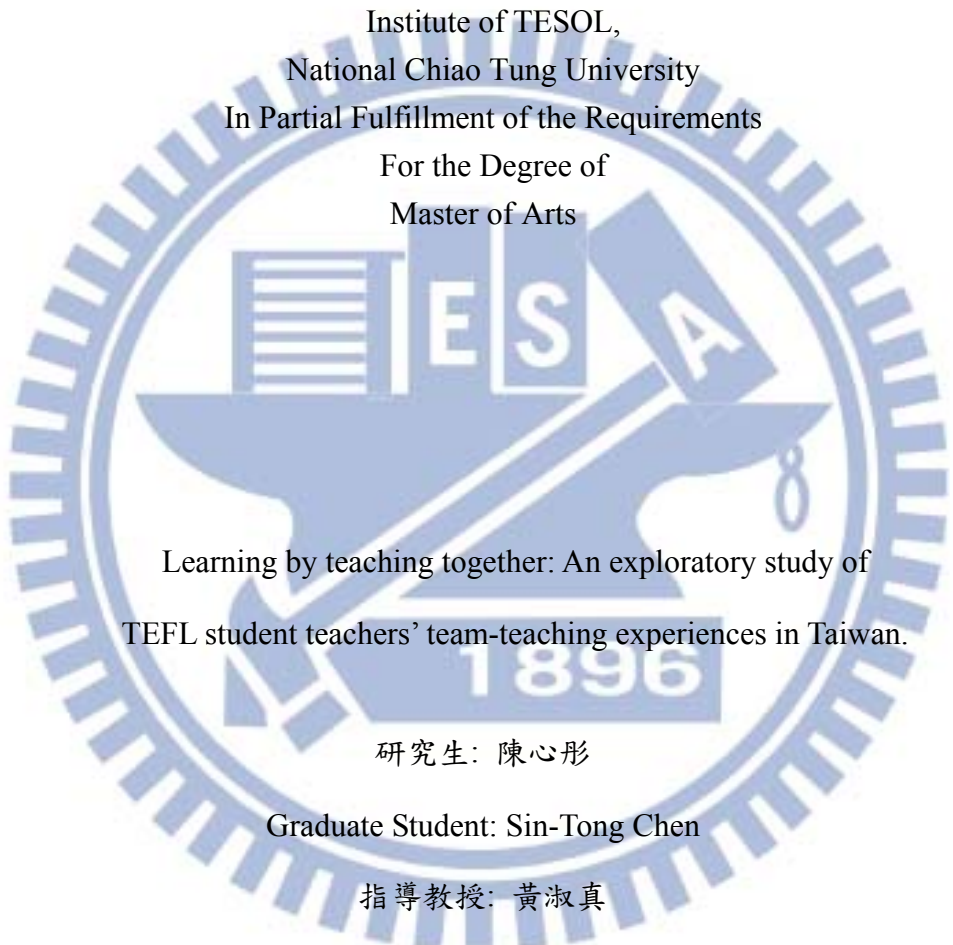


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Learning by teaching together: An exploratory study of  
TEFL student teachers' team-teaching experiences in Taiwan.

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論文名稱：從協同教學中學習：探究以英語為外語教學的學生教師之小組協同教學經驗。

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## 中文摘要

很多的研究者(Bartlett, 1990; Buchberger et al., 2000; Guyton, 2003; Johnson, 2002; Lieberman & Miller, 1990)建議師資培育機構應該考量發展能鼓勵合作的教學經驗，因為合作教學有益於提高個人的學習和賦予老師不同的角色。過去的研究致力於外籍和台灣當地的在職英文教師之間的小組協同教學(e.g., Chen, 2008; Cheng, 2004; Chou, 2005; Liou, 2002; Lou, 2005; Pan, 2004; Tsai, 2007; Wang, 2006); 但是卻少有研究探討協同教學對於本籍英語為外語教學(TEFL)的學生教師之專業發展。

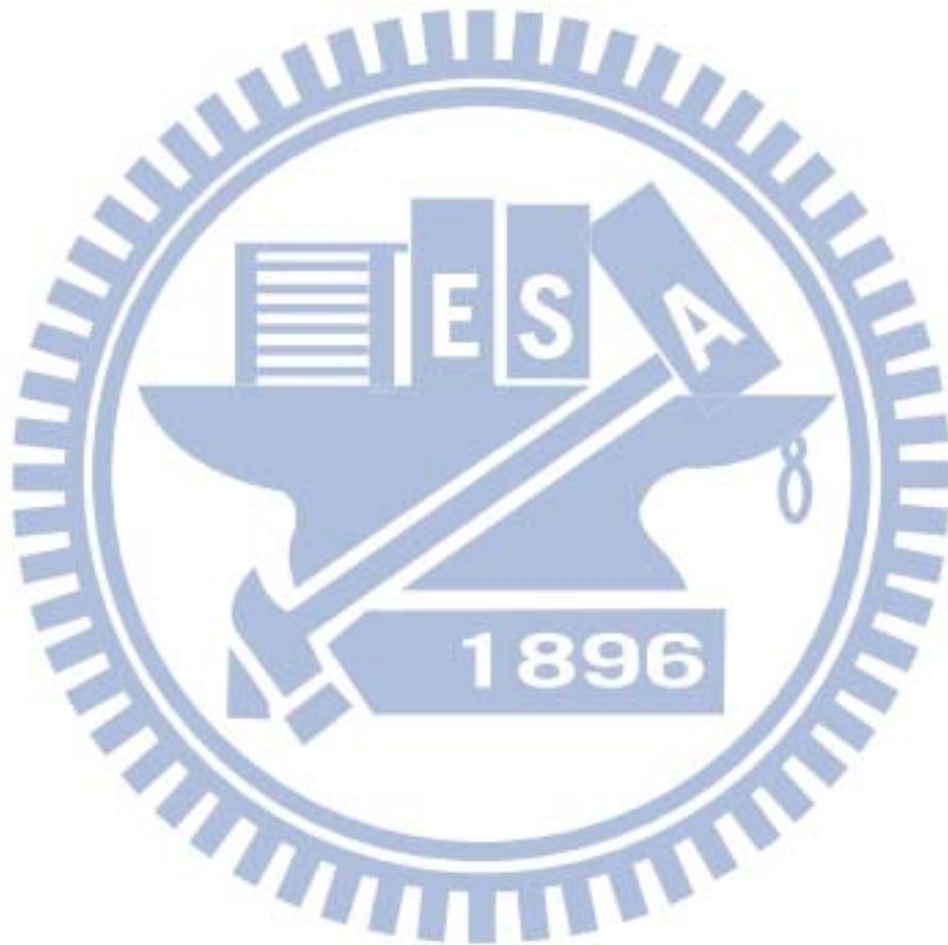
因此，本研究試圖探究以英語為外語教學的學生教師之小組協同教學經驗，並且了解學生教師在合作教學關係中所獲得的成長。本研究的對象是兩對正在台灣某一所英語教學研究所就讀的研究生。這四位學生教師，兩人一組，教授大學生全民英語檢定的測驗準備技巧。本研究為質性的個案研究，使用的資料收集方法包括課室觀察、半結構式訪談、研究參與者的教學日誌、開放式問卷、研究者的實地札記和課堂教學的錄影來收集資料以求完備。

本研究結果顯示學生教師對協同教學敘述和觀點不同。研究參與者提供象徵協同教學的隱喻，以及她們描述最難忘的教學事件，有助於我們了解她們的協同教學經驗。研究參與者也在協同教學過程中扮演不同的角色。她們對各種不同角色的詮釋有助於了解合作教學的經驗。而關於從中獲得的成長，研究結果顯示學生教師於課程及教材設計方面的知識成長最多。此外，她們也透過參

與備課過程和課堂觀察，了解彼此在教學上的優勢和弱點。

最後依據本研究結果，討論以英語為外語教學的教育機構，如何設計並實施協同教學於課程之中。也針對教師實習制度提出相關建議，期望未來能融入協同教學的概念，提升學生教師的專業成長。

關鍵字：協同教學、學生教師、專業合作、近側發展區(ZPD)



## Abstract

Researchers (Bartlett, 1990; Buchberger et al., 2000; Guyton, 2003; Johnson, 2002; Lieberman & Miller, 1990) have often suggested that pre-service teacher preparation institutions should consider developing field experiences that encourage teamwork since collaboration with others is beneficial to enhancing individual learning and creating new roles for teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Previous research has been devoted to team teaching between foreign and local English in-service teachers in Taiwan (e.g., Chen, 2008; Cheng, 2004; Chou, 2005; Liou, 2002; Lou, 2005; Pan, 2004; Tsai, 2007; Wang, 2006); however, there is little research on team teaching as a facet of nonnative Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) pre-service teachers' professional development.

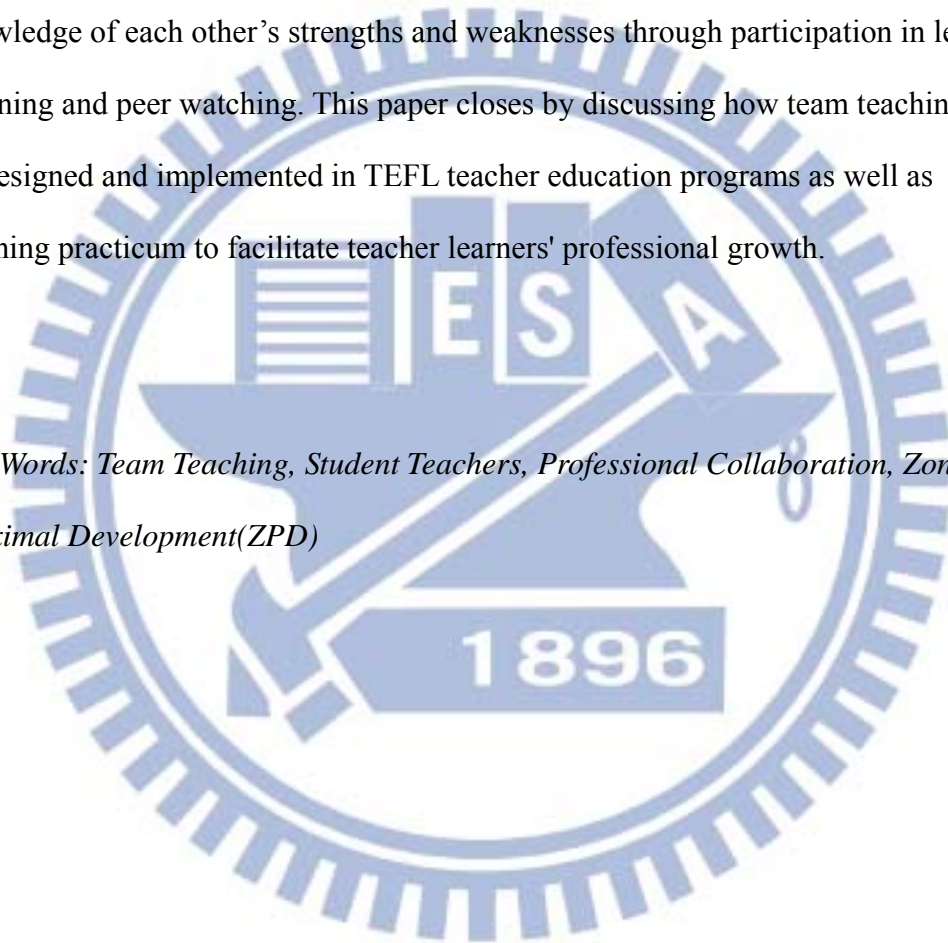
Therefore, this study seeks to explore the team teaching experiences of TEFL student teachers, and to illuminate student teachers' growth in a collaborative-teaching relationship. The participants are two pairs of the 1<sup>st</sup>-year graduate students pursuing their Masters of Art (MA) degree in an Institute of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in Taiwan. The four student teachers, two in a team, teach college students General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) test-preparation skills. To explore the team teaching experiences, the study utilizes a qualitative case study design. Multiple data collection methods were adopted, including classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, reflective logs kept by the student teachers, open-ended questionnaires, researcher's field notes and video-recording the lessons.

Findings suggested that student teachers' description and perception of their experiences in team teaching differed. The metaphors they provided for team teaching and the teaching incidents they described as the most memorable serve as a



window to understand their experiences. In addition, the participants took the different roles during the team-teaching process. The interpretation of the varied roles given by each participant helps to gain a better understanding of their experiences of collaboration. With regard to the teachers' growth, findings revealed that the student teachers benefited from the collaboration, especially the increasing knowledge of course and material design. In addition, they also gained the knowledge of each other's strengths and weaknesses through participation in lesson planning and peer watching. This paper closes by discussing how team teaching can be designed and implemented in TEFL teacher education programs as well as teaching practicum to facilitate teacher learners' professional growth.

*Key Words: Team Teaching, Student Teachers, Professional Collaboration, Zone of Proximal Development(ZPD)*



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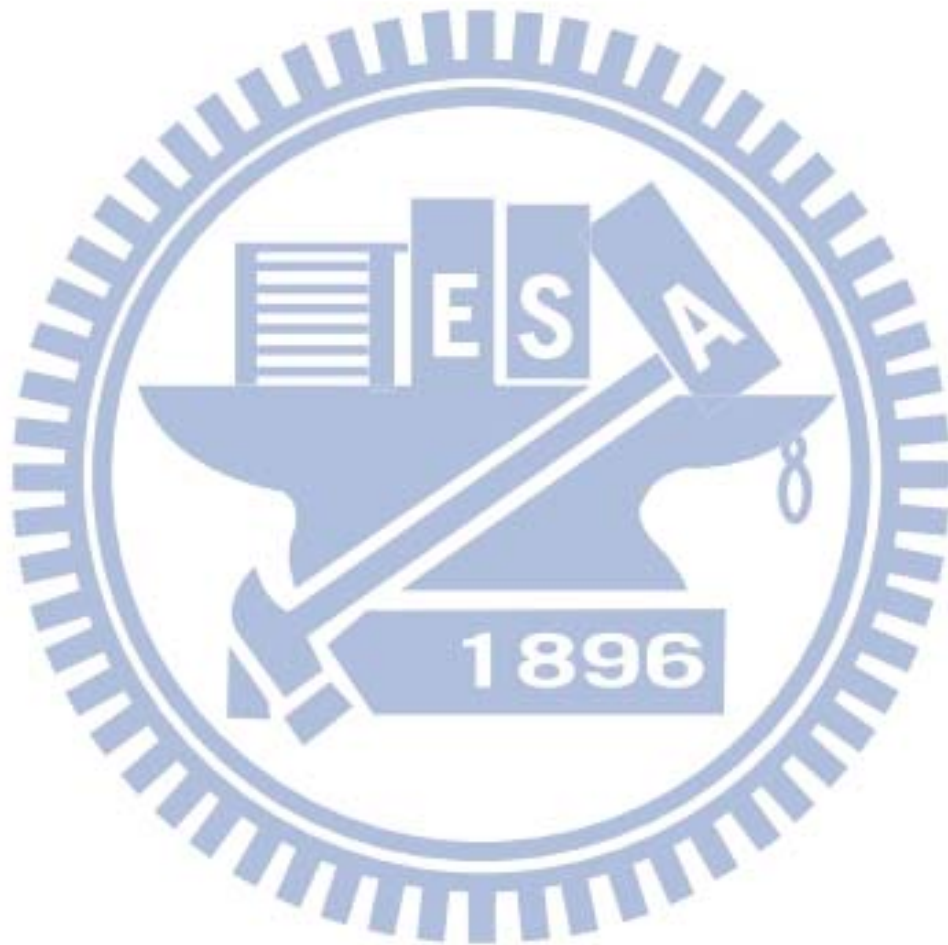
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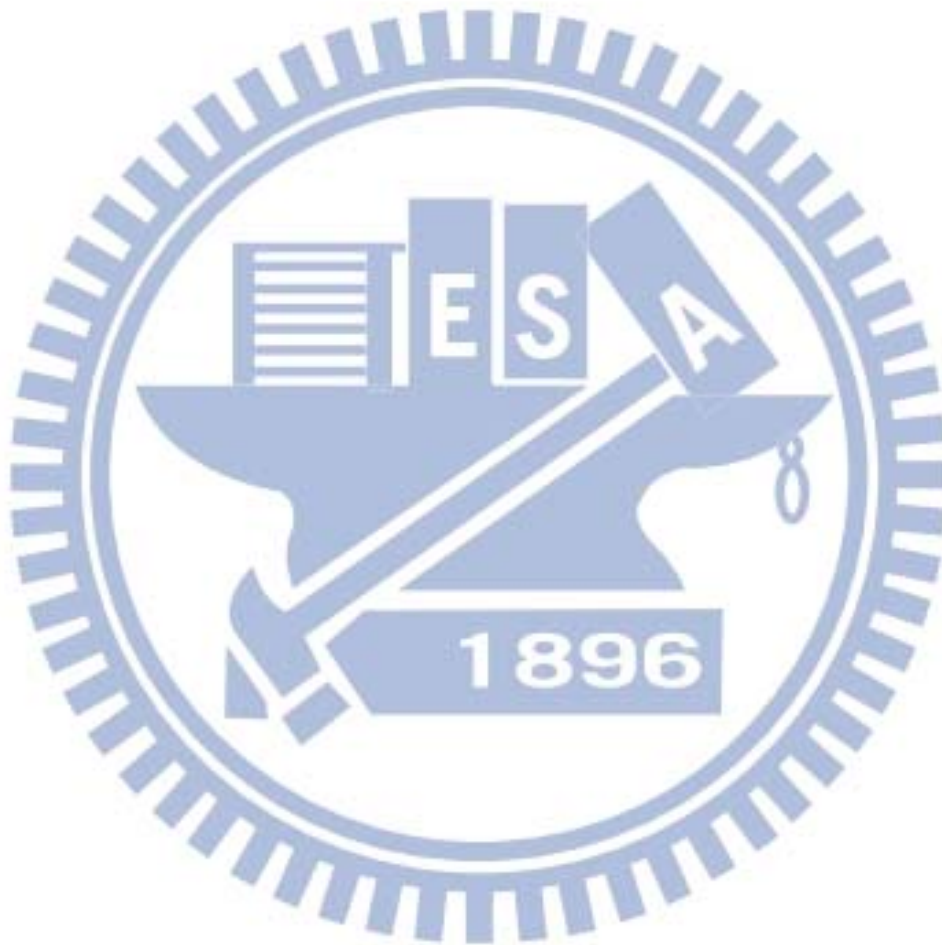
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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

The first chapter, Introduction, discusses the background and rationale of the inquiry, the study's purpose and significance, and research limitations. Several terminologies which are important in the current study will be also defined.

### 1.1 Background and Rationale

#### A Need to Rethink Student Teaching

The premise of the current research is based on the view that it is no longer sufficient for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) programs to solely offer student teachers a tailored and highly specialized knowledge base often consisting of second/foreign language acquisition, linguistics, TEFL methodology, testing and assessment, and a variety of specially-designed courses. The reason of such perception is that TEFL student teachers who merely acquire pre-packaged professional knowledge and teaching tactics from experienced teachers or teacher educators without real teaching practices are very likely to encounter "reality shock" after teaching in a real classroom. The unpleasant or even failure experiences in novice teachers' early years of teaching may weaken their teaching commitment and could pose negative impacts on their future professional development. As a matter of fact, the assumption noted above is supported by a number of studies which provide a substantial insight regarding the marginal effect of teacher education. Specifically, some teacher candidates feel that education programs do not prepare them adequately for the challenges they face during their initial practice (Kagan, 1992; Widden, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998).

Given the view that the content of teacher education constitutes not merely the



theories of teaching and the knowledge learned from textbooks, field experience has become a centerpiece of teacher education reform over the past several years (Bullough, et al., 2003). Therefore, over the past years there has been a tremendous wave of interest in the research regarding how to improve the quality and extent of prospective teachers' field experiences (Latham & Vogt, 2007; Parson & Stephenson, 2005; Smith, 2004; Young, Bullough, Draper, Smith, & Erickson, 2005). Despite such efforts, the general perception remains unchanged, which means generally learning to teach is still considered an individual endeavor, and good teachers in many ways work alone (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). With regard to the status quo of prospective teachers' field experience, Bullough et al. (2003) propose that the typical pattern of student teaching remained little changed for 50 years. The traditional pattern of field experience consists of a student teacher who is placed in a classroom with a single cooperating teacher for varying lengths of time, a term or perhaps a school year. Under such circumstances, the student teacher is expected to take full responsibility for classroom instruction and management as quickly as possible, and is arranged to practice his or her solo teaching as the partial fulfillment of practicum training (Bullough et al., 2003, p.57). The traditional practicum setting brings the connection among university, school, and student teacher that are not closely united. As Wideen et al. (1998) state:

“The university provides the theory, the school provides the setting, and the student teacher provides the effort to bring them together (Britzman, 1986).

The results of research on the practicum suggest that we seriously need to question this notion.”(Wideen et al., 1998, p.152)

While practicum has been regarded as the bridge between theories and practices in teacher education, there is a growing cognition of the shortcomings of traditional patterns of field experience. For instance, in the model of traditional practicum, cooperating teachers exert

tremendous power over the learning process of student teachers (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). Because of the hierarchical inequality inherent in this model, the challenge for student teachers is clear: “survival appears uppermost in their minds, with risk taking being minimal and the need for a good grade essential” (Wideen et al., 1998, p.155). Nonetheless, given student teachers’ focus on survival and intention of receiving a positive evaluation, the concern of whether student teachers’ professional development is significantly enhanced through their practicum teaching calls for further in-depth investigations.

