, Miss Jones would cautiously evaluate the situation and then helped them through, informing:

There are reasons for falling behind, they could be falling behind because of problems at home, they could be falling behind because of what they are doing in class, they could be falling behind because of they really can't do it. And you know, for other reasons too. If they are falling behind because of family, then the parents need to know. Uh, if it's because of class, that's the classroom management comes in. This kid is not doing well because of sitting next by this other student, so we need to move them, you know. If it's because they can't, then you have to find exactly what's wrong. Like sometimes is through testing, sometimes is through...whatever, but there are ways to help the student.

As Miss Jones explained, not being able to effectively communicate with the students in Chinese limits her ability in engaging students fully. Even though till the end she realized that it's possible to communicate without the language because it doesn't take the language to show that she cares and wants them to learn, she considered it's hard to engage the students for the whole 40 minutes without Mrs. Lee, explaining:

Maybe I was comparing the two, working with English-speaking kids from the States, and knowing how to engage them because I am able to talk to them, opposed to the Chinese speaking kids, I can't, I am limited in what I can do, because of the language, and how I need my team teaching partner to help out with that too. To engage students, I mean you can, you can engage students for a certain link of time, uh, anyone can engage students for any link of time, for a

small link of time. But when you do 40 minutes of class, you really need someone who's able to finish, pulling into together.

Besides, when facing the students who are not interested in learning or who are being unfocused, Miss Jones continues, "I think it would have been useful for my Chinese language, do you know, just to make small talk with the ones who really didn't care about it." To Miss Jones, she does as much as she can, while Mrs. Lee is the one who's able to build the bridge. Therefore, language becomes the main barrier, lowering Miss Jones's sense of efficacy in this area.

The interview shows that Miss Jones is a very skillful and reflective teacher. She constantly evaluates and reflects on her teaching in order to be a more effective teacher. Miss Jones tried not only to use what she knows works, but sometimes put new things to get students' attention. She doesn't use the same thing over and over again because students would get bored. Similar to Mrs. Lee, Miss Jones perceived herself good at classroom management. She believed classroom management is fundamental to successful teaching. As she noted, "I believe first you have to manage the kids and then you teach them, you can't teach and manage. If you're not good discipline, your kids aren't gonna learn. And if your kids don't learn, then you are not an effective teacher".

Implication and Conclusion

The results of current study pointed out both participating teachers benefited tremendously from this collaboration as evident in their continuous interest in future team teaching, their increased sense of confidence as English teachers, and their professional growth. Though both teachers never team-taught a class before this collaboration, they both saw a great deal of advantages in cross-cultural team-teaching, such as mutual learning between the partners, reciprocal mentoring for each other, and refreshed look into one's own teaching. Both teachers recognized the importance of pre and post-class discussions where they had chances to exchange ideas, express concerns candidly, think retrospectively, and stimulate professional growth. In addition, both teachers also mentioned constant monitoring and reflection helped them a lot, especially when they were team-teaching for the first time. Having opportunities to think retrospectively and voice concerns constantly alleviates their anxiety as they stepped into the uncertainty of the partnership in front of 40 something students. The language barrier encountered by Miss Jones prevented her from functioning fully. For the future cross-cultural collaboration, it is desirable and equally important to require certain Chinese language proficiency of the NEST, so that the NEST would be able to teach to their strength while collaborating with the local teachers.