Consistent with teacher education in general, in the field of second/foreign language teacher education, the TESOL practicum is considered to be one of the most important experiences for most pre-service teachers to learn to teach. Nevertheless, according to Johnson (1996), what actually occurs during the TESOL practicum is still largely unknown and virtually ignored in most second-language teacher preparation programs, which has also been pointed out in several studies (see for example Freeman, 1989; Richards, 1987; Richards & Crookes, 1988). This argument parallels to Zeichner’s (1980) assertion—“The appropriate question at this state of knowledge is not ‘are we right?’ but only ‘what is out there?’” (p.47).

Though the situation is little better in mainstream education, there is a persistent concern that student teachers’ practicum may not reach their full potential value (Goker, 2006). Responding to this concern, Bullough et al. (2002) argue that, “There is a growing need to rethink student teaching and to generate alternative models of field experience” (p.58). Given the increasing difficulty and complexity of teaching, there is a need for modes that enhance teachers “competence in collaborative problem-solving” and “competence of co-operation and team work” (Buchberger et al., 2000, p.49). Buchberger et al. (2000) further point out that “As regards education and training the move towards

*more autonomy for schools* and an increasing necessity for teacher *team-work* makes the acquisition of these competencies vitally important” (p.49, italics in original). In Dangel and Guyton’s (2003) review of constructivist-oriented teacher education programs and their effects, they identify eight significant elements across 35 teacher education programs. Three of the eight significant elements are problem solving, collaborative learning, and cohort groups, which also highlights a collaborative role orientation to learning rather than private practice of individual learners.

By the same token, in an article portraying the future of second language teacher education, Johnson (2002) maintains that it is critical for any teacher education program to construct professional development opportunities that feature “a collaborative effort, a reflective process, a situated experience, and a theorizing opportunity<sup>1</sup>.” Recognizing learning to teach as a collaborative effort places the locus of teacher learning not only within the individual teacher, or within a particular teacher education program, but among all those who participate in and have an impact on teacher learning (Johnson, 2002). In this perspective, it is essential that teacher education programs build collaborative partnerships both within and outside their own academic units.

Based on the conceptual framework discussed above, the current study therefore presumes that recent professional development efforts should move away from an emphasis on skills training to the “establishment of new norms of collegiality, experimentation, and risk-taking by promoting open discussion of issues, shared understandings, and a common vocabulary” (Lieberman & Miller, 1990, p. 1049). This form of development is based on the assumption that, firstly, “The element of sharing or

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<sup>1</sup> From “Second language teacher education,” by K. E. Johnson, 2002, *TESOL Matters*, 12(1). Retrieved July 6, 2009, from [http://www.tesol.org/s\\_tesol/sec\\_document.asp?CID=193&DID=929](http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=193&DID=929) *TESOL Matters* ceased publication in Fall 2003. Selected articles from *TESOL Matters* from 1997-2003 appear online and contents are viewed without page numbers. Thus, here the researcher quotes a part of writing without providing the precise page number on which the quotation is.



collaboration with colleagues offers the possibility of extending one's insights about oneself as teacher to oneself as an individual member of a larger community" (Bartlett, 1990, p.210). Secondly, the integration of the practice teaching experience with the campus program is essential in the design of many TEFL programs and crucial to student teachers' professional development. Also, the practice teaching experience recommended by the researcher differs from an internship in the nature of student teachers' responsibility since during the internship the student teachers assist the teacher but do not take full responsibility for teaching a class (Richards, 1998, p.20). Thus, creating opportunities for student teachers to experience collaboration in teaching and learning by making student teachers equally responsible for teaching should be advocated and implemented in TEFL programs to bring more benefits to the prospective English teachers.

#### Team Teaching as a Starting-Point

Language teachers' professional collaboration can take many different forms, for instance, peer coaching, critical friendship, action research, critical incidents, case studies, teacher support groups, and of course team teaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Of the many effective ways of creating a professional learning community for prospective language teachers, the researcher defines the professional collaboration under the current investigation as team teaching because the purpose of team teaching can adequately fit into *the nature of the teaching setting and the educational background and teaching experience of the participants* of the study. Prior to the purpose of team teaching, the background information of the teaching context and the participants will be described next in order to provide readers with the prerequisite knowledge of this study. After which the purpose of team teaching and the link between team teaching and the current study are discussed.

#### *Background Information of the Teaching Context and the Participants* The



participants chosen for this study are two pairs of co-teachers who are graduate students pursuing their Master of Art (MA) degree in the Institute of TESOL in one national university located in northern Taiwan. Similar to most graduate TESOL programs, the curriculum offered in this program covers areas such as TESOL Methodology, Second Language Acquisition, Learning Motivation, Teaching Reading/ Speaking/ Reading/ Writing: Theory and Practice, Sociolinguistics, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). In addition to second language teaching and learning-related courses, this language teacher preparation program has offered an opportunity for student teachers to teach college students GEPT test-taking skills. It is worth mentioning that such practice teaching experience is neither a partial fulfillment of an MA degree in TESOL nor a part of the teaching content in any MA courses. Instead of being forced to teach, student teachers in this program are encouraged to practice teaching on a voluntary basis.

The major reason for the graduate program to offer the GEPT-related courses is due to a budget provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE), which aims to improve college students' overall English proficiency level. Responsible for well spending the budget to facilitate college students' English learning, every semester the MA program designs and provides a series of English learning-related activities and courses, e.g., English Table, Learning English through Watching Western Movies, and GEPT Class, to students on the campus. These English learning-related activities and courses are carried out on a non-credit and non-monetary basis, and students on the campus voluntarily participate in these activities and courses which are not a part of their school curriculum.

Since the summer of 2007, the student teachers in this MA program have started to conduct GEPT lessons voluntarily. Those who register for taking part in GEPT Class can choose to teach independently or co-teach with a team member (i.e., a peer as a teaching partner) and decide on a specific language skill (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, or

writing) which the course aims to focus on. None of the independent teachers or teaching teams are given any instruction about how to teach, nor are any expectation for formal collaboration established. Student teachers are responsible for constructing the syllabus before the class officially begins and discussing the lesson plan with the cooperating teacher to ensure smooth delivery of each lesson. The total class hours of GEPT class is 20 hours long and is offered in both spring and fall semester. Given the heavy burden of school work many MA students usually have, all of the student teachers in this study decided to schedule their GEPT classes during the summer break of the academic year 2008. By so doing, they can save all their time and efforts to accomplish their teaching tasks. During the 5-week intensive GEPT courses, the student teachers need to undertake two 120-minute lessons per week.

Regarding participants' educational background, three of the participants received their Bachelor degree with a major in English while the other majored in Special Education and minored in English in a university of education. None of the student teachers had the experience of teaching college students before. All the participants are classmates currently studying in the same MA program of TESOL; all of them are the 1<sup>st</sup>-year students whose ages range from twenty-four to twenty-six.

*The Purpose of Team Teaching* According to Richards and Farrell (2005), the purpose of team teaching is to provide a collaborative-learning community in which “both teachers generally take equal responsibility for the different stages of the teaching process. The shared planning, decision making, teaching, and review that result serve as a powerful medium of collaborative learning” (p.160). The researcher should point out here that, according to the information yielded from the opportunist talks before investigation, co-teachers in each team both perceive themselves equally responsible for all stages of lesson, including pre-instructional planning, lesson delivery, and follow-up work in

relation to the GEPT course. They consider their role of co-teacher as team members who are both closely and equally involved in all aspects of teaching. This type of professional collaboration is different from, for instance, peer observation, peer coaching, critical incidents, and teacher support group, for team teaching involves “a cycle of team planning, team teaching, and team follow-up” (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.159) which is not the primary focus of the many activities noted above.

Another professional activity similar to team teaching is peer coaching, which has been investigated and advocated by several previous studies and books due to the many benefits that peer coaching is capable of providing (see for example Brown, 2001; Goker, 2006; Vidmar, 2006). Nonetheless, compared with team teaching, peer coaching demands more structured interaction through three initial phases—peer watching, peer feedback, and peer coaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.151). In the first phase, teams need to decide what they will focus on their peer-coaching activity, such as a specific technique of teaching. In the process of peer feedback, the coach, who has collected data, presents this information to his or her peer. The most important component of peer coaching is the third phase where the coach plans and offers suggestions for improvement. In addition to the three phases, it is crucial to note that real peer coaching performs on a system of request, that is, “One teacher requests a peer to coach him or her on some aspect of teaching in order to improve his or her teaching” (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.153). However, the teaching context mentioned earlier is not structured in a way that peer coaching is expected to. Furthermore, the student teachers who collaborate to carry out GEPT class do not choose any specific topics for improvement. Instead, the student teachers regard themselves as equal partners not having any experience of teaching adult learners and being equally responsible for all stages of conducting lessons.



## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

With the phenomenon of importing foreign English teachers in Taiwan since 2003 (Ministry of Education, Republic of China, 2003) , there has been rapid growth in literature examining cooperative teaching between native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-NESTs (see for example, Chen, 2008; Cheng, 2004; Chou, 2005; Liou, 2002; Lou, 2005; Pan, 2004; Tsai, 2007; Wang, 2006). These publications help validate the field of “intercultural team teaching” (Carless, 2006) and lay the foundation for future research associated with other types of team-teaching collaborations. However, except for team-teaching practices between foreign and local English in-service teachers, there has been little progress in the field of TEFL in relation to other types of team-teaching collaboration, such as equal partners, leader and participant, mentor and apprentice, and advanced speaker and less proficient speaker (Richards & Farrell, 2005, pp.162-163) and in their implementations in language classrooms. Additionally, there appears to be relatively little systematic research, if any, which has been done to investigate team teaching as a facet of TEFL student teachers’ professional growth in the field of foreign language teacher education in Taiwan. To fill the void left by earlier studies, the current study aims to probe into collaborative language teaching among Taiwanese TEFL student teachers. Furthermore, recognizing that the collaborative-teaching setting under the current investigation is not a uniform practice across many TESOL programs in Taiwan, the author considers this type of practice opportunity unique and worth exploring. Hence, it is hoped that the information reported here will lead to a better understanding of how engaging in team teaching influences TEFL student teachers’ professional growth, and will be useful for practitioners in relation to how team teaching can be designed and successfully implemented in TEFL teacher training programs.



### **1.3 Research Purpose**

Building on the premise outlined above, the current study intends (1) to explore the team teaching experiences of TEFL student teachers in Taiwan and (2) to illuminate TEFL student teachers' professional growth, if any, in a collaborative-teaching relationship. It has been recognized that learning to teach is an on going and complex process which involves many cognitive, affective, individual, and contextual factors (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Thus, inquiry focusing on second language teachers' professional growth should provide a more in-depth examination to uncover the crucial issues and phenomena found within the complicated process of learning to teach. The researcher, aiming to provide more holistic and detailed descriptions of four TEFL student teachers' team teaching experiences, will employ a qualitative research design to probe more deeply into student teachers' mental process, experiences, and perspectives. As it has been argued that qualitative-oriented methods not only allow for deeper understanding of the phenomena and participants' lived experiences (Vélez-Rendón, 2002) but have been found well suited to portray teachers' ways of thinking and the contexts they work within (Crookes, 1997; Freeman & Richards, 1996). Given the complexity of the learning-to-teach process, it is believed that the data generated from qualitative methods are richer and more comprehensive than statistically analyzing scores collected from quantitative methods.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Two research questions are proposed to guide the investigation:

1. What are the TEFL student teachers' perceptions of their team-teaching experience?
2. What skills and knowledge do the TEFL student teachers learn from their team-teaching experience?

## 1.5 Definitions of Important Terms

**TEFL** — Teaching English as a Foreign Language, refers to teaching English to students whose first language is not English. In this study, the researcher considers the two acronyms — TEFL and TESOL— to be interchangeable.

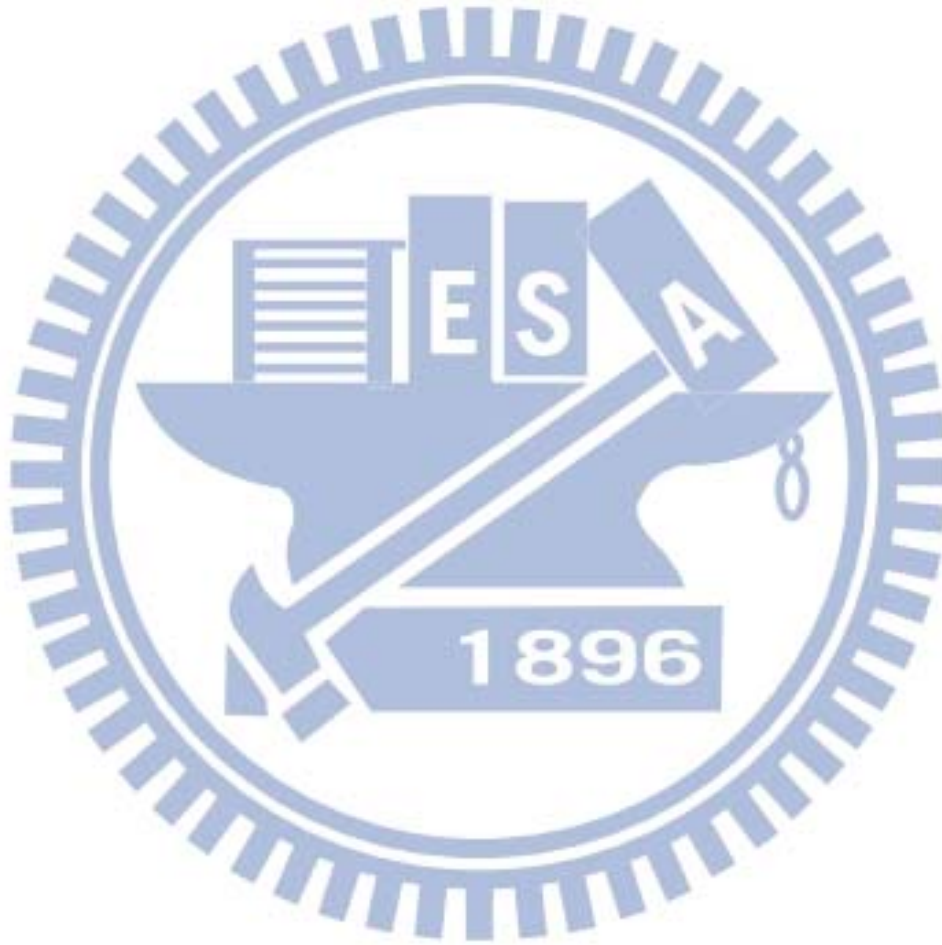
**TESOL** — stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in this study, referring to teaching English as an additional language to those who speak other languages as their mother tongue. In this study, TESOL is most often used to describe the profession of teaching English to students of other languages. TESOL, however, is also the name of a graduate program.

**Team Teaching** — is defined as “a process in which two or more teachers share the responsibility for planning the class or course, for teaching it, and for any follow-up work associated with the class such as evaluation and assessment. It thus involves a cycle of team planning, team teaching, and team follow-up” (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.159). In this study, team teaching involves two pairs of TESOL graduate students who take time and share responsibility to plan and conduct GEPT-related lessons for students studying in one national university located in western Taiwan. In the current study, the researcher conceives “team teaching” synonymous with “co-teaching,” and “collaborative teaching”, and they will be used interchangeably in this thesis.

**GEPT Courses** — refer to the non-credit English lessons associated with General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) test-preparation skills and offered to college students on the campus without monetary benefit. Since the summer of 2007, the TESOL Institute under the current investigation has been offering GEPT courses for the on-campus students. The three terms —“GEPT courses”, “GEPT-related courses” and “lessons of GEPT” — will be used interchangeably throughout the thesis

**Student Teachers of Team Teaching** — refer to the 1<sup>st</sup>-year students who are

engaging in their graduate study in the Institute of TESOL at one national university in Taiwan. There are four student teachers participating in team teaching, two in a team, teaching college students GEPT test preparation skills. None of them have had the experience of team-teaching before. The three terms — ” student teachers of team teaching”, “co-teachers”, and “team-teachers” — will be regarded as identical terms and will be used interchangeably throughout the study.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter lays out the theoretical framework of this study. The review of related literature is divided into two sections. The first section elucidates some issues which pertain to *student teachers' professional development in the field of TESOL*, including a discussion of (a) language teacher's knowledge base, (b) professional collaboration as a vehicle of knowledge construction, and (c) language teacher education and field-based learning. The second section discusses *team teaching* which begins with (a) a general description of team teaching, followed by (b) positive dimensions of collaborative teaching among student teachers, (c) issues on teacher collaboration and teacher learning, and (d) a review of team teaching studies of preparing teacher candidates. After identifying the important intellectual traditions that guide the current study, the researcher will end up each section by providing a brief summary and the discussion of the link between the literature and this study.

### **2.1 TESOL Student Teachers' Professional Development**

#### **2.1.1 Language Teacher's Knowledge Base**

The term "knowledge base" pertains to "the repertoire of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers require to effectively carry out classroom practices" (Fradd & Lee, 1998, p.761-762). Though the literature does not provide us with one undisputed establishment of language teacher's knowledge base, efforts to define what language teachers know have been undertaken in the past few years (Velez-Rendon, 2002). Among several perspectives delineating teacher's knowledge base, one of the oft-cited is Shulman's (1987) framework which accounts for the components of teachers' knowledge.



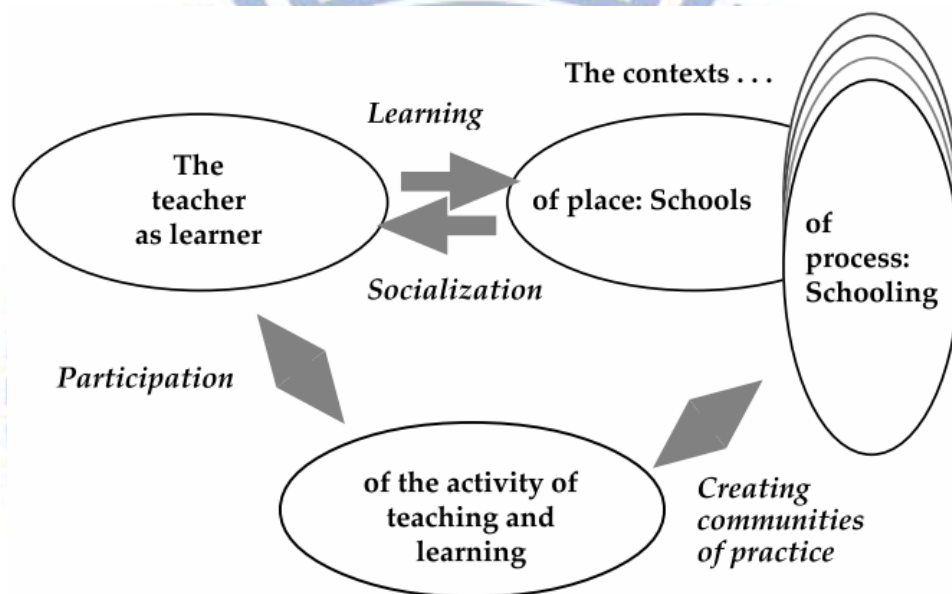
The essential components identified by Shulman (1987) include (a) content knowledge; (b) general pedagogical knowledge; (c) curriculum knowledge; (d) pedagogical content knowledge; (e) knowledge of learners; (f) knowledge of educational contexts; and (g) knowledge of education ends, purposes, and values.

Except for Shulman's definition, the more recent ones include Richards' (1998) and Freeman and Johnson's (1998) frameworks. Richards (1998) regards the following six dimensions of expertise as the scope of second language teacher education: (a) theories of teaching; (b) teaching skills; (c) communication skills and language proficiency; (d) subject matter knowledge; (e) pedagogical reasoning skills and decision making; and (f) contextual knowledge. It is worth mentioning that Richards' model (1998) differs from that of Shulman (1987) in respect to the emphasis on teachers' personal *theories of teaching* which serves as "a positive or negative filter to acceptance of subject matter knowledge or general teaching skills" (p.14). Drawing upon the previous studies with foci of teachers' personal knowledge or experience (Almarza, 1996; Woods, 1996; as cited in Richards, 1998), Richards (1998) therefore maintains that personal theories of teaching may function as the key to the development of a teacher's overall understanding and approach to teaching.

In an attempt to embark on a broader conceptualization of teacher's knowledge base, Freeman and Johnson (1998) propose a tripartite framework by responding to a deceptively simple question, that is, "Who teaches what to whom, where?" (see Figure 1, reproduced from Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p.406). Three primary domains are identified as crucial components which encompass the knowledge-base of language teacher education, including (a) the nature of teacher-learner: teacher as a learner of teaching; (b) the nature of schools and schooling: the social context within which teacher-learning and teaching take place; and (c) the nature of language teaching: the pedagogical process, the subject matter

and content (also see Liou, 2000).

This tripartite framework highlights the dynamic nature of teachers themselves, defined as learning agents who are “not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills; they are individuals who enter teacher education programs with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do in their classrooms” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p.401). Moreover, according to Freeman and Johnson (1998), participation in social practices and contexts is



*Note.* Domains are in boldface; processes are in italics. From “Reconceptualizing the knowledge-base of language teacher education,” by D. Freeman, and K. E. Johnson, 1998, *TESOL Quarterly*, 32, pp.397-417.

*Figure 1.* Framework for the knowledge-base of language teacher education

of crucial importance to help teachers establish effective knowledge-base (p.408). During the process of engaging in multiple social and cultural contexts (i.e., contexts of school and schooling, and pedagogical process), teachers’ experience is therefore enriched, and their attitudes towards teaching may also undergo significant changes.

### 2.1.2 Professional Collaboration as a Vehicle of Knowledge Construction

Although teacher development can occur through a teacher's own personal initiative, collaboration with others can both enhance individual learning and encourage greater peer-based learning through mentoring, and sharing skills, experience, and solutions to common problems (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.12). Richards and Farrell (2005) examine a wide variety of methods available for language teacher development and consider useful activities that involve working with another colleague, including (a) *peer coaching*; (b) *peer observation*; (c) *critical friendships*; (d) *action research*; (e) *critical incidents*; and (f) *team teaching*. Except for the activities noted above which demand one-to-one interaction and collaboration for implementing them, the following four types of activity are carried out at the group-based level: (a) *case studies*; (b) *action research*; (c) *journal writing*; and (d) *teacher support groups* (p.14). Drawing upon the teacher collaboration tasks noted above, one can easily identify a prevailing education philosophy of constructivism which is currently popular in education including language teacher education. That is, knowledge is actively constructed and not passively received.

Social constructivists, such as Vygotsky (1978), and later Bruffee (1986) and Wertsch (1991), emphasized social interaction as the driving force and prerequisite to individuals' cognitive development. From the view of social constructivism, learning is described as—according to Russell (1993,)—"a constant interpretation, a constant re-weaving of the 'web of meaning' (Vygotsky), a constant 'reconstruction of experience' (Dewey) as human beings consciously evolve new social practices to meet human needs, to adapt to and transform their environments" (p.179). Moreover, social constructivists maintain that interaction in the collective is a necessary precondition for engaging in self-regulation. Self-regulation as a process is achieved when individuals are able to find their authentic voice during problem solving by using the meditational tool of language. Vygotsky (1978)

believed that isolated learning cannot lead to cognitive development. He firmly believed that social interaction is a prerequisite to learning and cognitive development. In other words, knowledge is constructed and leaning always involves more than one person. Vygotsky (1978) situated learning in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which he posited as being the “distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p.86).

In this respect, student teachers of foreign language are therefore expected to obtain opportunities to develop their cognition by actively communicating with others who are more proficient and thereby expend each other’s conceptual potential. Thus, within the ZPD (i.e., each individual’s zone of potential learning) more capable students can provide peers with new information and new ways of thinking so that all parties can create new means of understanding. This mutually beneficial social process can also lead more experienced students to discover missing information, gain new insights through interactions, and develop a qualitatively different way of thinking (Kyikos & Hashimota, 1997).

A closely related concept of professional collaboration is the notion of reflective practice. And it has been argued that, when teachers are encouraged to reflect critically on their teaching, the quality of their work experience is improved dramatically (Gomez & Tabachnick, 1992). According to Schön (1982), “reflective practitioners” are those who continually develop their professional expertise by interacting with situations of practice to try to solve problems, thereby gaining an increasingly deep understanding of their subject matter, of themselves as teachers, and of the nature of teaching. In a study relating to a team-taught graduate Spanish course (Knezevic & Scholl, 1996), the co-teachers who are also the researchers reflected upon their team teaching experience and considered the



process of collaborative planning beneficial for team teachers *to practice reflective dialogue* and *to think creatively*. As Knezevic and Scholl (1996) illustrated, while brainstorming ideas:

...we refrained from judging the ideas. Instead, we help each other express them more fully by asking questions to clarify and expand statements made. “What do you mean by a guessing game? How do you see us introducing the activity? Where do you see the activity leading?” were typical guiding questions. [...] Learning to express our ideas to one another and to ask nonjudgmental questions gave us a broad base from which to begin our teaching. (p.84)

Moreover, often in reflection after the class, one of the team teachers would ask, “Why did you do X?” By means of modeling, dialogue, and discussing, teachers worked to understand each other’s reasoning and motivation (Knezevic & Scholl, 1996, p.88). Their study ends up by advocating the crucial component of language teacher professional development— collaboration — “a catalyst and a mirror for exposing, expressing, and examining ideas” (Knezevic & Scholl, 1996, p.95). In addition, more future research and practice should be undertaken to illuminate the question with regard to how to create such opportunities for teachers to collaborate through which they could learn from each other.

### **2.1.3 Language Teacher Education and Field-Based Learning**

As noted in the previous chapter, literature concerning the general teacher education has provided evidence that teacher education programs have little bearing on what prospective teachers do in their classrooms, and do not prepare them for the challenge they find in their initial practices. According to a survey regarding how the teaching practicum is conducted in 120 graduate TESOL programs in U.S. (Richards & Crookes, 1988), results indicate that:

Some lead a certification so that graduates may teach in public schools; other programs have a particular specialization such as bilingual education, adult education, or teaching English overseas. Most attempt to achieve their goals through offering a balanced curriculum emphasizing both theory and practice. However, theory sometimes wins out over practice. (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p.9)

Richards and Hino (1983), in a survey of American TESOL graduates working in Japan, found that the most frequently studied courses in MA TESOL programs were phonology, transformational grammar, structural linguistics, second language acquisition, first language acquisition, and contrastive analysis. By contrast, little attention was apparently given to “education” topics: curriculum development, instructional practice, and evaluation. Except for one line of earlier studies on curriculum focus, several studies have explored the degree to which second language education coursework influences teacher pedagogical knowledge but the findings vary (Vélez-Rendón, 2002, p.460). Johnson’s (1994) study indicated that a number of preservice teachers considered language teacher preparation program less influential. Another research which is also conducted by Johnson (1996) reported a perceived mismatch between preservice teachers’ vision of teaching and the realities of the classroom. On the other hand, some studies demonstrated the positive effect of teacher education programs on transforming student teachers’ pretraining knowledge (Almarza, 1996), so do others by indicating that language teacher education programs contributed to preservice teachers’ familiarity with the discourse of teaching (Richards et al., 1996) and thus used this newly acquired professional discourse to rename their experience and construct their ways of thinking (Freeman, 1993).

Within the field of second language teacher education, a public debate has continued

over what should stand at the core of knowledge base of second language teacher education. Johnson (2006) notes that the fundamental arguments lie within two different views of knowledge base of language teacher education, that is, whether the knowledge base should remain grounded in the “core disciplinary knowledge about the nature of language and language acquisition” (Yates & Muchisky, 2003, p. 136; as cited in Johnson, 2006) or focus more primarily on how L2 teachers learn to teach and how they carry out their work (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a). In an article titled “*The Social Cultural Turn and Its Challenge for Second Language Teacher*”, Johnson (2006) contends that the traditional theory/practice dichotomy seems permeate the debate and is considered irrelevant to the sociocultural theory of human development. Instead of arguing over whether second language teachers should study, for instance, theories of SLA as part of a professional preparation program, Johnson (2006) asserts that “attention may be better focused on creating opportunities for L2 teachers to make sense of those theories in their professional lives and the settings where they work” (p.240).

It is of interest to see that teacher educators have continued to search for an educative balance of theory and practice in the field of teacher education. Tracing back to one hundred years ago that Dewey (1974) set out to define the “proper relationship of theory and practice” (p.314), he argued that the aims of practice should not be to gain immediate mastery. Rather, practice should serve as an instrument for “making real and vital theoretical instruction” (Dewey, 1974, p.314). As the teacher candidates begin to unravel and identify the theories behind their beliefs and the teaching practices they would like to adopt, they begin to take ownership of these theories and develop their own “teaching stance” (Smith, 2007). In this perspective, in order for teacher candidates to understand how theory and practice are integrated in the processes of teaching and learning to teach,

second language teacher education calls for more opportunities for teacher candidates to experience this integration through teaching practices.

#### **2.1.4 Interim Summary**

The first section of literature review aims to gain a clearer understanding of student teachers' professional development in the field of TESOL, including three important issues which come into play in the complex process of learning to teach. They are *language teacher's knowledge base*, *professional collaboration as a vehicle of knowledge construction*, and *language teacher education and field-based learning*. In the review of collaboration as a means of professional growth, constructivist view of teacher education and the notion of reflective practice are also discussed.

Judging from the review above, the researcher is informed that the teaching and learning process experienced by student teachers as they are undertaking student teaching is different from that of in-service or beginning teachers. Although second language teacher education benefits considerably from findings in general teacher education research, we must start paying attention to how the process of learning to teach unfolds in second language student teachers specifically, and what underlies this process. Also, as previously noted, attention of L2 teacher education may be better focused on creating opportunities for L2 teachers to make sense of those theories in their professional lives and the teaching settings, particularly those which could generate interaction in the collective. In the field of TEFL student teachers education, however, a further study is needed which takes a closer look at collaborative teaching among TEFL student teachers and investigates how this collaborative-teaching process influences student teachers' perceptions of being a prospective English teacher. This line of research may contribute to establishing a fertile dialogue with language teacher education community; nonetheless, it has been pointed out



that practice and research on collaborative language teaching have been remarkably absent from the literature in the field of TESOL. Given the research gap noted above, the current study aims to tap into team-teaching experience among TEFL student teachers. The focus in the next section will turn to team teaching, including a general description of team teaching, followed by advantages and important issues involved in the collaborative teaching relationship. Relevant studies related to student teachers' collaboration of learning to teach will also be reviewed.



## 2.2 Team Teaching

### 2.2.1 A General Description of Team Teaching

Various definitions of team teaching have been proposed over the decades to contribute to our emerging understanding of the essence of team teaching. Bess (2000) defines team teaching as a process in which all team members are equally responsible for student instruction, assessment, and equally evolved in the teaching unit to achieve learning objectives while Davis (1995) describes team teaching as “all arrangements that include two or more faculty in some level of collaboration in the planning and delivery of a course” (p. 8). In a book that depicts current approaches to professional development of language teachers, Richards and Farrell (2005) proposes that:

Team teaching (sometimes called pair teaching) is a process in which two or more teachers share the responsibility for teaching a class. The teachers share responsibility for planning the class or course, for teaching it, and for any follow-up work associated with the class such as evaluation and assessment. (p.159)

In spite of the numerous interpretations existing to shed some light on the essence of team teaching, the label of team teaching has been custom-tailored to suit diverse instructional purposes, functions, subjects, and educational settings. Team teaching can take a number of different forms according to different organizational patterns (authority-directed, self-directed, or coordinated teams), and the fields that are involved in team teaching (single-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or school-within-a-school teams; Buckley, 2000). Of the many ways to categorize team teaching, Eisen (2000) proposes different classifications based on team goals and team relationships respectively. With different relationships of team members, team teaching and learning models vary and can be categorized into the six team types, including (a) committed marriage, (b) extended family, (c) cohabitants, (d) blind date, (e) joint custody, and (f) the village (see Table1 for

the detailed description of each team type).

Table 1

*Team Types Based On Member Relationships* (reproduced from Eisen, 2000, p.13)

Team Type	Description
Committed marriage	Team members select each other voluntarily and commit to working closely over time.
Extended family	Individual teachers or separate teams exchange ideas and materials periodically, observe each other's class, or commiserate.
Cohabitants	Each team member does own thing with own class; classes come together for convenience (for example, to cover for an absent teacher, share guest speakers, or view videos jointly).
Blind date	Strangers are matched by a third party, such as an administrator. This could lead to a committed marriage—or an one-night stand.
Joint custody	Two instructors share one section. Teacher representing distinct disciplines may be in class together, using a serial presentation or debating format, or they may teach alternating classes. Multidisciplinary partners, who agree to share most or all class sessions, may develop a blended presentation format.
The village (or nontraditional family)	The team is composed of learners and teachers who seek to foster a broad-based learning community.

*Note.* From “The many faces of team teaching and learning: An overview,” by M. J. Eisen, 2000, *New Direction for Adult and Continuing Education*, 87, pp.5-14.

Based upon this classification, the team teachers in this study pertain to the team type of “committed marriage”. As stated in the previous chapter, student teachers are acquainted with each other at the outset and they can select a team member voluntarily, taking part in the teaching process collaboratively.

Additionally, Davis (1995) proposes that team teaching comprises a continuum of practices, depending upon the degree of collaboration and integration between team members, and the level of their engagement in the teaching process. Weak forms of team teaching are those where there is little evidence of collaboration and/or involvement by team members in the planning, management and delivery of a course. An example of team teaching at this end of continuum would be one where the teaching of a subject is divided between team teachers who may present only one or two lectures over the duration of the course while another teacher acting as the overall subject coordinator. However, Jacob, Honey, and Jordan (2002) argue that this type of team teaching is not considered real form of team teaching but akin to guest lecturing or at best a form of sequential teaching. Being placed on another end of the continuum, models of strong collaborative teaching take place where team members are both intimately and equally involved in all aspects of teaching.

### **2.2.2 Positive Dimensions of Collaborative Teaching Among Student Teachers**

The literature has documented the positive effect of team teaching on students’ learning achievement (Anderson & Speck, 1998; Bailey et al., 2001; Richards & Farrell, 2005) and teachers’ professional development (Anderson & Speck, 1998; Buckley, 2000; Richards & Farrell, 2005). For students, team teaching provides a stimulating and exciting learning environment where students are exposed to alternative teacher perspectives, different teaching styles, and teacher personalities simultaneously (Buckley, 2000, p.13). Team teaching makes it possible for students to work within small groups where two or



more teachers can engage in group discussion and have more interaction with their students (Buckley, 2000, p.13), and it enhances the function of evaluation/feedback as “with two knowledgeable readers [of students’ papers], feedback can be doubled and alternative points of view can be discussed” (Anderson, 1991, p.10).

Regarding the field of language teachers’ education, collaboration is increasingly identified as a crucial aspect of teacher professional development. In a book providing readers with a sketching of strategies approaches to language teachers’ development, Richards and Farrell identify several advantages of teaching with a partner, which include (a) *collegiality*; (b) *different roles*; (c) *combined expertise*; (d) *teacher-development opportunities*; and (e) *learner benefits* (see Richards & Farrell, 2005, for more details). Reviewing the literature concerning student teachers’ practices of collaborative teaching particularly, the researcher is informed of the three significant components which are combined together to promote the improvement of student teachers’ teaching practices. Firstly, it is team teaching that provides student teachers with *good peer support* during the transition from the role of student to the role of teacher. It is worth noting that isolation is a challenge that can inhibit teachers’ learning if peers are not accessible to assist (Little, 1982).

Moreover, a community of peers is important not only in terms of support but also as *a crucial source of ideas and constructive comments* (Sykes, 1996). Working in a small group, student teachers learn new perspectives and insights from sharing new teaching ideas, proposing innovative approaches, and watching each other teach. In terms of professional development for language teachers, team teaching provides a ready-made classroom observation situation where student teachers share together teaching ideas or useful teaching techniques and can also facilitate the development of a teacher’s creativity (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.161). Additionally, student teachers, being new and

inexperienced in the field of teaching profession, “can be observed, critiqued, and improved by the other team member in a nonthreatening, supportive context” (Buckley, 2005, p.12). The self-evaluation done by a team of teachers will be more insightful and balanced than the introspection and self-evaluation assessed by an individual teacher (Buckley, 2005). The process of team teaching can therefore be viewed as a meaningful process of professional development, supporting a “mode for developing [teachers] as more critically reflective learners” (Eisen & Tisdell, 2002). Except for these three components--support, ideas, and criticism--combined to promote the improvement of student teachers' practice, another two insights strike the researcher as particularly crucial for prospective teachers.

First of all, Buckley (2005) maintains that “sharing in decision making boosts self-confidence” (p.12). And there is strong evidence showing that collaboration among teachers promotes teacher efficacy and, further, that peer coaching holds particular promise for encouraging teacher development (Ross & Bruce, 2007). As Eick and Ware (2005) state that teacher “candidates’ early concerns as they begin to teach are expressed through their voracious need for feedback on how well they look, sound, and execute their lessons. They are initially less concerned over the substance of lessons, but first prefer to work on attaining a modicum of technical proficiency and confidence in their role as teacher” (p.192). It should therefore be noted that peer input might influence teacher satisfaction with the teaching outcomes, if co-teachers give praise explicitly linked to the quality of the teacher’s performance of their instruction (Cameron & Pierce, 1994). Germane to the concept of self-confidence is a teacher’s efficacy beliefs, described as “...the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998, p.233), which has proved to be a powerful indicator to

reliably predict teachers' teaching outcomes and students' learning achievement. In light of Bandura (1997) sources of efficacy information, student teachers working collaboratively are exposed to the following sources which would in turn help enhance their efficacy beliefs. They are *social persuasion* (telling student teachers they are capable of performing a task), *vicarious experience* (student teachers' impressions about the teaching task which are formed through watching others teach), and *managing physiological and emotional states* (strengthening positive feelings arising from teaching and interpreting them as indicative of teaching ability or reducing negative feelings arising from teaching, such as stress).

Another significant payoff of co-teaching early is that it serves as an especially effective means to make student teachers' tacit knowledge explicit, allowing student teachers to make informed and well-calculated decisions for their daily teaching. While comparing teaching individually and teaching with a colleague, Knezevic and Scholl (1996) note:

The need to synchronize teaching acts requires team teachers to negotiate and discuss their thoughts, values, and actions in ways that solo teachers do not encounter. The process of having to explain oneself and one's ideas, so that another teacher can understand them and interact with them, forces team teachers to find words for thoughts which, had one been teaching alone, might have been realized solely through action. (p, 79)

In other words, because of the need to articulate one's rationale for implementing particular teaching method or activity, working in a team provides abundant opportunities for student teachers to express their ideas, which in turn helps them to become more aware of their personal beliefs. As they become cognizant of their own beliefs, they can then begin to "question those beliefs in light of what they intellectually know and not simply

what they intuitively feel” (Johnson, 1999, p.39).

## **2.2.3 Problems on Teacher Collaboration and Teacher Learning**

### *2.2.3.1 Collegiality vs. individualism*

The literature review above indicates that team teaching is of benefit to students’ learning and teachers’ professional development. Nonetheless, team teaching is not without problems. As mentioned earlier, one of the many advantages of team teaching is that teachers could benefit from new perspectives regarding teaching and learning from other teammates. However, the potential challenge accompanying with this benefit could also undermine team effectiveness. As Schamber (1999) points out that “Diversity among team members is a major benefit in allowing multiple perspectives in dealing with students and other issues, but it can also be very problematic in daily decisions and practices of teaming—a double-edged sword” (p.18). Similarly, Buckley (2000) maintains that, among those disadvantages which may put collaborative relationship into danger, the most serious problem is “incompatible teammates” (p.13). As he writes, “Some teachers are rigid personality types. Others are wedded to a single method. Some simply dislike the other teacher. Others are unwilling to share the spotlight or their pet ideas or to lose total control” (Buckley, 2000, p.13). Therefore, it would be naïve to assume that collaborative teaching would always bring positive effect on teachers’ professional development. What’s more, how to maintain the tension between being an effective team member and retaining one’s privacy and autonomy is a crucial issue which many team teachers need to tackle with in the daily practice. In an attempt to analyze the relation between primary school teachers’ autonomy and collegiality and its impact on teachers’ professional development, Clement and Vandenberghe (2000) conclude that it is essential to strike a balance and maintain a healthy tension between autonomy and collegiality in the workplace for



promoting teachers' professional development because in this way teachers can be afforded more space and freedom to adjust themselves in a collaborative context as they learn from comments of colleagues and respect each other's professional decisions. According to the researchers, this healthy "circular tension" between teachers' autonomy and collegiality "cannot be created by enforcing collegiality through, for instance, the establishment of structural forms of collaboration. Further, teachers should be motivated to collaborate, if this collaboration gives rise to the creation of learning opportunities and an adequately adjusted learning space" (p. 98).

In a discussion of the non-beneficial aspect of teachers' collaboration, Hargeaves (1994) also suggests that collaboration under contrived and structural conditions does not lead to teachers learning from their colleagues. Following the same vein, Avalos (1998) investigated the implementation of teacher professional groups (TPGs) in Chilli, concluding that (a) collaboration is better when it is not contrived; (b) teachers need to develop their forms of collaborative operation; and (c) a balance between external orientation and internal freedom to experiment new things is necessary. In other words, the most powerful collaborative efforts for teachers were those initiated by teachers themselves (Sawyer, 2002), rather than those proposed by outsiders (e.g., ministerial authorities of school). Based on Hargeaves' comments as well as the findings from Avalos' study, the notion of contrived collegiality has highlighted a most interesting possibility that "blind-date" (Eisen, 2002, p.13)—strangers are matched by a third party, such as an administrator—could lead to a committed marriage or an one-night stand.

#### *2.2.3.2 Support from Schools and Administrations*

In an investigation of Australian teachers' experience of collaboration (Johnson, 2003), while the majority of teachers reported that working in a team reduced their workload, around 40% of teachers voiced the negative impact of working collaboratively. That is, in

many cases, the need to meet more frequently with colleagues to discuss and plan collaboratively placed an added work burden on teachers. The results yielded from Johnson's study is paralleled with Buckley's (2000) discussion of the disadvantages in teaming in which he puts "Team teaching makes more demands on time and energy. There will be inevitable inconvenience in rethinking the courses. Members must arrange mutually agreeable times for planning and evaluation session. Discussions can be draining, even exhausting, from the constant interaction with peers. Group decisions are slower to make" (p.13). Therefore, it is important for schools or administrators to take team teachers' work intensification into consideration as team teaching demands those behind-the-scene affairs in the planning and evaluation sessions. For example, allowing release time for meetings and reducing teaching workload could critically determine teachers' motivation to make collaborative efforts.

#### *2.2.3.3 The Role of Teacher Education in Promoting Team Teaching*

Discussing team teaching as one type of the pre-service teachers' training activities, Wallace (1991) describes team teaching as a type of "shared professional action" (p.91) involving teachers' collaboration to make it work. Compared to other teacher training activities such as planning and analyzing lesson plans, team teaching involves a high risk and cost in two aspects (p.89). Firstly, having an untrained teacher standing up before the class and teaching students is obviously wasteful and harmful to the clients. In other words, the students might be taught by incapable teachers. The second risk or cost is to the trainees, the pre-service teachers per se, because "the trauma of being thrown unprepared into a full classroom situation is not calculated to ensure any kind of rational professional development, and has probably on many occasions led to the choice of another career" (p.89).

Following the same vein, Welch (1998) points out that one pervasive problem in

implementing collaborative teaching in educational settings is lack of training (p.32). In an attempt to bridge the gap and prepare student teachers to engage in collaborative practices in the workplace, he asserts that teacher education programs must offer an exploration of various theoretical constructs, values, and definitions of collaboration. He further writes “Teacher education programs must consider developing courses and field experiences that introduce principles of collaboration” (p.32) so that teacher candidates could apply newly assimilated knowledge or skills in the context of collaboration. These identified knowledge and skills include problem solving and decision making, communication skills, conflict management skills, awareness of micro- and macro-cultures, etc” (p.32). In acquiring these skills, student teachers become capable to participate fully in a collaborative partnership and can further grasp opportunities to improve their teaching practice.

#### **2.2.4 Team Teaching Studies of Preparing Teacher Candidates**

As discussed earlier, team teaching can vary in different forms. In the field of general education, inter-disciplinary and multicultural education teams are flourishing because they are very effective in fostering “integrative thinking” (McDaniel & Colarulli, 1997, p. 19) and an appreciation of diversity. Having diverse team members who blend their own different disciplinary or cultural perspectives is eye-opening for many learners and for teachers themselves. In the field of TESOL, content-based language teaching and English for Specific Purposes approaches are also being widely adopted. This teaching mode calls for the collaboration between language teachers and colleagues in the subject-area disciplines. With regard to research conducted in East Asian countries, there has been significant discourse recently on the subject of collaboration which pertains to “intercultural team teaching” (Carless, 2006), that is, coursework team-taught by in-service local and foreign language teachers at different levels (e.g., Carless, 2002, 2004; Chen,

2008; Lai, 1999; Sturman, 1992; Tajino & Tajino, 2000; Tsai, 2007). This line of study puts more emphasis on investigating the impact of team teaching on in-service teachers' on-going professional development.

In the current study, however, the participating teachers share the same cultural and language background, pursuing their MA degrees together in one TESOL program. Specifically, the learning-to-teach experience of the TEFL student teachers involves significant contextual, biographical, academic, and cognitive factors affecting her development (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Richards & Nunan, 1990), which may differ in different team-teaching contexts (e.g., inter-disciplinary and multicultural education). Consequently, several studies undertaken in collaboration among pre-service teachers or student teachers were chosen to be reviewed here because of the similar nature of collaborative relationship (i.e., collaboration among peer teachers) between the reviewed studies and the present.

Over the last two decades, research on teaching has shown that effective practice of collaborative teaching is linked to inquiry, reflection and continuous professional growth and development. Several researchers have studied collaborative teaching in teacher education from varying perspectives including “pair-teaching placements” (Smith, 2004), “peer mentoring” (Forbes, 2004), “critical partnerships” (Parsons & Stephenson, 2005), “peer coaching” (Goker, 2006); each study is discussed below.

Collaboration among teachers has long been advocated to the professional development of prospective teachers. Among the alternative models of field experience being explored, Smith (2004) conducted a three-year action research program that intended to provide trainee teachers with peer support in planning and carrying out class teaching. Framed along the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and the associated notion of scaffolding, the study created a hierarchy of a lead trainee-teacher and a back-up



trainee-teacher, which formalized turn-taking while teaching, and included provision for each teacher to enact both roles. In this model, the lead teacher planned the lessons and the mentor teacher, rather than the peer teacher, gave feedback. Meanwhile, the back-up teacher functioned as an aide under the assumption that by observing the lead teacher, some benefits would be gained. The results from this study revealed that the pairs were not supposed to engage in discussion of teaching and each desired critical feedback from their peer. Though the model in this study limited opportunities for engagement, trainee-teachers reported favorably on the extra support that the paired placement provided. An unexpected benefit was that the trainee-teachers valued the opportunities to learn from watching their partner teach. Most interestingly, the learning from observing peer-teachers' teaching was reported as being easier than that from more highly-skilled class-teachers. As Smith (2004) comments, "peer-scaffolding provided by the presence of another trainee-teacher is of a different nature in that it is (a) less intimidating because it is less authoritative and (b) unconnected with the assessment of teaching competence and (c) such support is also of different nature in that, as Martine said, pupils often act differently when the class-teacher is in the room" (p.111).

Another form of peer collaboration is "peer mentoring" which involves pairs of teachers observing one another's teaching, engaging in a reciprocal relationship of sharing observations and feedback, and working cooperatively to confront issues outside the classroom context and address technical aspects of their professional roles (Forbes, 2004, p.220). Grounded in the concept that collaboration must occur in a non-threatening, non-evaluative environment, Forbes (2004) examined the effectiveness of peer mentoring on the professional growth of three early-career science teachers over one academic year. The data sources include interviews with the participants at the beginning and the end of the academic year as well as the participants' reflective journals kept for the primary

purpose of reflecting upon the lesson they have taught and insights gained from the observing teachers and lesson they have observed. The results suggested that through collaboration with peers, early-career science teachers report increased proficiency in four domains, especially in respect to issues commonly cited as challenges to new teachers in general, and beginning science teachers particularly. The participants reported gaining insight in the four domains related to curriculum structure, managing the classroom environment and student behavior, instructional strategies, and negotiating relationships with various stakeholders as part of their professional responsibilities. Additionally, when asked whether peer mentoring served as a support and development mechanism, the participants in this study reported a high level of emotional fulfillment in their collaboration and suggested that the interactions were at no point confrontational or tense. Participation in the project eased their anxiety associated with working as early-career science teachers and each reported a strong willingness to participate in peer mentoring again (p.234).

Following the same vein, Parsons and Stephenson's (2005) investigate the effectiveness of collaborative interactions with peers and experienced colleagues. Based upon the premise that group activities can allow students to share their knowledge about their cognition and the opportunity of seeing experts reflecting on what he/she is doing and how well it has been done, student teachers are placed in a shared practicum in which they work in close collaboration with a crucial partner from their peer group and a member of school staff. Since the aim of the collaboration in this study is to enable deeper thinking about practice in an atmosphere of supportive and constructive but honest feedback, the placement included structured tasks to give focus to the reflection. That is, on completion of the placement, a sample of students and the teachers with whom they had worked completed questionnaires in which they were asked to respond to questions about the

collaborative nature of the placement, the role of the tasks and the nature of the partnerships(s) which developed. The analysis of the responses showed that the design of the placement had encouraged students to consider a range of aspects of their practice and that the partnership with peers and experienced colleagues had enabled them to gain more understanding of their teaching. Nonetheless, some reservations about the collaborative nature of the placement were also expressed; students were concerned about difficulties in establishing a working relationship with their partner, whilst teachers were concerned about equity within the critical partnership. Also, insufficient data relating to the students' use of theoretical knowledge in reflection means that no claims can be made in respect to the influence of such knowledge on their practice. According to the results yielded in Parsons and Stephenson's (2005) investigation, it is noteworthy that placing two students in a collaborative community but structuring interaction through scripted discussion guides may have prevented practicum teachers from entering into honest dialogue about their practice and development. This therefore promoted Parsons and Stephenson (2005) to suggest that future research focus less on structured tasks and more on the collaborative interaction.

In an attempt to test whether TEFL student teachers trained using a peer coaching training program after teaching practicum sessions will demonstrate greater improvement on instructional skills and self-efficacy, Goker (2006) performed an experiment involving 32 student teachers from English language teaching department of a European university who were doing their practicum teaching as part of the teacher education requirement. The participants were randomly assigned to an experimental or control group, randomly placed in two high schools, and assigned cooperating teachers within the schools. During their regular Teaching Practicum course, the experimental group assigned in pairs to the same high school and elementary classroom where they, along with a cooperating teacher,

observed each other teaching for the experimental condition. The peer coach maintained notes that included entries for demonstrations of clarity skills. Peers used the notes in the post-conferences that were held immediately after each lesson. On the other hand, the control group was assigned to classroom individually, rather than in pairs. Using Bandura's (1995) General Self-Efficacy Scale, Goker found that although pretest mean score differences for the two groups were not statistically significant for any of the variables, post-treatment results showed statistical significance in favor of the experimental group for all variables. These variables measured include self-efficacy items in relation to, for instance, the ability to deal with unforeseen situations, to remain clam when facing teaching difficulties, to resolve problems, and to accomplish one's teaching goals (p.248). In regard to instructional (clarity) skills variables, between-group mean score comparisons at post-assessment indicated statistical significance in favor of the experimental group ( $F(1, 30) = 255.40, p < .001$ ).

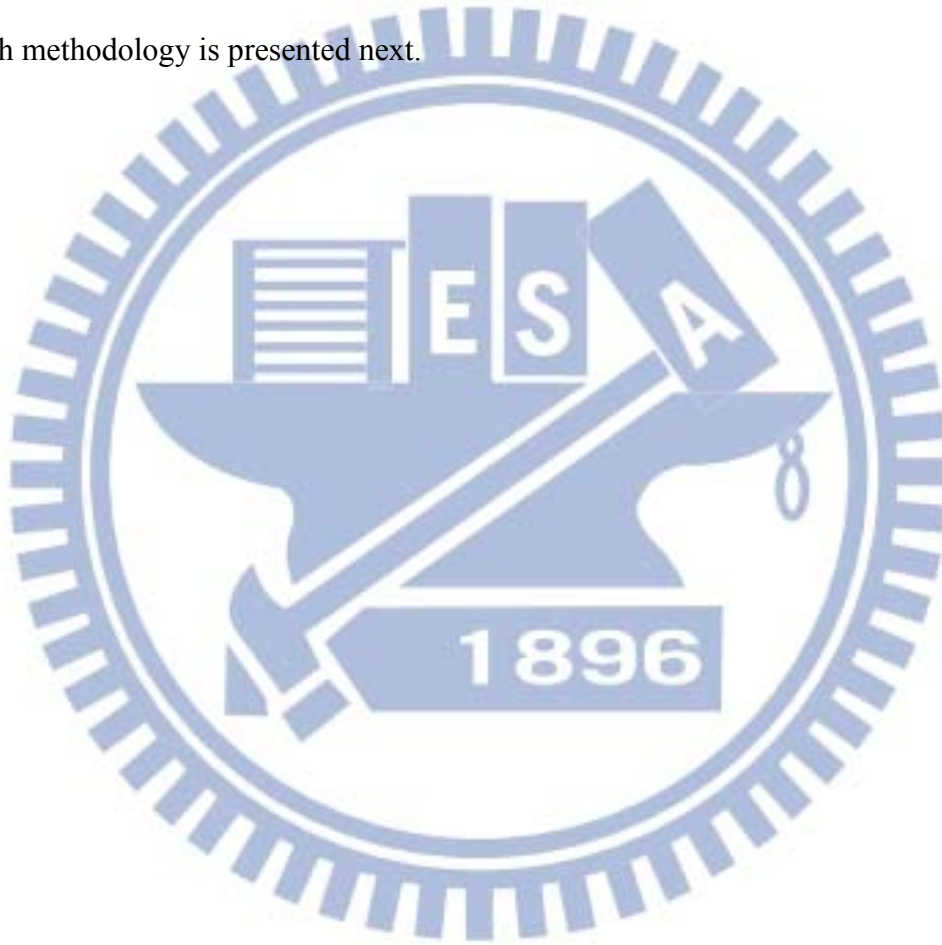
### **2.2.5 Interim Summary**

This section has reviewed literature related to a general description of team teaching in general education as well as in foreign and second language education. It also provides an overview of the advantages of team teaching which can be combined together to promote the improvement of student teachers' practice. Following the benefits identified in collaborative teaching, several crucial issues which may undermine the effectiveness of team teaching are discussed. Finally, the four studies associated with the student teachers' team-teaching experience are also reviewed.

To summarize, it is clear that teaching partnership can function in different ways based upon the studies discussed above. For many years now, collaboration among teachers in the field of TESOL has been trumpeted, but few actually do it (Stewart et al.,



2005). Framed in the constructivist view on language teachers' education, the current study intends to investigate how TEFL student teachers grow through their team teaching experience in one national university located in western Taiwan. It is hoped that such investigation will lead a better understanding of how student teachers of team teaching cope with the demands in their learning-to-teach process, and will elucidate their professional growth, if any, in a collaborative partnership. For the objectives to be achieved, research methodology is presented next.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter is devoted to a description of the research design and methods of the current study. The first section focuses on rationale of the research design. After which descriptions of teaching setting and participants is presented, followed by data collection methods and procedures with descriptions of the implementation of each method. Finally, data analysis, role of the researcher, and trustworthiness of the study are elaborated.

#### **3.1 Rationale of the Research Design**

The primary goals, as introduced at the outset, are (1) to explore the team-teaching experiences of TEFL student teachers in Taiwan and (2) to illuminate team teachers' professional growth, if any, in a collaborative-teaching relationship. To address the two main questions, the researcher employs a qualitative approach because the aim of this study is to discuss and understand the meaning TEFL student teachers have constructed from the team-teaching experiences. The purpose fits the philosophical assumption of qualitative research, "...the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds" (Merriam, 1998, p.6). Additionally, given the great complexity involved in the process of TEFL student teachers' learning to teach, qualitative methods have recently gained wider acceptance in L2 research as they "allow for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and second language teachers' lived experiences" (Vélez-Rendón, 2002, p.457).

Aiming to provide more valid and convincing evidence, the study adopts a qualitative case study design. The reasons for adopting a case study design are as follows. The first

lies within its usefulness for allowing the researcher to focus on individuals in a way that is hardly possible in group research (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p.172). In order to more clearly understand how and why student teachers' professional lives evolve in a collaborative-teaching relationship, this study aims to provide careful and detailed descriptions of specific student teachers within their particular teaching setting in as much detail as possible. This approach is opposed to quantitative studies which use a large group of participants with the goal of generalization to a larger population. Secondly, as Mackey and Gass (2005) report, "case studies can be conducted with more than one individual learner or more than one existing group of learners for the purpose of comparing and contrasting their behaviors within their particular context" (p.172). Consequently, employing a case study design has the potential for rich contextualization that can shed light on the potential similarities and differences of each student teacher's interpretation of particular phenomena and lived experiences gained from team teaching. Finally, determining when to use case studies depends upon the nature of the research problem and the questions being proposed, particularly when a study aims to investigate complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in order to understand a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998, p.41). Because of the rich data it is capable of providing (Yin, 2003), a case study design is the best candidate for learning about complicated teaching contexts where numerous factors come into play during personal teaching practices.

Given the merits outlined above, this research utilizes a qualitative case study approach and a variety of qualitative research methods in order to portray TEFL student teachers' collaborative experiences and understand whether engaging in team teaching influences TEFL student teachers' professional growth. Prior to a detailed description of each method, teaching site and participant selection will be presented next.

## 3.2 Research Sites and Participants

### 3.2.1 Team-Teaching Contexts

The teaching contexts under the current investigation are two GEPT classes: one Speaking Class and one Writing Class. Each class will be conducted collaboratively by two team teachers. Determined by the TESOL graduate institute, the maximum student number of each class is thirty. According to the description of previous GEPT teachers, the majority of the students who took part in GEPT courses come from different disciplines. For example, many of them are from the field of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Biological Science and Technology, as well as Management. Students' motivations of attending GEPT classes generally include preparing for GEPT and improving English communication ability.

### 3.2.2 Participant Selection

After September 2008, the researcher started to seek potential participants who plan to teach GEPT Class with a partner in the following spring semester. After passing a notice (see Appendix A), for the purpose of informing the potential participants about the research project, to all the 1<sup>st</sup>-year graduate students via e-mail on November 11<sup>th</sup>, the researcher received responses from the two potential participants (*Lynn* and *Irene*) who plan to form a teaching team the following term and are interested in participating in the current study. The researcher then began to contact Lynn and Irene via e-mail and in person in the following three months, providing full information about the research and answering any concerns they might have. The following three months flew by, and soon the new semester began. In that semester, the researcher took a course offered in this MA program together with her classmates and all the 1<sup>st</sup>-year schoolmates. In mid-March of 2009, occasionally



the researcher received the news from Lynn and Irene that another two 1<sup>st</sup>-year students were also planning to conduct GEPT classes. Two days later, when the researcher attended the regular class meeting, she approached to her potential participants (*Andrea* and *Nadya*), sincerely inquiring their willingness to participate in this study. To the researcher's surprise, *Andrea* and *Nadya* kindly agreed to participate in this project. Having received their permission and commitment, the researcher started to explain the research project, asking all the participants to carefully read through and sign the informed consent (Appendix B) before the investigation began.

The MA program in TESOL under investigation was first established in 2003 as a division of Graduate Institute of Linguistics and Cultural Studies. Two years later, in 2005, it became one of the few TESOL graduate institutes in Taiwan. With regard to the requirements for the MA degree in TESOL, MA thesis and a minimum coursework of 29 credits are required. Of the 29 credits, 4 required courses (11 credits) and at least 6 optional electives (18 credits) (see Appendix C for the courses offered in this TESOL graduate institute). In the first year of studying in the graduate program, student teachers took courses including *TESOL Methodology*, *Sociolinguistics*, *Research Methodology*, *CALL*, *Teaching Speaking & Listening: Theory & Practice*, and *Thesis Writing*.

In addition to course requirements, minimum 100 score on TOEFL iBT is also required as a threshold of graduation. It is worthy to note that this MA program in TESOL does not require any graduate's practice teaching as part of its program requirements. Student teachers studying in this TESOL graduate institute are encouraged to practice teaching GEPT courses on a voluntary basis, but not a partial fulfillment of an MA degree in TESOL. Students who graduate from the program can choose to become English teachers in elementary schools or high schools in the future, if they also complete the Teacher Education requirements and have a teaching certificate. Aiming to become

certified EFL teachers at the secondary level, all the participants have started to take courses offered in Teacher Education Center since the first year of their graduate study in order to fulfill the secondary English teacher certificate requirements. Requirements for the secondary English teacher certificate include a total of 26 degrees in courses related to the foundation of education, for instance, Educational Psychology, Educational Sociology, Testing and Assessment, Classroom Management, Instructional Media and Operations, and Subject-related Teaching Materials and Methods (English). In addition to a wide variety of classroom-based courses, teacher candidates need to fulfill their practicum requirement in the field after completing all the course degrees on campus (see Appendix D for more details).

The participating teachers and the researcher were acquainted with each other at the outset, having taken several on-campus courses together, both in the TESOL graduate institute and in the Teacher Education Center. To provide readers with a grasp of participants' personal profiles, student teachers' background information noted above was briefly summarize in Table 2 (see page 44). For the sake of research ethics, pseudonyms will be used to maintain anonymity throughout the thesis.

### **3.3 Data Collection Methods and Procedures**

Data collection was 5 weeks in duration. General description of data collection procedures is presented in Table 3 (see page 45). This study employed triangulation of different methods, in which multiple sources of data are gathered to investigate same issue. The data were collected from (1) a background information interview, (2) open-ended questionnaire, (3) semi-structured follow-up interviews after the open-ended questionnaire, (4) teacher's reflective logs, (5) classroom observations, (6) informal interviews, (7) field

notes and researcher journal, and (8) relevant documents. Each is separately elaborated below.

Table 2

*Table of Participants' Profile*

	Name	Gender	Age	Aiming to become certified EFL teachers at the secondary level	Had team-teaching experience before	Had classroom teaching experience before	Team type	Course they teach
<b>Team A</b>	Lynn	Female	24	Yes	No	No	Committed marriage	GEPT Speaking Class
	Irene	Female	25	Yes	No	No		
<b>Team B</b>	Andrea	Female	26	Yes	No	Yes (at the primary level)	Committed marriage	GEPT Writing Class
	Nadya	Female	25	Yes	No	Yes (at the primary level and junior high )		

### 3.3.1 Semi-Structured Background Interview with Student Teachers

Before the team teaching officially began, a background information interview was conducted in order to obtain participants' basic demographic information and their initial perception regarding team teaching. Based upon the interview protocol developed by Chen (2008), the researcher modified and added some interview questions to adequately fit the interview protocol into the context of the current study (see Appendix E for the background interview protocol). As noted above, background interview was conducted for the purpose of (1) capturing participants' basic demographic information and (2) their perception of

team teaching prior to the team-teaching experience; hence, background interview protocol consists of questions concerning these two major domains. To gain a better understanding of participants' personal information, student teachers were asked to introduce themselves regarding their age, educational background, previous practice teaching experiences, current teaching position, as well as to elaborate on how and why they form their team. As for primary perception of team teaching, several questions were designed to ask participants to define what team teaching means verbally, to specify what they would have to do to facilitate students' English learning through the team-taught class, and to state the role they expect to take in team teaching, any skills or knowledge is considered particularly lacking or inadequate and anticipate to gain in those areas. To provide more holistic and detailed results, participants' preconception formed in advance would be compared with their opinions and perceptions based upon the actual team-teaching experiences.

Table 3

*General Description of Data Collection Procedures*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
One week before team teaching	Week 1-5	Week 5	Week 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background Interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's Reflective Logs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open-ended Questionnaire</li> <li>• Semi-structured Follow-up Interview after Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Semi-structured Interviews (1. Perceptions of Team Teaching; 2. Any Skills or Knowledge Learned from Team Teaching)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom Observations and Video-recording the Lessons</li> <li>• Informal Interviews</li> <li>• Field Notes and Researcher Journal</li> <li>• Document Inspection</li> </ul>		

*Note.* The team teaching is 5 weeks in duration, beginning at Week 1 and ending at Week 5.



### **3.3.2 Teacher's Reflective Logs (Appendix F)**

The participants were suggested to keep reflective logs after every team-teaching lesson either at home or in the teaching sites while the memories were still fresh. They would be provided with a sample reflective log (modified from Lin, 2007) and several blank forms on which they could take their time recording and reflecting upon their team-teaching practices. They were guided to focus on certain questions (see Appendix F) and to record whatever flashing through their minds related to the previous lesson. Teacher's reflective logs can not merely enrich the research data but further help to understand the participating teachers' inside feelings and deep thoughts that are not easily elicited by employing interview techniques (Lin, 2007). The participants could choose to keep their reflections either in English or in Chinese. Majored in English as all the participants were, recording and reflecting on their team-teaching experiences in their mother tongue may allow them to express their thoughts and feelings more freely and precisely than in a foreign language.

### **3.3.3 Open-Ended Questionnaire**

In Week 5, the participants were asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire (adopted from Chen, 2008) which aims to elicit a detailed description of participants' perspectives and attitudes with regard to the team-teaching relationship. To seek participants' views on team teaching, the open-ended questionnaire was adopted as it consists of several questions including asking participants to define what team teaching is in their own words, and to describe what they like or dislike about team teaching as well as their strengths and weakness as a team teacher. Additionally, each participant was asked to provide a metaphor of team teaching. According to Shannon and Meath-Lang (1992), metaphors contain rich information about student teachers' perceptions of collaborative

teaching. Several published books and articles have applied the use of metaphors in the field of teacher education (Dooley, 1998; Farrell, 2006; Greves, 2005; Knowles, 1994; Martinez et al., 2001; Oxford et al., 1998) as also cited in Chen's study (2008). Metaphor, by definition, "involves employing a familiar object or event as a conceptual tool to elucidate features of a more complex subject or situation" (Oxford et al, 1998, p.4). In their arresting book titled *Metaphors We Live By*, Johnson and Lakoff (1980) suggest that metaphors not only make our thoughts more vivid and interesting but actually structure our perceptions and understanding. To depict student teachers' experience and to elicit their understanding of collaborative language teaching, participants are asked to write a metaphor of team teaching in their own words along with a picture conceptualizing the written description (see Appendix G).

### **3.3.4 Semi-Structured Follow-Up Interview after the Open-Ended Questionnaire**

Immediately following open-ended questionnaire administration, a semi-structured interview was conducted to each participant to help understand and clarify points worth-probing in the open-ended questionnaire. For example, if a participant responds to the question "What is your role in team teaching?" with the answer "Main teacher", the researchers would ask for meaning of the term to probe for understanding and clarity.

### **3.3.5 Semi-Structured Interviews after Team Teaching**

Near the end of the collaborative teaching the researcher conducts two separate interviews: one for depicting student teachers' perception of team teaching after team-teaching experience (Appendix H), and another with the purpose of eliciting skills and knowledge, if any, the participants gain from team teaching (Appendix I). The former was designed for the purpose of comparing participants' conception regarding team

teaching before and after team-teaching experience. Regarding the latter aiming to investigate any skills and knowledge learned in team-taught lessons, in a book covering the central issues and concerns relating to the self-directed second/foreign teacher (Nunan & Lamb, 1996), the five themes including lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, language learning, and professional knowledge are considered crucial for language teachers to make informed decisions as they teach in the classrooms. Hence, in light of the importance of these five themes, student teachers were asked to reflect upon their team-teaching experience and elaborate on any skills and knowledge gained in relation to these five major aspects.

In an attempt to piece together the understanding of phenomenon studied, the researcher also designed other questions based on their responses in teacher's reflective logs and the issues emerging from interviews or observations during fieldwork. Each interview lasted about 60 minutes in duration and is audio-recorded for further analysis and transcription.

### **3.3.6 Classroom Observations and Video-Recording the Lessons**

According to Creswell and Clark (2007), “the depth of a research can be better established by actually going to the research site (e.g., home, place of work of the participants) to learn about the context of participants' thinking” (p.30). Thus, the researcher conducts classroom observation of every class by immersing herself in the research site. Gathering data through observations in this study is because data collected through persistent observations in the field serves to “...triangulate emerging findings; that is, they are used in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate the findings” (Merriam, 1998, p.96). The view is shared by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who suggest that credibility of qualitative research can be increased by “prolonged

engagement” and “persistent observation” in the field (also see Flick, 2007, p.19). During the fieldwork, the researcher arrives at the classroom at least 10 minutes before the class begins so that she could greet the student teachers, listen to their talks, and settle down the video-recording equipment. Before the class, questions worth exploring in the previous lesson or arising from the existing data would not be asked to prevent interrupting participants’ preparation. After the class, the researcher used the opportunity to help out on occasion or have daily conversations with student teachers in order to establish rapport and trust. Meanwhile, the researcher seized every opportunity to conduct informal interviews when she finds issues worth exploring in the previous lesson or when anything important arising from the existing data, such as teacher’s reflective logs and documents collected. Nonetheless, in the conditions that the participants were busy dealing with any teaching duties or students’ questions during the break, the researcher would not interrupt at the time. Rather, time slots convenient for participants to conduct informal interviews would further be set to avoid obtrusion.

During observations, the researcher took the role of a complete observer, sitting in the very back of the classroom. Also, the researcher always acted in a passive and unobtrusive manner in order to put student teachers at ease while they are teaching. To determine what to observe, the researcher focused on the three primary aspects, i.e., *classroom practices about lesson planning, instructional strategies, and classroom management* because a structured observation can facilitate the recording of details, allowing the researcher to compare behaviors in a principle manner (Mackey and Gass, 2005, p.175). As mentioned earlier, to explore any skills and knowledge student teachers gain in a collaborative-teaching relationship, lesson planning, instructional strategies, and classroom management were considered as the three teaching techniques which teachers should master; knowledge related to language learning and teaching profession were viewed as beneficial in effective



management of teaching and learning process. Teaching behaviors in relation to these particular aspects therefore be observed to examine any growth as a result of team teaching. However, although an observation sheet (see Appendix J) with pre-determined themes was used to record participants' specified behaviors or significant events and activities happened in the classroom, the collected data using observational techniques were also combined with field notes involving the researcher's intuitions, impressions, and questions emerging during the lesson.

To document the events in the classroom, video-recording is a better candidate as it allows more details, such as verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication. Another advantage of video recording is permanence, which allows the researcher and the participants of this study to revisit the lesson at any time.

### **3.3.7 Informal Interviews**

As suggested by Lin (2007), informal interviews such as having small talks with the participants immediately after every team teaching class can avoid the possibility of researcher's memory lapses. Once any questions or hunches were formed in the researcher's mind, she conducted informal interviews with the participants before leaving to help clarify the questions or phenomena found in the previous lesson.

### **3.3.8 Field Notes and Researcher Journal**

While conducting fieldwork, the researcher spent time in the field recording data that may be important, such as characteristics of setting, significant behaviors of student teachers, verbal and nonverbal communication between student teachers, what does not happen, and anything else that seems important at the time.

The researcher journal functions as an instrument to document the entire research

process; moreover, it could contain the researcher's initial interpretations of the events being observed in the research sites (Chen, 2008). To record any incidents that might happen in the research process in as much detail as possible, the researcher would take notes and keep journal whenever possible.

### **3.3.9 Document Inspection**

In addition to the elicited information (e.g., data collected through open-ended questionnaires, interviews, teacher's reflective logs), available materials such as teachers' teaching materials, lesson plans, worksheets, teachers' evaluation forms, and public announcements made by the TESOL institution and school, etc. were also gathered and analyzed.

## **3.4 Data Analysis**

After each interview was conducted, the interview audio file was immediately transcribed verbatim into a word-processing file and stored in the researcher's computer chronologically for analysis. According to Merriam (1998), "...the right way to analyze data in a qualitative study is to do it *simultaneously* with data collection" (p.162). Based upon the suggestions of previous researchers, the researcher initially reviewed the central purposes of this study, wrote down the reflections, tentative themes, hunches that were derived from the first set of data (e.g., the first observation and the first teacher's reflective log), and wrote up things the researchers planned to ask, observe, or explore in the next data collection activity.

Once completing all the data collection phases, data collected from interviews, field notes, questionnaires, and other documents were coded and analyzed using the "constant comparative method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This method

involved the inductive coding of data with the simultaneous comparison of all comments, events, and incidents identified from the data for similarities, differences and general patterns. Without the pre-determined coding scheme, the researcher intends to generate themes and categories by directly examining the data during the coding process.

While adopting the constant comparative method to analyze the data, the researcher began by marking meaningful segments of data with her ideas, comments, and interpretations to construct initial categories. Those categories were written in the margins and developed as a running list. This running list represented tentative coding categories. After the tentative coding categories are developed, the researcher would carefully analyze data in a line-by-line fashion in order to “refine the actual codes” (Gibbs, 2007, p.54). In the phase of refining the actual codes, the researcher repeatedly revisited the raw data and constantly compared those tentative coding categories derived from data. By so doing, the researcher could see whether the assigned categories need to be renamed, modified or deleted and make initially descriptive codes more analytic or specific. The refining phase therefore resulted in the second version of coding categories. Based upon the second version of coding categories, the researcher would group relevant categories or subsidiary categories together to establish core categories.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the nature of case studies could affect researchers’ data analysis. As Merriam (1998) states that, “conveying an understanding of the case is the paramount consideration in analyzing the data” (p.193). While trying to understand the student teachers’ co-teaching experience and their professional growth after team teaching, the researcher tried to analyze important episodes and texts, finding the significant pattern or critical incident by strategy of self-reflecting (e.g., asking herself “What did that mean?”) and triangulating in order to truly understand how engaging in team teaching influences student teachers’ professional lives.

Finally, being aware of a tremendous amount of data of this study, the researcher kept reminding herself that “Always start from reviewing the central purposes and primary research questions of this study!” to prevent the consequence of sinking in the mud.

### **3.5 Role of the Researcher**

As many others including Merriam (1998), and Marshall and Rossman (2006) have pointed out, in qualitative studies the researcher is the main instrument for data collection and analysis. According to Merriam (1998), data in qualitative research “are mediated through this human instrument, the researcher, rather than through some inanimate inventory, questionnaire, or computer” (p.7). This highlights the differences between human researcher and other data collection instruments, for “the researcher is responsive to the context; he or she can adapt techniques to the circumstances; the total context can be considered; what is known about the situation can be expanded through sensitivity to nonverbal aspects; the researcher can process data immediately, can clarify and summarize as they study evolves, and can explore anomalous responses” (p.7). In their book titled *Designing Qualitative Research*, Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggest that “in qualitative studies, the researcher is the instrument. Her presence in the lives of the participants invented to be part of the study is fundamental to the methodology” (p.72). Given the sustained and intensive presence of the researcher in the research sites, the researcher of this study remains full aware of these issues regarding technical and interpersonal considerations. To think about her role in planning and conducting this study, the researcher follows the advice of previous scholars (Patton, 1980; also cited in Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p.72) by evaluating herself along a continuum of participantness; more details are discussed below.

*Participantness* refers to “the degree of actual participation in daily life” (Marshall &



Rossman, 2006, p.72), ranging from full participant to the complete observer. As earlier noted, during classroom observations, the researcher entered into the research site as a complete observer, sitting at the very back of the classroom as unobtrusively as possible to avoid intervening the participants' teaching or influencing learners' performance. After class, only brief conversations and informal interviews between the participants and the researcher happened in the research site. However, as a senior schoolmate of the participants, the researcher often engages in social interaction with the participants on the occasions such as taking on-campus courses and having meals together. As Marshall and Rossman contend (2006) that "building trusting relations must proceed in conjunction with gathering good data" (p.73). The researcher regards engaging in daily activities with the participants as an important process of establishing good connections between the researcher and the participants. These connections allow for rich description of participants' life experiences, thoughts, feelings and beliefs as the barrier between the researcher and the participants are consciously avoided (Toma, 2000). On the other hand, while having daily conversations on the topic of teaching the GEPT course, the researcher cautioned herself to avoid any personal involvement and offering any preference concerning lesson planning, language instruction, and classroom management in order to remain neutral and not to contaminate the research results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter provides the results of the current study. Being aware of a large amount of data yielded in this study, here the researcher starts from reviewing the primary research questions which were posed to guide the current study. Two research questions are as follows:

1. What are the TEFL student teachers' perceptions of their team-teaching experience?
2. What skills and knowledge, if any, do the TEFL student teachers learn from their team-teaching experience?

In this chapter, the researcher will answer the two research questions respectively. Also, the content of this chapter will be organized on a team basis, that is, *the Lynn and Irene team* in the first section, followed by the other team, *Andrea and Nadya* in the second.

Furthermore, as stated in Chapter Four, after each interview was conducted, the interview audio file was immediately transcribed verbatim into a word-processing file and stored chronologically for analysis. Then the researcher carefully analyzed the raw data to determine important episodes and texts which were helpful to understand how engaging in team teaching affected the participants' professional lives. These important episodes and texts were then translated from Chinese in English as shown in this chapter.

#### **4.1 TEAM 1: LYNN AND IRENE**

##### **4.1.1 Description and Perception of Team-Teaching Experience**

###### *4.1.1.1 Lynn's Motivation of Team Teaching and Perception of Her Role*

In the background interview, Lynn found it difficult to define team teaching in her own

words. The researcher therefore asked Lynn to describe her motivation of teaming up instead. Lynn remarked:

*Learning from peers can bring me new inspirations. For instance, Irene and I have discussed what we want to include in our course syllabus, from which I learn something that I never thought of. Apart from that, before teaming up with Irene I once heard from an undergraduate lecturer in our institute saying that she often discusses with her colleagues about how to teach and they usually share teaching tips together. Based on her sharing, I learned that discussing with someone else can bring benefits to both of the parties and the teachers gain something they are lacking of (background interview, Lynn, 2009/05/09).*

Regarding the role she expected herself and Irene to play in team teaching, Lynn stated in the background interview that she expected herself and Irene to take equal responsibility in the cooperative teaching relationship. She also stated, *“Irene seems to have little teaching experience, nor do I. Though she is currently tutoring students studying in elementary schools, Irene has no experience of teaching college students English, and I don’t, either. So probably we will plan lessons together and teach together”* (background interview, Lynn, 2009/05/09).

#### *4.1.1.2 The Challenge Lynn Had Expected to Encounter Before Team Teaching*

The challenge Lynn thought she might face with was how to solve the conflict over different opinions of two teachers. She mentioned:

*The conflict over different opinions may end up with quarrels. We need to design a Speaking Class together after all. We may spend time deciding on the procedures of each lesson, discussing who takes charge of the first period and who the next. The process of teaching together involves numerous problems (background interview, Lynn, 2009/05/09).*

Another challenge Irene thought of in the background interview was the issue of turn taking between two teachers. Irene started to imagine the process of the first class and

stated, “We will do self-introduction in the first class, so both of us shall be present on the podium. Supposing Irene and I don’t take turn to talk, will students feel our cooperation is like a chaos” (background interview, Lynn, 2009/05/09)?

#### 4.1.1.3 A High Level of Anxiety in the Early Stage

In the fourth week of conducting a team-taught class with Irene, Lynn reflected upon her feelings and thoughts when she knew she was going to co-teach English in a real classroom:

Researcher: *Please describe your feelings and thoughts when you were about to teach English in a real classroom?*

Lynn: *I felt very good! I have no experience of teaching a whole class, teaching in front of so many students, so thinking of a teacher who can co-teach with me made me feel very good!*

Researcher: *In what way was it good?*

Lynn: *I felt less nervous. I thought that I am not the only teacher who needs to take the full responsibility of teaching a class. There’s another person who can share the workload with me.*

Researcher: *So you felt less anxious?*

Lynn: *Yes. I thought that we can brainstorm together. And even if I encounter difficulties, the other teacher is gonna help me out with problems (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

#### 4.1.1.4 Lynn’s Metaphor for Team Teaching

Lynn’s perception of team teaching was shaped by the following metaphor and the picture she provided (see Figure 2):

*As far as I am concerned, I think of team teaching as parenting. Like parents, team teachers might have to take on the roles of “good cop and bad cop.” Other than that, another possibility is that two team teachers are both the good cops but they both earn respect from their students. Students resemble our children. During the process of parenting, we spend much time discussing our nurturing approaches, sharing and communicating individual perspectives. At times, parents discuss and share the process of decision making (e.g.,*



*whether we should send our child to the piano class), which is much like what team teachers are involved during the process of co-planning, co-teaching, and co-evaluation (e.g., whether it is appropriate to have our students do the role-play or information gap activity as a way of conversational practice). Though having different viewpoints, parents would try to reach the consensus behind the scene and act in concert in the face of children. Similar to parenting, the consistency within the two parties is rather essential for a successful team teaching (the 1<sup>st</sup> question in the open-ended questionnaire, Lynn).*

In the follow-up interview, the researcher asked Lynn to provide a specific example to illustrate “*the consistency within the two parties*” in the written metaphor of her team teaching experience. She stated that all the teaching instruction provided in a team-taught class should be the agreement resulting from discussion of both teachers. She added, “*In a discussion of two teachers, if a teacher says yes to an idea, a plan, or suggestion, while the other says no, students will get confused about which teacher they should listen to*” (follow-up interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).



Figure 2. The picture provided by Lynn to conceptualize her written metaphor.

(Source of the picture: <http://www.fotosearch.com/clip-art/house.html>)

#### 4.1.1.5 Equal Pose Between Two Teachers

With regard to the question that who is more powerful in the team, Lynn stated in the second interview that she felt both Irene and her took equal power during team teaching.

She remarked:

*It seemed that the one who insisted on the certain thing more strongly than the other made the final decision. We sometimes worked on the problems of the order of worksheets, and I once suggested Irene that we should put worksheet A at the end of the day's handouts. She considered my suggestion seriously and then accepted it. Irene usually approved of my decisions when she had no opinions about the issue under discussion, and vice versa. It's easy for us to reach common ground (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

She added, *“Our decisions are usually made by peaceful compromises.”*

#### 4.1.1.6 Challenge and the Most Rewarding Aspect in Team Teaching

With respect to the most rewarding part from this team-teaching experience, Lynn considered the process of co-lesson planning the most valuable. She elaborated:

*We all have our own blind spots. Discussing with Irene gets me to find my blind spots more easily. Our different educational backgrounds and life experiences generate varied perspectives and interpretations of a single issue. Each of us can think up new teaching activities and worksheets. This is the most precious part in team teaching and this is beneficial to our future teaching as well (interview, 2009/07/27).*

Reflecting upon the team-teaching process, Lynn couldn't come up with the most frustrating thing throughout team teaching. On the other hand, when it comes to the challenges Lynn faces in team teaching, she answered:

*Everything seemed fine. One challenge I can think of is the time when two*

*teachers both like to deliver certain part of the instruction. And this happened especially when the teaching part is easier to instruct for teachers, such as leading students to do activities. At times I felt I was more confident in delivering teaching instruction in the 1<sup>st</sup> period, and so did Irene. But I couldn't just get my own way and say "Give me this part." So we did paper-scissor-stone to decide, and like last time we even asked Nadya<sup>1</sup> to assign because we both want to teach the same part (laughing) (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

#### 4.1.1.7 Lynn's Most Memorable Incidents in Team Teaching

When asked about the most memorable incidents throughout team teaching, Lynn remarked:

*To me, the most memorable incidents are that whenever students asked us questions regarding certain vocabulary, I could barely answer students' questions. But Irene could often come up with the vocabulary to solve students' puzzles. I can't help admiring her and feeling perplexed where she learned those words. For example, last time a student asked us "Do you know what was meant by KO?", I didn't realize that it could be an acronym of something until Irene answered "knock out" without hesitation. Another incident that once happened was that one of our students asked how to say "健康検査" in English, Irene answered "check-up" with great ease. However, because I was under the vague impression of the word and afraid of saying the wrong word in face of students, I appeared silent at the moment that Irene was answering student's question (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

The researcher continued to ask Lynn to elaborate what she learned from these incidents, she answered:

*I learned...many new words (laughing), not actually learned something. Instead, I was reminded that I should do something to broaden my vocabulary bank, such as listening to English-learning radio programs and watching American TV series. I was aware that I should immerse myself in daily life*

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<sup>1</sup> Nadya is one of the team teachers in GEPT Speaking Class.



*English or English that is trendy at the present time to upgrade my English proficiency. Perhaps because I am not the kind of learner who has wild enthusiasm for English learning, I usually don't do these to brush up my English skills. But I think if I want to become a competent English teacher, I need to do these to enrich myself (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

#### *4.1.1.8 Lynn's Perception of Advantages of Team Teaching*

When asked about how helpful or significant team teaching is for Lynn to lead a class, she described how this experience helped her on her first try:

*Lynn: Yes, it really helped.*

*Researcher: In what aspects did it help?*

*Lynn: I think the help lies in...when a student teacher first led a class, as I just said, I felt less anxious. I was more confident about how to design a course because there was a teacher co-planning with me. Because I have this teaching experience, if someday in the future, I have to lead a class all by myself, I will feel less panic.*

*Researcher: You just mentioned "how to design a course". Can you elaborate more on this?*

*Lynn: Team teaching is helpful in designing a course because we all have our own blind spots.*

*Researcher: Can you offer some examples?*

*Lynn: For example, before the lesson I imagined that it will take about ten minutes to finish an activity, but Irene felt that ten minutes is a bit rushed. If I planned the lesson alone...and I thought ten minutes was sufficient, and there were also lots of worksheets to teach, I supposed there's no way of finishing all these in one class. Irene and I usually pondered on the potential flaws of our teaching plans. Sometimes I thought I got a perfect activity, but from Irene's point of view she could easily point out the weaknesses in my teaching idea.*

*Researcher: What might be the weaknesses in your teaching idea?*

*Irene: Such as time control...can the activity arouse students' interest?...and what does the activity lack?*

*Researcher: What might an activity lack?*

*Irene: For example, the following worksheet or activity might lack the connection with the preceding one (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*



Because of the several benefits she found in team teaching, Lynn endorsed teaching with a co-teacher. She said, “According to what I just mentioned, team teaching is a pretty good idea, because you got another teacher’s support” (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27). However, she added:

*It is because now I am a student teacher who has little teaching experience that I like the feeling of co-teaching with peers. Maybe after years of teaching, I become a practicing teacher who has much experience of teaching and my teaching beliefs are deeply rooted, I may dislike co-teaching with others. Many in-service teachers don’t like to change and accept new things* (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).

She indicated in the second interview that at the phase of being a student teacher she found collaborative teaching satisfactory. Nonetheless, a pleasant team-teaching experience does not guarantee that she will implement team teaching in her daily teaching after moving forward from a student teacher to a practice teacher.

#### *4.1.1.9 Lynn’s Strength and Weakness as a Team Teacher*

Lynn evaluated her strengths and weaknesses as a team member from the team-teaching collaboration and concluded that “*I am a teacher who is able to accept colleague’s opinions, and so is my teaching partner. In addition, I usually don’t insist on my personal viewpoints, and this may greatly facilitate cooperation*” (open-ended questionnaire, Lynn). Nonetheless, according to her responses of weakness as a co-teacher, the quality of being respectful to colleagues’ ideas could also be viewed as a defect of a team teacher’s character. She wrote:

*It’s like two sides of the same coin. When a team teacher gives in to the other’s opinions easily, it’s very likely that he/she is gonna miss out something.*

*Insisting on what I think is right is what I need to improve* (open-ended questionnaire, Lynn).

#### *4.1.1.10 Irene's Expectation Before Team Teaching and Perception of Her Role*

Before participating in team teaching, Irene expressed her expectation of learning from her partner. She remarked, *"I expect to learn from Lynn about some teaching activities or teaching ideas. Although we were both English majors, the way we were educated is different. She must know some interesting activities that I don't know, so I think we can learn from each other in this aspect"* (background interview, Irene, 2009/05/09). In addition to the expectation in team teaching, Irene, like Lynn, considered different opinions between them as a challenge likely to happen in their collaboration.

#### *4.1.1.11 Irene's Reflection of the First Class*

After the first class, Irene mulled over their team-teaching practice and recorded her feelings in the reflective log. In her words (she kept the log in English):

*This was the very first class of this GEPT speaking course. I felt so nervous about teaching college, graduate, and even doctoral students. This is also the very first time that I teach such a big class. I[t] was nice to have Lynn to work with me for we can work together. I felt more secured when there was a team member to back me up.*

*Today's class went quite smoothly. For this was the first class, we spent more time talking about the course syllabus and introducing each other. Lynn and I worked well today. While discussion about the course content, I reminded her to tell the students about some "rules" of this class. I also helped her type students' names on the roll-calling list while she was calling the roll and asking the students their English [names].*

*Anyway, I think this was a quite successful class and a good start. I hope we can do better in the following classes for there are still a lot to be improved* (reflective log, Irene, 2009/06/30).

#### 4.1.1.12 Irene's Most Memorable Incident in Team Teaching

From Irene's point of view, collaborative teaching is significant in providing her a sense of security of her first teaching as well as the timely teaching assistance and suggestions from the other student teacher. In the reflective journal of the 6<sup>th</sup> class, Irene jotted down an incident which Lynn gave her a helping hand to meet the urgent need. The incident happened when Irene was the major teacher of the task of picture description<sup>1</sup>. In her words:

*In the second period of today's lesson, I had students come to the podium and practice picture description one by one, while Lynn helped me time the length of students' oral production. After observing a few students' performance, Lynn told me that she found students simply described what they could see in the picture. She therefore suggested that I should elicit students' response by asking their personal view about the picture or whether the picture arouses their recall of a particular event from the past. Her helpful hint was certainly of great use. I really appreciate that (reflective log, Irene, 2009/07/16).*

In the first formal interview, a piece of timely advice offered by Lynn was also taken as the most memorable incident by Irene in team teaching. When asked why she thought of this as the most unforgettable event, Irene revealed that Lynn's advice served as a cure which saved both teacher and student from being in an embarrassing silence.

Nonetheless, this incident was also regarded as a challenge Irene ever faced in team teaching. According to the interview with Irene, the conflict between her and Lynn resulted from their different opinions on whether students should speak for one and a half minutes. She described her dilemma in the interview:

*I initially agreed to have students practice picture description for 1 and a half*

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<sup>1</sup> In GEPT, the task of picture description requires test takers, while presented with a picture, to think about questions for 30 seconds, and then record their answers for 1 and a half minutes.



*minutes. But after implementing this activity, to my surprise I found some students simply couldn't talk more due to the speaker's block. I think it's a waste of time to let students stand there and talk nothing. It is just a practice...and I just want them to have that hands-on experience from the activity"* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).

#### *4.1.1.13 Irene's Perception of the Benefits of Team Teaching*

For Irene, one additional benefit team teaching could provide was, with the assistance of the other, it may allow a teacher to get a more holistic view on students' learning. Irene remarked:

*Sometimes when we were doing group discussion, though I was a major teacher, I couldn't engage myself in each group. I often asked Lynn to help me observe the other groups to see if they have problems during their discussion. This helped me understand student's learning more thoroughly* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).

After teaching in a real classroom for the first time, Irene considered it positive to create a teaching environment such as GEPT Courses for student teachers to practice teaching, for *"through which student teachers can build confidence to teach and accumulate teaching experiences"* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27). She continued:

*We have been passively waiting to be filled with knowledge. But if today you got a teaching opportunity like GEPT Courses...it's like you got the real chance to figure out what teaching is all about, instead of accepting merely what's in the books.*

On the other hand, when asked how team teaching can benefit student teachers' professional growth in particular, Irene stated, *"Participating in team teaching allows student teachers to learn from their teaching partners. It can enrich student teachers' teaching repertoires, particularly in the aspect that is more practical"* (interview, Irene,



2009/07/27).

#### 4.1.1.14 Irene's Metaphor for Team Teaching

Irene depicted team teaching as playing one piano, four hands. In her words (also see Figure 3 for the picture she provided to symbolize the written metaphor):

*Team teaching for me personally very much parallels playing one piano, four hands. In order to successfully perform a piece of four-hand piano work, two pianists must have gone through lots of musical exercises behind the scene not only to ensure the smooth flow of the musical performance but to enhance the harmony among the two players. What's more, trying hard towards perfection, as soon as one of the players makes a slip of hand, the other must help in time to cover his/her company's lapse. Likewise, before conducting English lessons, the team must meet as a whole periodically to brainstorm, plan, assess, evaluate, and redesign. Particularly important for student teachers is to spend plenty of time rehearsing, going through the whole process in a more detailed manner in order to ensure the smooth delivery of each lesson. Additionally, I consider it important to form a team involving teachers who share similar beliefs or perspectives on teaching so that the potential conflicts existing in team teaching can be minimized or eliminated (open-ended questionnaire, Irene).*



We need to communicate and rehearse a lot before we go on stage.

Figure 3. The picture<sup>1</sup> provided by Irene to conceptualizes her written metaphor

<sup>1</sup> According to Irene, the picture she provided was selected online. However, she forgot the link of the original website. The researcher thus seeks to find the original source of the image by using Google search engine and other searching softwares. However, the searching effort was in vain. Thus, here the researcher presents the image without providing the original source of the image.

Considering who is more powerful in the team, Irene regarded herself more powerful than Lynn in certain aspects which she couldn't help paying more attention to, for instance, the layout of worksheet. She explained:

*Strictly speaking, I feel I was more powerful. Take designing worksheets for example, I often modified Lynn's worksheets after she sent me her work. The reason of doing so is perhaps that I care more about this aspect. I wouldn't get into the act of how she's gonna design the worksheets, but I would make some changes afterwards. But generally in terms of teaching, I think we were pretty equal. Sometimes she helped me out with PowerPoint slides; I might make some modifications after her work (interview, Irene, 2007/07/27).*

Under the condition that adjustments or changes were made by one of the party, Irene indicated that open and frequent communication were significant in developing a successful partnership. She described how they managed changes:

Researcher: *In your collaboration, if Lynn wanted to make some changes of a lesson, would she discuss with you?*

Irene: *Yes, she would.*

Researcher: *Even if that's her part, not yours, would she do that, too?*

Irene: *Yes. As long as there were changes to be made by either Lynn or I, we would inform each other. Like last week, we taught pick-up lines. One of the activities was to have students complete the pick-up lines by using their creativity. This idea occurred to me just last night before the class, and then I did the worksheet and PowerPoint slides by myself at home because I know it would be rushed to have Lynn finish all these right before the class began. Next day in the morning, I told Lynn the activity I came up with seemed to be able to arouse more students' imagination, which is to have them to complete the sentences by thinking of the hints provided. And she said "OK".*

According to Irene, both Lynn and she always inform each other a heads-up of changes before conducting the class.

Like Lynn, Irene viewed the process of co-developing lessons as the most worthwhile from the team-teaching experience. Except for many activities of teaching which could be learned from a partner, Irene also indicated that in team teaching both teachers' efforts can be united to work as a whole. As she stated in the first interview:

*When teaching independently, I have limited time. The information I can search is just limited. But if there're two teachers doing the searching together, we could find different things and share what we got with each other. I felt I learned so much in this process. I also learned a lot from observing Lynn's teaching performance. I figured out that certain kinds of activities really enhance students' engagement while others don't. I learned how she handled the class as well (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).*

#### *4.1.1.15 Irene's Strength and Weakness as a Team Teacher*

In the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix G), Irene described her major strength in team teaching as the talent for designing teaching materials. She wrote, *"I am very keen on designing worksheet layout. My participation in the GEPT course allowed me to work on what I am good at."* On the other hand, reflecting upon the process of collaboration, Irene further concluded that another strength of hers was her *"helping the other co-teacher build confidence of teaching and overcome stage fright"*. She stated:

*My co-teacher is a kind of person who gets nervous easily when she has to talk in front of strangers, not to mention being a teacher talking in front of many students. During the process of our collaboration, I had tried my best to cheer her up, and it turned out that she was more secured when I was around (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).*

Regarding her weaknesses as a team teacher, Irene found it difficult to think of what she had assisted Lynn in teaching when Lynn was a major teacher. What's more, Irene



considered herself a person who usually needs more time preparing lessons. She wrote, “Take searching for information for example, I might spend more time than Lynn. So Lynn often had to wait for me until I had my part finished. I should learn from my co-teacher about how to search information more effectively” (open-ended questionnaire, Irene).

#### 4.1.1.16 Lynn’s and Irene’s Change in Perception of Team Teaching

After deciding to form a team to teach GEPT Speaking Class, Lynn and Irene consulted two of their senior schoolmates, Angel and Tina<sup>1</sup>, who had taught a class together about how they planned and conducted lessons. Lynn was cognizant that Angel and Tina split the ten-week Speaking Class into two equal parts. One who was responsible for lessons of the first five weeks prepared teaching materials by herself and did all the teaching. So did the other teacher who took charge of the other five lessons. When first hearing of their collaboration model, Lynn got the feeling of nervousness. She stated:

*Upon hearing this, I was a bit afraid. I was thinking that if Irene and I choose to teach independently, as Angel and Tina did, will I feel very nervous? Though Irene may still sit in the classroom observing my teaching, it is I that have to do all the talking. I simply don’t like this kind of collaboration (interview, Lynn, 2008/07/27).*

In fact, Lynn and Irene decided to be equally responsible for lesson planning, and equally involved in delivery of the teaching units. In their form of team teaching, Lynn and Irene spent time together doing all the preparation, including collecting teaching materials, constructing teaching syllabus and finalizing the handout before each lesson began. They shared teaching hours equally, that is, one is the major teacher in the first period while the other the second. No matter who took the role of the major teacher, Irene and Lynn were

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<sup>1</sup> Angel and Tina (pseudonyms) were the 2<sup>nd</sup>-year graduate students, senior schoolmates of Lynn and Irene. One semester prior to Lynn and Irene’s Speaking Class, Angel and Tina had carried out a team-taught course offered by the TESOL Institute under the current investigation.



both present on the stage. After undertaking team teaching with Irene, Lynn considered that their team type can bring more benefits to team teachers than the team type of Angel and Tina. She claimed:

*That each team teacher does one's own thing in one's own class undermines the true significance of collaborative teaching. Take Angel and Tina's model of collaboration as an example, they are like the two instructors sharing a class but teaching independently. They are not "a team". My first perception of team teaching was shaped by the team-teaching experience of, Angel and Tina. But now I am co-teaching with Irene. I think our collaboration is better (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

The above quotations illustrated that Lynn's definition of team teaching was changed to a collaborative mode which required equal level of co-teachers' engagement in the teaching process. Such a new insight of team teaching was also shown in Irene's new understanding of team teaching. Specifically, Irene's new idea of team teaching echoed Lynn's remark that Angel and Tina were like the two instructors sharing a class but teaching independently and they are not "a team". Besides, she added:

*Both Lynn and I prefer our type of collaboration, that is, one took charge of the first period while the other the second. So we didn't adopt their model. In Angle and Tina's collaboration, each teacher had her own teaching material. I felt that's quite weird (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).*

#### *4.1.1.17 Indispensable Elements for a Successful Team-Teaching Collaboration*

After team teaching, Lynn thought of respecting each other as the most important component in team teaching. She stated:

*Being objective is an essential component. In other words, a co-teacher should*

*avoid him/herself being autocratic to the other. In a collaborative-teaching relationship, even if teacher A is often more submissive than teacher B and willing to yield the authority to teacher B, in the long run, it's inevitable for teacher A to feel that teacher B likes to predominate over teaching. Though there's no fight "on the table", teacher B would still feel uncomfortable in such kind of collaboration (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

Lynn finally added, "A team teacher must be open-minded to the other's voice."

For the same question, Irene considered that successful collaborative-teaching relationship required "*mutual communication and negotiation between co-teachers*" for "*It's impossible to find two teachers who are one hundred percent matched. It's inevitable to avoid disagreements between the two. To ensure smooth cooperation, it is imperative for co-teachers to communicate with each other whenever needed*" (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).

#### 4.1.1.18 Diverse Roles of a Team Teacher

Table 4 summarized the different kinds of roles which Lynn and Irene considered themselves to play during the team-teaching process. The interpretation of the different roles given by each teacher will be provided in the following section.

Table 4

Lynn's and Irene's Roles of a Team Teacher

Team Teacher	Varied Roles Which the Team Teacher Played
Lynn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a teacher</li> <li>● a partner</li> </ul>
Irene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a teacher</li> <li>● a partner</li> <li>● a student</li> <li>● a classroom evaluator</li> </ul>

One of the questions on the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix G) asked student teachers to reflect on the role she played in team teaching. Lynn wrote, “*My role of course. I am a teacher and a partner as well*”. She further pinpointed the distinction between the two. In her words:

*The primary difference between the two is that as a teacher he or she has to teach independently. But when you have an equal partner, you feel more secure and less panic. Such emotional support arises from the reciprocal assistance and encouragement provided by the other co-teacher. Owing to reciprocal supports team teachers can provide, in team teaching I have to take the role of not only a good teacher but a good partner. Only by so doing can team teaching really bring benefits to every team teacher (open-ended questionnaire, Lynn).*

Like Lynn, Irene thought of herself as a teacher as well as a partner in team teaching. In the description of taking a role as a teacher, she also described how she shifted her role between a teacher as well as a student. Irene explained:

*As for the role as a teacher, I think I taught Lynn something which she hadn't learned about, such as I taught her several functions of Word Processing, some teaching activities and so on. On the contrary, when I learned from Lynn about something I didn't know, I felt myself more like a student (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27).*

Furthermore, during the process of lesson planning and conducting lessons, they shared responsibility by working together, which therefore made their roles become partners. Last but not the least, the role as a classroom evaluator provided Irene an opportunity to learn through observing her partner's teaching performance and students' classroom behaviors. She commented, “*Sometimes I felt I was a classroom evaluator. When Lynn was a major*

*teacher, I would pay attention to her teaching and students' responses. If I found some problems, I would give her my suggestions after the lesson."*

#### **4.1.2 Skills and Knowledge Learned in Team Teaching**

##### *4.1.2.1 Lynn's Initial Anxiety Before Team Teaching Experience*

In the background interview, Lynn mentioned her preconceived concern that she may not be able to handle the students' questions—certain word usages or vocabulary which appear unfamiliar to her. Moreover, taking a role of a graduate student and a Speaking Class teacher at the same time, she also mentioned her worry because of the vague identity—*"What I am lacking is confidence. The students here are in a fairly prestigious university, maybe they wouldn't trust our expertise...because their teachers are graduate students but not teachers"* (background interview, Lynn, 2009/05/09).

When she was a college student, Lynn had the experience of carrying out an English-learning summer camp which was held by the college she studied in. She did not consider that experience beneficial for her to teach this time. She stated:

*The experience at that time was more activity-oriented to me. As for teaching, they hired other teachers to conduct English lessons. I've always had a question about how to strike a balance between being authoritative and establishing a good relationship with students* (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28).

##### *4.1.2.2. Lynn's Growth*

Co-teaching with Irene, Lynn thought of *"lesson planning"* as the area she gained most by working with her partner. In her words, *"My partner usually came up with some good ideas which could make the entire lesson become more focused, and could encourage the students to speak out and share their viewpoints"* (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28).



Lynn went on to provide an example by telling the researcher that Irene always typed the agenda of each class in the first PowerPoint slide to inform the class of major foci of a lesson. In her words:

*Even though this idea was originated from someone else, in our team it was Irene that first proposed adopting it. By doing so, I felt the procedures of each lesson went more smoothly, and the students were told clearly about what they're gonna be learning in a certain lesson (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28).*

According to the aforementioned, Lynn was afraid that she was incapable of answering the students' questions. The researcher therefore asked Lynn whether her co-teacher helped her overcome this preconceived concern. In her word, "*We asked each other if one of us was not sure of the usage. Sometimes she would search word usages online for me. We helped each other with the students' questions, and this also provided feedback that was more immediate*" (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28).

In the same interview, Lynn talked about what she gained by watching her co-teacher teach the class. She first reflected upon her own teaching, saying:

*I was the kind of person who would speak quickly whenever I felt nervous. This might give students the impression that I just wanna shuffle it off. But my partner usually speaks at a slower speed, and this also helps her process what she's going to talk to the students and avoid slips of tongue (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28).*

She went on to say that, when leading group discussion, Irene seemed to like to join the students' discussion. Even though it might be impossible to get involved to every group, Lynn thought joining students' discussion was a tip for getting close to the students.

#### 4.1.2.3 Areas Irene Wanted to Improve on Before Team Teaching

In the background interview, Irene said that she would have a strong sense of frustration if her students just sit motionlessly and appear uninterested. She thus mentioned that what she like to learn in team teaching is how to establish a rapport with the students.

#### 4.1.2.4 Irene's Growth

In an open-ended questionnaire, Irene wrote down what she learned from team teaching. In her words:

*From the process of team teaching, I learned that being a teacher isn't that easy. When I was a student, I always thought that teaching is easy, because a teacher just has to teach. Much to my surprise, I found what I had thought was completely wrong after my first teaching. The preparation process is really tons of work, especially for novice teachers who are inexperienced and have limited resources. Thanks to Lynn, we shared the workload of lesson preparation. Meanwhile, by cooperating with Lynn, I learned a number of teaching activities as well as teaching topics. I think I learned the spirit of "1 plus 1 equals 2" (open-ended questionnaire, Irene).*

Reflected upon the area she had expected to learn before team teaching, Irene said she did gain something from working with Lynn. In her words,

*Every time after each group summarized and shared their discussion to the class, I, as a leading teacher, often listened to their sharing but rarely provided some follow-up comments. I usually said "Very good!...Ok. Let's have next group." But I discovered that Lynn quite often threw the students some follow-up questions, which were usually funny, and the atmosphere was in turn lightened.*

#### 4.1.2.5 The Effects of Participating in the Research Project

Both Lynn and Irene felt positive about participating in this project. Lynn commented that, after keeping reflective logs after each lesson, she figured out that people should learn

from continuous self-reflection—*“If you didn’t ask me to do this, I might already forget which mistake I had made in which lesson...and what areas I should further improve to make my teaching better”* (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/28). She continued:

*Another good thing is having the interviews with you because you asked me some questions that I never thought of. For example, you asked me what I learned from my co-teacher. Without those questions, I might not know that I could really gain something from my teaching partner.*

As for Irene, she stated that her promise to participate in this study drove her into her first teaching—*“Participating in this research project pushes me to carry out this course. If it were not for the research project, I would still hide like a shy shrimp as I used to be and I will never teach”* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/29). She added, *“Thanks to the opportunity to teach this time, I found that it was not that scary and I benefited a lot from the teaching experience.”* Moreover, like Lynn, Irene also endorsed the positive impact of completing teaching reflective logs. She remarked:

*At times I found something should be improved...and I did not write it down...the idea would just flash through my mind. But I felt the process of keeping reflection on teaching...the idea somehow becomes very clear in my mind. And I would ponder more deeply over the matter rather than just let it pop into my head. While I was observing Lynn teaching the class, I found some problems regarding her teaching and forgot to talk to her about those problems...by writing reflection, I was reminded once again that I should remember to discuss with her* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/29).

She continued to conceptualize the idea of keeping reflective logs by offering a metaphor. She remarked, *“It’s like to rewind our teaching video to watch it again.”*



## 4.2 TEAM 2: ANDREA AND NADYA

### 4.2.1 Description and Perception of Team-Teaching Experience

#### 4.2.1.1 Andrea's Definition of Team Teaching and Perception of Her Role

In the background interview, Andrea defined team teaching as *“a supportive team which can provide teachers with tremendous support”* (background interview, Andrea, 2009/05/11). She continued to indicate what kind of support that collaborative teaching was capable of providing, *“It's difficult for me to detect my own blind spots in my lesson plans. But integrating another teacher's opinions makes it easier for me to spot pitfalls of my lesson plans.”* Other than that, team teacher's *“emotional support”* as well as *“teaching assistance (e.g., helping each other with in-class group activities)”* were also pointed out by Andrea as the possible support of collaborative teaching.

In the same interview, the researcher also asked Andrea how her previous teaching experience, if any, facilitates the collaboration with Nadya. Before answering the question, Andrea first expressed her concern for striking a balance between team teachers' autonomy and collegiality, as she commented, *“Though we are going to team teach a course, it's necessary to retain each teacher's individualities.”* She continued, *“Lesson plans are co-constructed, but for each part of the lesson, PowerPoint slides, and the way how one's gonna present it should fit in with her own style. We still have to teach independently in the future.”* Moreover, holding a major of Social Education in college, Andrea had had a lot of experiences observing and evaluating peers' teaching performance. Andrea therefore regarded constructive comments and feedback provided by peers or more experienced teachers as significant sources of helping student teachers develop their teaching skill. She stated:

*When I was a college student, I got the experiences observing others' teaching.*



*Peers and teachers would offer their comments on every student's teaching performance. By listening to their feedback, I got the chance to know my weaknesses. This is our first time teaching adult learners. If I have a person who can observe and spot my weaknesses, I can make more improvement in my teaching. The room for professional growth could become larger* (background interview, Andrea, 2009/05/11).

Regarding their roles within the team, Andrea considered them at the same stage of inexperience and thus expected two teachers to take the role as equal teammates. On the other hand, Andrea expected her English proficiency, writing skills in particular, could in turn be enhanced through organizing and discussing writing lessons with Nadya. Apart from writing skills, Andrea hoped that the team-teaching experience could help her gain more pedagogical knowledge about how to teach L2 writing. She mentioned:

*I think this is one of the benefits of team teaching. Nadya took the course of L2 Writing when she was a college student and I am currently taking the course of Advanced Writing. We can combine what we learned and integrate what we think can best help students learn into our GEPT writing course* (background interview, Nadya, 2009/05/11).

#### *4.2.1.2 Andrea's Feelings of the First Class and Interaction with Nadya*

In their first class<sup>1</sup>, Nadya was the major teacher who took charge of the whole two periods while Andrea was a complete observer. The overall structure of their lesson included providing the overview of the day's agenda, getting students familiar with the format and question types of GEPT writing task, the notion of "writer's block", and introducing the day's primary topic—essay structure which was supposed to be a two-hour lecture (according to the reflective log on July 2<sup>nd</sup> from Nadya). Sitting in the classroom, Andrea intended to understand students' attitudes, learning, and how they felt about the

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<sup>1</sup> Here the first class refers to the first lecture after the orientation week.

course materials through observation. In the interview, Andrea described what she received by being an observer. She stated:

*Students were somehow poker-faced...perhaps they were tired...they didn't show any enthusiasm on their face...there were few students nodding their heads. At that moment, I was thinking that "I must try my best to memorize students' names before I teach them the next week, or I will have the name list on my hand, calling someone to answer my question directly instead of asking "Any volunteers?" as Nadya did" (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

After the first period of the lecture, during the break Andrea and Nadya had a short discussion about students' performance in class. Nadya, Andrea's team teacher, jotted down her feeling after carrying out the first class with Andrea's help (see p.32 for more information).

#### *4.2.1.3 Andrea's Perception of the Benefits of Team Teaching*

Andrea considered team teaching helpful for her to lead a class in the following three aspects: (1) *constructing teaching materials*, (2) *conducting teaching activities*, and (3) *re-confirming word or grammar usage* (interview, 2009/07/24). As mentioned above, from Andrea's perspective, team teaching made it possible for teacher candidates to be exposed to different teaching perspectives which are derived from the distinct teaching experience. However, because of this, both of them had to spend much more time expressing their ideas than that of teaching individually. Andrea stated:

*There were several times we spent a lot of time communicating to each other. Sometimes I felt fed up with this kind of communication because it took a long time to articulate just an idea. This communication to some extent may result from our different learning experiences...but on the other hand it allowed a teacher to view the other teacher as her student because we always explain to each other about how I'm gonna lead the activities...why I put this in my*

*worksheet...what will come next after I finish this part (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

Another benefit of sharing a class, from Andrea's point of view, was that the help of the other teacher facilitated the smooth running of teaching activities, as she mentioned:

*Nadya helped me calculate the scores of each group when I was a major teacher leading the activity. If I have to calculate the scores while teaching...I think of course a single teacher can do two things at the same time... but if there are two sharing a class, it seems that things could run more smoothly and the learning spirit could become higher (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

In addition to the smooth running of teaching activities, Andrea also considered her partner a writing consultant for her to re-confirm English usage or grammatical concepts which she was not completely sure of. She stated:

*Sometimes students asked me questions...at that moment I wasn't 100 percent sure if the usage is correct. But I could turn to Nadya for help. I think this is quite important...I mean you got another teacher who can double check for you (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

#### *4.2.1.4 Andrea's Most Memorable Incident in Team Teaching*

Andrea's most memorable incident in team teaching took place when two co-teachers finished correcting students' in-class writing for the second time. Before distributing students' writing pieces, Andrea hit upon the idea of conducting student-teacher writing consultation. She continued to describe how Nadya responded to her idea:

*We spent a long time arguing this because I was quite insisting on explaining to students face to face. She thought why I was such a lazy person... why not just write comments on students' test paper. And I even show her the test paper*



*I corrected which was full of my comments. We argued over this for a long time. Lynn and Irene<sup>1</sup> were even laughing beside us while we were arguing (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

The reason of such conception was that she thought writing teachers often re-write students' sentences due to grammar errors, and it was very likely for writing teachers to re-write a student' sentence in a specific way that changed the meaning the student originally wanted to convey. She told the researcher, *“Instead of guessing what a student tries to say, why not just ask him/her directly?”* (interview, 2009/07/24).

#### *4.2.1.5 The Most Rewarding Aspect in Team Teaching*

The most rewarding aspect in team teaching, from Andrea's perspective, was the joyful feeling originated from teaching together. She mentioned that the two writing teachers and the two speaking teachers often discussed together about students' performance and shared feelings about their first teaching after class. As she stated, *“There were 13 students both took Speaking and Writing class...I felt co-teachers' sharing after class...we chatted about what type a certain student was...how he or she was doing in class...I thought the sharing after class was good”* (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24). She also added, *“Sometimes when a student was absent from class, we writing teachers would know the reason of absence from the speaking teachers”*. Andrea also compared the situation of independent teaching to that of collaborative teaching by referring to Ruth, one of her classmates who had taught alone in the last semester, as she described:

*Take Ruth for example, she taught GEPT Class independently. When she was teaching her class in the last semester, we four hadn't started teaching GEPT Class...we wouldn't put ourselves in her shoes. But we four all taught GEPT Class during this summer break, Nadya and I understood what Lynn and Irene*

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn and Irene were another group of team teachers who were also under the current investigation.



*were happy for or what they were upset about and they could imagine what it would feel like to be in our situation (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

#### *4.2.1.6 Andrea's Strength and Weakness as a Team Teacher*

On the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix G), Andrea considered the strength of her own in team teaching as the ability to find new ideas or activities. She wrote:

*I would think of numerous teaching possibilities and activities...usually I would come up with several methods, for instance, games, what punishment to impose, and what rules to follow, from which the other teacher could choose. She could choose a better method (open-ended questionnaire, Andrea).*

In addition to creativity, another strength when taking a role of a co-teacher was her vivacious personality, as she indicated, *“I had a cheerful character and often behaved in a happy way, so most of the activities were carried out by me”*.

On the other hand, regarding her weakness as a co-teacher, she remarked, *“I often came up with ideas that were very abstract. I couldn't put my abstract ideas into words to let Nadya understand”* (open-ended questionnaire, Andrea). She continued, *“It might be quite difficult for her to communicate or design lessons with me”*. In the follow-up interview, the researcher asked Andrea to provide an example to illustrate, and she described, *“Sometimes I could only think of an opening of something. Then she asked me what I am gonna do next. And this usually happened at the time when I explained to her about the content of an activity or the procedure of a lesson (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

#### *4.2.1.7 Andrea's Metaphor for Team Teaching*

The following depiction portrayed Andrea's idea for team teaching (also see Figure 4 for the pictures Andrea provided to conceptualize her written metaphor).

*Team teaching is like two riders riding a tandem bike, a bicycle with seats and pedals for two, either on land or on water. Unlike solo bike, a tandem bike takes two riders who are equally devoted to coasting at the same time and maneuvering smoothly. Since the tandem is so much heavier, it cannot accelerate quickly without the cooperation and coordination of both riders. Hence, if one of the riders is not dedicated and appears lazy, though the tandem bike can still be coasting, the speed of the tandem would become slower in motion. The same can be applied to team teaching, for every team member in a team can choose to be a committed and wholehearted partner or, adversely, to be irresponsible and dependent partner. It's all about choices (open-ended questionnaire, Andrea).*



*Figure 4. The pictures provided by Andrea to conceptualize her written metaphor*

(Sources of the pictures:

Upper-left

<http://www.clevescene.com/scene-and-heard/archives/2010/08/03/towpath-trail-completion-closer-to-reality-after-key-land-acquired>

Upper-right

<http://www.sfgate.com/thingstodo/article/Low-carbon-dating-Biking-gets-hearts-racing-3172245.php>

Lower-left

[http://music.yule.tom.com/uimg/2009/6/9/caohonglin/1244507349311\\_48030.jpg](http://music.yule.tom.com/uimg/2009/6/9/caohonglin/1244507349311_48030.jpg)

Lower-right

[http://flower-sea.tw.tranews.com/Show/Style7/Column/c1\\_Column.asp?SiteMId=0131030&ProgramNo=A400035000001&SubjectNo=3985](http://flower-sea.tw.tranews.com/Show/Style7/Column/c1_Column.asp?SiteMId=0131030&ProgramNo=A400035000001&SubjectNo=3985))

#### 4.2.1.8 What Does Andrea Like and Dislike about Team Teaching?

In the open-ended questionnaire, Andrea jotted down her likes and dislikes about team teaching. On one hand, she indicated that team teaching could offer novice teachers with a good chance for expressing and examining teaching ideas. In her words:

*I considered team teaching very helpful for inexperienced teachers because when I designed lessons or activities, I needed someone who could discuss with me or listen to my ideas. By means of consecutive communication and negotiation, teaching activities would become more thorough and courses would contain greater varieties (open-ended questionnaire, Andrea).*

On the other hand, a good chance for expressing and examining ideas was her dislikes about team teaching as well. The process of course design and lesson planning would involve successive communication. She remarked, *“Two teachers had different educational backgrounds, and the way how we learned English writing was different, either. Sometimes I would apply what I learned to my students; however, my co-teacher might not understand what I want to do”* (open-ended questionnaire, Andrea). She continued, *“You can’t get your own way to carry out something when that takes two to achieve”*.



#### *4.2.1.9 Nadya's Expectation Before Team Teaching and Perception of Her Role*

By way of collaborative teaching, Nadya expected to learn from Andrea in the following two aspects. The first aspect that she hoped to learn was her co-teacher's knowledge of classroom practice. As she stated, "*She must be more experienced than I in the area of teaching practice because she had finished her internship in a primary school before*" (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29). She continued, "*Although she used to teach primary school students, she would still be more experienced than I in the area of classroom management*". Another aspect Nadya would like to learn was the pedagogical content knowledge of teaching L2 writing. She mentioned that her co-teacher was currently taking the course of Advanced Writing offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. Though Nadya had taken courses related to L2 writing before, she mentioned in the interview that what she had learned and what instructors had taught already slipped her memory. Compared with her, Andrea would be more familiar with the knowledge of teaching L2 writing.

On the other hand, regarding their roles within the team, Nadya's response resembled that of Andrea because both co-teachers considered themselves at the same stage of inexperience and thus expected two teachers to take the role as equal teammates.

#### *4.2.1.10 Nadya's Feelings of the First Class and Interaction with Andrea*

As mentioned earlier, in their first class Nadya was the major teacher who took charge of the entire two periods while Andrea was a complete observer. In the interview, Nadya expressed her feeling of extreme nervousness while conducting the class. When the first period of the lecture was over, during the break Andrea and Nadya had a short discussion about students' performance in class. Right after the first lesson, Nadya jotted down her feeling after carrying out the class and her interaction with Andrea, part of the log was



shown below:

*I planned to introduce “topic sentence” in more detail, including leading students to look at every example sentence. However, after the first hour, I felt that if I kept lecturing, students might get bored. As a result, after discussing with Andrea, I decided to briefly go through the concept rather than refer to many example sentences. And I could have students do a group activity if time permitted. Since I wasn’t well-prepared for the activity last night, I asked Andrea to help me conduct it together. And it was fun! (reflective log, Nadya, 2009/06/30).*

In the background interview, Nadya also mentioned she accepted Andrea’s feedback on her teaching, i.e., briefly introducing a few key sentences and saving time for the activity even though she still continued to ponder on possible ways of improving her lecturing skills during the teaching process. It was also after the first team-taught class that Andrea and Nadya reached a consensus on the integration of an activity in each class.

#### *4.2.1.11 Nadya’s Most Memorable Incident in Team Teaching*

Nadya’s most memorable incident happened in the second period of their first team-taught class, the time when she continued introducing the concept of “topic sentence” by asking students to choose a good, clear topic sentence from several pairs of sentences. After students had finished browsing through several sentences, Nadya checked answers by asking the whole class to provide their choices and the reasons behind them. When it came to the fifth sentence—“*Camping is a great outdoor activity.*” and the sixth sentence—“*Camping requires a variety of special equipment.*”, some of the students thought of the former as being too general, some of them considered the latter too specific, while the rest regarded both were acceptable. After students’ responses to the exercise, Nadya first mentioned that her choice was the sixth; however, she also indicated that what differentiated between these two was hard to recognize. After pondering over the

disagreement for a while, Nadya turned to Andrea for help. She asked Andrea if she had any other thoughts. Andrea said that she considered the fifth sentence was better than the other and expressed her opinions about why she preferred the fifth to the sixth (fieldnotes, 2009/06/30). In the interview, Nadya reflected upon the incident and remarked, *“I think it was clever of me to ask her for help because I really didn’t know how to explain. And Nadya helped me explain that to students. She just saved me”* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27). She added, *“The students would never accept my explanations, if I kept using the same reasons to defend my stance”*.

#### 4.2.1.12 Nadya’s Perception of the Benefits of Team Teaching

Part of the open-ended questionnaire asked Nadya to state her like in team teaching. She wrote, *“What I like the most is that when I was doubtful in teaching, I have a partner who could discuss with me. I think as far as new teachers are concerned, this is the most helpful aspect”* (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya). She further remarked, *“Because new teachers usually have great uncertainty about teaching, and we’re often uncertain whether we are doing it best way. Novice teachers would feel much relieved when they have a person to discuss with”*.

#### 4.2.1.13 Nadya’s Dislike about Team Teaching

Like Andrea, Nadya also considered the different perspectives shared between two teachers to be her dislike about team teaching. She jotted down her response in the questionnaire:

*When two had different opinions for something, each sides had to give up a little bit in order to ensure a better collaboration. Under this kind of circumstances, I could not get my own way to design a course that I hope for* (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya).

#### 4.2.1.14 Nadya's Metaphor for Team Teaching

The following depiction portrayed Nadya's idea for team teaching (also see Figure 5 for the pictures Nadya provided to conceptualize her written metaphor).

*Team teaching itself appears fairly consistent with the piano duet. First and foremost, cooperation between the two sides is significant. Secondly, two pianists should be with equally good piano-playing skills. Thirdly, a tacit understanding of each other without anything being said or any obvious signal being passed is also needed for the harmonious and beautiful piano music (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya).*



*Figure 5.* The picture provided by Nadya to conceptualize her written metaphor

(Source of the picture: <http://www.flonline.pro/en/image-details/154596.html>)

In the interview, the researcher asked Nadya to illustrate the meaning of “*equally good piano-playing skills*” as well as “*a tacit understanding of each other without anything*

*being said or any obvious signal being passed*” (open-ended questionnaire). She elaborated further, the former means “*Both two co-teachers must be equal in their level of English proficiency*” while the latter refers to “*Two teachers can share similar ideas upon an issue. Also, for example while Andrea is teaching...she is sending a signal to me to ask for help, I am able to pick up her signal and then respond to it*” (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27). She added by providing an incident relating to her answer:

*There was a time when a student asked Andrea what is the difference between “but” and “yet”, and then she gave me a look. I was thinking that she might be unable to answer the question, so I helped her explain the usage”* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27).

#### 4.2.1.15 Nadya’s Strength and Weakness as a Team Teacher

In the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix G), Nadya depicted her submissive personal quality as her major strength in team teaching. She wrote, “*Most of the time, I was willing to accept the other teacher’s opinions*” (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya). Based on her response to the question, in the follow-up interview the researcher asked Nadya whether she considered a submissive personality trait essential in successful team teaching. She remarked:

*While completing the questionnaire, I contemplated on this question for quite a while. The reason was that I couldn’t think of any strength of my own as a team teacher. As for your question, I think it depends on who your partner is. If two teachers are both considered submissive, their collaboration must have some problems. The same situation will also happen when two teachers both have a dominant personality* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27).

Regarding her weakness as a team teacher, Nadya considered her deficient ability to



be her weakness in team teaching. As she wrote in the questionnaire:

*While I was doing lesson planning, I usually had difficulty thinking of how to teach...or I might have problems clarifying some grammar points and writing concepts. My partner and I often encountered this kind of situations. We usually spent lots of time discussing who was right. This made me think that all the problems probably resulted from my insufficient ability to teach. If I was 100 percent sure of everything, we wouldn't keep spending time discussing and preparing (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya).*

#### 4.2.1.16 Andrea's and Nadya's Change in Perception of Team Teaching

As mentioned earlier, Andrea had the experience of co-teaching with her classmates in college. Andrea's team-teaching partner in college was a kind of person who always pinpointed her teaching weaknesses and the areas that could be better improved. On the other hand, reflected upon the collaboration this time, Andrea regarded the mutual feedback provided from the two sides, particularly in the aspect of teaching skills, was much less when it was compared to her previous team-teaching experience. The researcher asked Andrea to think of any possible reasons, and she remarked:

*One of the possible reasons might be that my classmates in college were eager to become qualified teachers at primary schools. And we all planned to take the exam of teacher recruitment after we graduated. It was doubtless that we laid much emphasis on what could be improved, including the way we talked and the way we delivered instructions. But this time we were teaching college students...we didn't aim to teach college students as our future career. So we didn't care much about giving each other feedback concerning teaching techniques of teaching students at this age (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).*

#### 4.2.1.17 Indispensable Element for a Successful Team-Teaching Collaboration

When asked what factor was vitally important for team teaching, Andrea viewed

personality as a significant element. She indicated that when looking for a teaching partner, she would in a way evaluate the collaboration with another co-teacher. The researcher continued to ask her in what aspects she would take into consideration. She replied, *“Some people are not suitable for team teaching because of their personalities. If a person who has a great deal of creativity and she often likes to add a new stuff into what has already been planned at the last minute, he or she is unsuitable for collaborative teaching”* (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).

After team teaching, Nadya regarded teachers’ way of thinking as the most essential element in successful team teaching. She remarked, *“The way of thinking between two parties should be similar. Take making friends for example, some people around you somehow share a similar way of thinking with you while others just don’t click”* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27). She added, *“If you have a teaching partner who shares a similar way of thinking with you, the amount of time for negotiation would be shortened”*.

#### 4.2.1.18 Diverse Roles of a Team Teacher

Table 5 summarized the different kinds of roles which Andrea and Nadya considered they played during the team-teaching process. The interpretation of the different roles given by each teacher is provided in the following paragraph.

Andrea regarded the role of a team teacher as a counselor as well as a partner. She further elaborated:

*We asked each other how activities could be implemented to make sure the smooth delivery of each activity. Or in terms of teaching methods, for example, we shared our interpretations on a single issue. She told me how she’s gonna explain this to students, and I told her if I were her, how I would explain that to students* (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/24).

Table 5

Andrea’s and Nadya’s Role of a Team Teacher

Team Teacher	Varied Roles Which the Team Teacher Played
Andrea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a counselor</li> <li>● a partner</li> </ul>
Nadya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a teaching partner</li> </ul>

Regarding the role of a partner, Andrea mentioned that in team-taught situations, co-teachers need to back up each other no matter who is the major teacher of that class. For example, they reached an agreement that when they were having group discussion in class, the teacher who did not take the lead sometimes had to join students in order to have even number of students in each group.

For the same question, Nadya regarded her role as a friend who could discuss with the other teacher. She remarked, *“In preparing lessons, I discussed with the other teacher about how to arrange lessons and coordinate our lessons. Whenever I faced problems, I always had a partner to discuss with, too”* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27).

#### **4.2.2 Skills and Knowledge Learned in Team Teaching**

##### *4.2.2.1 Areas Andrea Wanted to Improve on Before Team Teaching*

Being a student teacher, Andrea stated in the background interview that she hoped to learn more about *“how to cultivate better classroom atmosphere”* (background interview, Andrea, 2009/05/11). She also mentioned teacher’s sense of humor plays a significant role in forming wonderful classroom atmosphere. As a student who had taken the course of Advanced Writing in the same university, Andrea found that in class most college students

would sit in the classroom listening to the instructor's lectures, but they rarely expressed their opinions or gave their feedback actively. She continued, "*The teachers who are popular with college students are those who are humorous*" (background interview, Andrea, 2009/05/11).

In addition to techniques which could benefit classroom atmosphere, Andrea also expected to learn from Nadya about how to implement multimedia in language teaching.

#### 4.2.2.2 Andrea's Growth

After team teaching, the researcher asked Andrea to talk about what she learned most by co-teaching with Nadya. She mentioned the area she gained most from the collaboration:

*I think I learned material design most. In terms of lecturing, I think both of us are novice teachers...student teachers, so it seemed we learned from each other...but not that much. But in the aspect of material design, I think each of us applied our own backgrounds to how to design teaching materials...how to sequence the teaching procedures...* (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27).

Compared with material designation, though not very much was gained in the aspect of delivering instruction, Andrea talked about what she learned from observing her partner's teaching performance. Unlike Nadya who often felt natural applying computer skills in teaching writing, Andrea intended to avoid using PowerPoint while teaching, for she thought "*lights are usually too dim for students to get concentrated or if PowerPoint slides include what's exactly in the textbook, students might neglect the importance of taking notes*" (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27). Nonetheless, by watching how the other taught the class, Andrea found Nadya's using PowerPoint slides to pinpoint students' common errors of their in-class writing effective and interactive. As she described:



*Initially, I thought if I'm gonna be teaching this part, I will type all the NG sentences on a piece of A4-size paper and make copies for students...and let's check those sentences together. But I found the way Nadya used PowerPoint to show language errors more effective (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27).*

She continued, *“The waiting time for PowerPoint animations allowed Nadya to have interaction with the students...the time allowed the students to think...and the answers were shown directly on the slides...that was a pretty good way to correct writing errors”* (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27)! Inspired by her teaching partner, Andrea did it as Nadya did when it was her turn to point out the students' writing errors.

As mentioned earlier, Andrea expected to learn more about *“how to cultivate better classroom atmosphere”* (background interview, 2009/05/11) and how to implement multimedia in language teaching by co-teaching. At the end of collaborative teaching, the researcher therefore asked Andrea to talk about whether she gained knowledge in these two areas.

Researcher: *Did you put lots of effort to cultivate classroom atmosphere?*

Andrea: *I think telling lousy jokes counts. As I said, students looked drowsy in the first week, so the following week...when I took the lead, I think...I'm not gonna take the students through writing instruction immediately. There should be a small activity...I told a lousy joke, next I went on by reviewing the previous lesson...then I took the students to the day's major topic.*

Researcher: *Do you think this can be considered a technique for you to get closer to your students?*

Andrea: *I think this could. I think lessons can have a small warm-up activity as an opening, rather than starting from instruction right away.*

Researcher: *Did you come up with this idea gradually during the process of team teaching?*

Andrea: *Yes. Because Nadya took the lead in the first week, and the students were kind of drowsy...Nadya felt the same as I did...so I thought I would try telling a joke the following time.*

In the same interview, Andrea also acknowledged the strengths of two teachers' collegiality in cultivating positive classroom atmosphere. She stated that originally Nadya preferred to have the pattern of one leading teacher, one teaching period. Nonetheless, after practicing team teaching, she realized that Nadya and she usually shifted the lead unintentionally, regardless who was scheduled to lead the particular class. She remarked, *"It seemed that the sharing of the leading role created a more harmonious classroom atmosphere. It also enhanced the students' confidence in the teachers"* (interview, Andrea, 2007/07/27).

One example to illustrate what Andrea stated above took place in mid-July. One of the foci of that day was using statistics to support a writer's ideas. After Nadya explained this strategy to the students, one of the students looked puzzled because he was not convinced of this. Nadya thus made a pause and asked if he has any problems regarding this part, and the student said, *"To me, using statistics here is not that convincing"* (fieldnotes, 2009/07/02). Next Nadya went on to explain the strategy again though the student still remained not convinced. She then asked Andrea, *"Andrea, how do you feel about this?"* At this point, Andrea endorsed the positive effect of using statistics by referring to several well-known magazines, such as *Career* and *Common Wealth Magazine*<sup>1</sup>. She shared her viewpoint in general, *"Using statistics to quantify one's ideas makes his writing different from others."* After Andrea's sharing, the researcher saw a few students were nodding their heads (fieldnotes, 2009/07/02).

Another unexpected effect of collaboration found in the current study was the inter-team interaction among the four participants. Andrea commented that the writing teachers often chatted with the speaking teachers, exchanging ideas and information regarding teaching GEPT. The researcher found that after the first two lessons Andrea

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<sup>1</sup> "天下雜誌" in Chinese.

made an announcement to the students— whoever was late for class had to prepare an English joke for the next class (fieldnotes, 2009/07/09). Andrea stated this rule was adopted from Lynn and Irene, the other two student teachers teaching Speaking Class. The researcher therefore asked Andrea whether the other two peers helped her learn about how to facilitate classroom atmosphere:

*Andrea: The speaking teachers did help us...we exchanged ideas with each other.*

*Researcher: Did you share your feeling with them after carrying out the first class?*

*Andrea: Yes. I said writing is a subject which is less interesting. And they agreed with me. So afterwards Nadya and I would incorporate an activity into a regular lesson. We would sometimes ask Lynn and Irene how they feel about the activity (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27).*

With regard to the area of applying multimedia in teaching writing, Andrea felt that she had not gained too much knowledge in this facet because “*We seldom incorporate multimedia with our teaching this time. We only applied some computer skills to making handouts. I think that’s all*” (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27).

#### *4.2.2.3 Areas Nadya Wanted to Improve on Before Team Teaching*

In Nadya’s case, she stated in the background interview that she lacked confidence to be a teacher. In her words, “*I am not confident in teaching. I always thought that I don’t have much experience*” (background interview, Nadya, 2009/05/25). With regard to the skills she would like to gain, she acknowledged that classroom management and language instruction appeared most challenging to her. She went on to say that she considered her language proficiency was not high enough to make herself a capable teacher. She remarked, “*The students might view us as their schoolmates, rather than their writing teachers. It*



*seems like our levels are similar, but I'm gonna be standing behind the podium to teach them"* (background interview, Nadya, 2009/05/25).

#### 4.2.2.4 Nadya's Growth

In an interview after team teaching, Nadya felt that the area she gained most from the co-teacher was the way how Andrea interacted with the students. The researcher then asked Nadya to provide an example to illustrate. She said:

*For example, we usually had group work...students were required to discuss with their group members. In the beginning, I hadn't even thought that I can go down from the podium and get involved with the students. I mean the teachers can ask if the students have any questions or else. In one of the lessons, I saw Andrea going down, engaging herself in every group's discussion. I think she did a good job* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29).

Nadya went on to talk about another incident which she also benefited from:

*There was a time when Andrea led the students to carry out an activity called "Shopping ABC". Some of students were not familiar with the activity, while the others knew what the activity was about. Instead of explaining the activity on her own, Andrea then asked "Anyone heard this activity before?" ...some students raised their hands... and next she randomly picked a student to explain and demonstrate the game. I felt the way she dealt with the situation was effective* (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29).

As stated earlier, Nadya felt less confident about teaching college students. After team teaching, the researcher therefore asked whether the team-teaching experience enhanced the confidence in her own ability. She told the researcher that what was built was not her confidence but a feeling of being at ease. She clarified the difference between these two:



*Confidence is that you are confident about you own ability to teach or you are sure that you can teach well on your own, but after team teaching I still felt unsure whether I can teach relatively well on my own. But I know I was much more relaxed...when I didn't teach well or when I came across difficulties, there's a person who could help out (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29).*

With regard to language proficiency, Nadya described the experience of working with Andrea as “*learning by doing.*” She felt that her linguistic knowledge in English was enhanced, and she remarked, “*I learned form my co-teacher of course, and also from the process of lesson planning*” (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29).

#### 4.2.2.5 *The Effects of Participating in the Research Project*

At the end of team teaching, both Andrea and Nadya considered participating in this study helpful in their professional growth. Andrea stated that one benefit of writing teaching reflective logs was that it involves deep thinking”. She remarked:

*Writing reflection requires the connection of each teaching episode...and you can think more deeply. In class, I just had to carry on with the lessons and I could only think of something quickly. I wouldn't have more time to figure out how I can improve a certain aspect (interview, Andrea, 2009/07/27).*

In Nadya's case, after participating in the current study, she commented that keeping reflective logs forced her to pay attention to something which she might easily neglect:

*At the beginning of writing each log, of course I would write down something impressed me the most. Somehow I found that I have very little to say, so I would try to think more thoroughly and deeply...I would take a look at the worksheets and syllabus on that day again...and contemplate on what I did in each phase of a lesson (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/29).*

Moreover, like Lynn in the first team, Nadya also endorsed the positive effect of having interviews with the researcher. She remarked:

*Some of the questions you asked during the interviews made me start to find answers. Like one of your previous questions...you asked me what I learned from observing my teaching partner. This reminded me once again of the alternative methods and techniques I learned from Andrea (interview, Nadya, 2009/07/27).*



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the researcher will first offer a summary of the findings of the two research questions, and then turn to the theoretical issues emerging from the results of the study. Next, the limitations of this study will be addressed. In the end, possible future directions to teacher preparation programs and further research on team teaching will be presented.

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The purposes of this study are (1) to explore the team teaching experience of TEFL student teachers in Taiwan and (2) to illuminate TEFL student teachers' professional growth, if any, in a collaborative-teaching relationship. Aiming to provide more valid and richer evidence, the study adopted a qualitative case study design. The current investigation was guided by the following two research questions: (1) What are the TEFL student teachers' perceptions of their team-teaching experience? ; (2) What skills and knowledge do the TEFL student teachers learn from their team-teaching experience? The researcher will begin this section by summarizing the findings of the first research questions, and then the second.

##### **5.1.1 (1) What are the TEFL student teachers' perceptions of their team-teaching experience?**

Regarding the first research question, three issues emerging from the data are worth summarizing: (1) the partner as an emotional Anchor; (2) the partner as a cognitive Anchor; (3) compatibility between partners.

#### 5.1.1.1 *The partner as an emotional anchor*

Before the team teaching officially began, every participant revealed a high level of anxiety of teaching a course. However, studying in the same TESOL institute, the four participants had the chance to communicate with the other teacher professionally, which relieved the stress and reduced workload of teaching alone. Analysis of the data also indicated that it is significant for student teachers to have a teaching partner in their first teaching experience. When the participants confronted with teaching problems or the decision-making process, the feeling of support and safety provided by the other team teacher was commonly described in the participants' perceptions of team teaching. Having a partner to discuss with when they were not sure of making any teaching decision was thought to be important among the participants.

#### 5.1.1.2 *The partner as a cognitive anchor*

In the present study, team teaching between two TEFL student teachers was shown to be of value to each cooperative teacher. Results of the present study suggested that a collaborative-teaching relationship appeared to be not only stimulating to the team members (in this case, Lynn got a sense of crisis by co-working with Irene, who inspired her to broaden her vocabulary bank) but also facilitating for the student teachers' development of *teaching ideas, classroom management skills, English usage, and delivery of effective lectures*.

#### 5.1.1.3 *Compatibility between partners*

In the current study, it seemed that the team teachers taught in harmony with each other and respected each other as team teachers. The four TEFL students all considered the chance of collaborative teaching to be beneficial for themselves. However, the metaphors and the pictures provided by the four participants revealed a number of issues which prospective team teachers should take into consideration before stepping in a



collaborative-teaching relationship. Based on the data yielding from the participants' metaphors, open-ended questionnaire, and follow-up interviews, three issues may have contributed to a successful team teaching, including (1) Communication, (2) Personality, and (3) Devotion to Team Teaching.

### **5.1.2 (2) What skills and knowledge, if any, do the TEFL student teachers learn from their team-teaching experience?**

Through collaborative teaching, the participants developed their knowledge in the two areas in particular; they are (1) adding to their repertoire of course and material design skills, and (2) knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses.

#### *5.1.2.1 Adding to their repertoire of course and material design skills*

The finding indicated that Lynn, Irene and Andrea gained the increasing knowledge of course and material design in terms of the subject they taught. For instance, Irene thought she learned a number of *teaching activities* as well as *teaching topics* for teaching Speaking. Moreover, Lynn viewed the process of *lesson planning* as the most beneficial from the collaboration while Andrea considered how to *design teaching materials* for teaching writing to be the area she gained the most.

#### *5.1.2.2 Knowledge of each other's strengths and weaknesses*

Observing the other teacher taught provided the participants with a good opportunity to learn from each other and understand oneself more as a student teacher. Take Lynn for example. Being an observer, Lynn thought that her partner usually spoke at a slower speed and tended to join the students' discussion. Reflected upon her own teaching, Lynn was inspired to speak slower for the students to understand and engage herself in students' discussion. Moreover, Andrea used to avoid using PowerPoint as she thought that students might neglect the importance of taking notes. Nevertheless, by watching how Nadya taught the class, Andrea found Nadya's using PowerPoint slides to pinpoint students' common

errors of their in-class writing effective and interactive. Andrea thus reshaped the preconceived belief about applying multi-media in language teaching.

## 5.2 Discussion

As discussed in Chapter One, previous study has shown a growing interest in depicting cooperative teaching between native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-NESTs (see for example, Chen, 2008; Cheng, 2004; Chou, 2005; Liou, 2002; Lou, 2005; Pan, 2004; Tsai, 2007; Wang, 2006). In this study, the researcher aims to provide more holistic and detailed descriptions of four TEFL student teachers' team teaching experiences in order to uncover the crucial issues and phenomena found within the complicated process of learning to teach.

The findings of the present study echo the previous literature on the positive effect of team teaching on teachers' professional development (Anderson & Speck, 1998; Buckley, 2000; Richards & Farrell, 2005). As revealed in Chapter Two, team teaching provides student teachers with *good peer support* during the transition from the role of student to the role of teacher. By comparing the current study with the former studies on the same topic — team teaching, it is found that a community of peers is also as *a crucial source of ideas and constructive comments*.

Because the current study is based on the view of social constructivism, and team teaching is a kind of social activity which is contributory for learning to take place, the following section aims to discuss the concept of zone of proximal development. On top of that, individual and interpersonal factors which involve in the professional collaboration are also discussed. Lastly, how peer-based collaboration could facilitate the participants' teaching skills is also presented.

### 5.2.1 Zone of Proximal Development

Guided by the spirit of the social constructivism, the current study aimed to shed some light on TEFL student teachers' development involved in the collaborative teaching. According to Vygotsky (1978), social interaction is a prerequisite to learning and cognitive development. As discussed in Chapter Two, within the ZPD (i.e., each individual's zone of potential learning), more capable students can provide peers with new information and new ways of thinking so that all parties can create new means of understanding. In addition, from the growing body of literature on social constructivism, it seems clear that the focus of Vygotsky's social constructivism is on how an individual's learning and understanding grow out of social encounters. In a social constructivist view, a crucial question to ask is what kinds of social activities are contributory for learning to take place. In other words, the context in which the learning occurs is central to the learning itself (McMahon, 1997). Findings of this study suggested that when team teachers were both intimately and equally involved in all aspects of teaching, the team-teaching mechanism was able to bring the benefits to the team teachers. This kind of collaboration seems probable to lead to student teachers' learning when they are equal partners who share equal degree of responsibility to carry out a lesson. Analysis of the findings indicated that the participants, being new and inexperienced in the field of teaching profession, were observed, critiqued, and improved by the other team member in a nonthreatening, supportive context. Although teacher development can occur through a teacher's own personal initiative, the findings in this study indicated that collaboration with others could cause individual learning and encourage greater peer-based learning through sharing and finding solutions to their teaching problems.

### 5.2.2 Collegiality vs. Individualism

Another issue emerging from the data is related to individual and interpersonal factors which involve in the professional collaboration. It is important to note that it takes a lot more than simply equally engaging in the team-teaching process for collaboration to bring positive effects to teachers. Findings of this study suggested that numerous individual and interpersonal factors were dependent upon a pleasant team-teaching experience. For example, individual factors, such as team members' personalities, were found to cause the other member different degree of stress in a collaborative-teaching relationship. Not knowing whom to co-teach in the future, Andrea indicated that when looking for a potential teaching partner, she would in a way evaluate his/her personality as a significant element whether to team up with him/her.

The results from this study seem to lend some support to the view that the negative impact of working collaboratively was the need to meet more frequently with colleagues to discuss and plan, which placed an added work burden on teachers (Buckley, 2000; Johnson, 2003). Despite the fact that the four participants endorsed the positive effects of team teaching, they also identified their dislikes about team teaching. For example, in the case of the writing teachers, both of Andrea and Nadya considered learning from each other's different ideas when planning lessons to be their dislike as well as their like. This means chances for expressing and examining teaching ideas could improve their teaching practices, and all of the participants came to recognize and appreciate each teacher's different ideas on how to teach. However, the process of lesson planning required successive communication and negotiation which usually took a lot of time for the participants to negotiate, and sometimes they just could not get their own way. As seen in the case of Andrea, Nadya and Irene, they stated that team teaching made more demands on time and energy than teaching alone. What's more, rethinking the courses and



explaining them to the other co-teacher did cause inevitable inconvenience to the participants and discussions were sometimes exhausting from the constant interaction with their peers.

Several researchers (Buckley, 2000; Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000) also proposed the concept that *the tension between being an effective team member and retaining one's autonomy* is what team teachers need to tackle with every day. The healthy balance between teachers' internal freedom and external collaboration cannot be created by enforcing collegiality (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Sawyer, 2002). According to Nadya, the way of thinking between two parties should be similar so that every member knows and follows similar teaching styles. Here, the results supported the previous studies (Avalos, 1998; Sawyer, 2002) for the point that the diversity among team teachers may not bring positive effects on teachers' professional development, and collaboration is better when it is not planned by a third party. In addition, as discussed earlier, team teachers fitting into the team type of "Blind date"—strangers who are matched by someone else, such as an administrator—could lead to either committing to working closely over time or a one-night stand (Eisen, 2000, p.13). Therefore, the findings underscore the importance of recognizing team teachers' individualism and lend support to the idea that the diversity among team teachers might be a potential challenge embedded in a collaborative relationship. Thus, it may suggest that perhaps team teachers are not necessary mutually compatible, so it might not be a fruitful way for school administrators or government officials to team up teaching members.

### **5.2.3 Emotional Support from Peers**

This study depicted TEFL student teachers' feelings and thoughts when they carried out a team-taught class. The findings of the present study show that at the phase of turning their imagination into a reality, every participant in the current study reported a high level

of anxiety. Carrying out a lesson with a co-teacher, every participant acknowledged the significance of peer support during the transition from the role of a graduate student to the role of a GEPT teacher. They felt more secured and confident when there was a team member to back them up and to reduce their workload, particularly in the aspects of lesson planning and teaching.

In Fuller's (1969) research in teacher professional development, he theorized that teacher concerns can be classified into three distinct categories, including "self concerns," "task concerns," and "impact concerns" and teacher concerns will develop in sequence. Although the duration of the current study only lasted for five week, analysis of the data indicated that at the outset the participants did care about what their students might think of them as teachers. Before team teaching began, Lynn and Nadya expressed that their students might lose confidence in them due to their identity, that is, a graduate with little teaching experience; their nervousness was found to affect their emotion at the outset. However, their perceived anxiety gradually relieved as the teaching process went on. The findings of this study echo Fuller's (1969) research since Lynn and Nadya laid much value on what their students thought of them and they felt insecure about their ability to teach. It is of importance for teacher educators to have an understanding of preservice and novice teachers' concerns in order to decrease the rates of attrition of teacher candidates within their progress (O'Connor & Taylor, 1992). In addition, it is worth noting that isolation is a challenge that can inhibit teachers' learning if peers are not accessible to assist (Little, 1982) or inexperienced teachers are less active to seek professional advice (Tsai, 2010).

#### **5.2.4 The Nature of Team Teaching in the Current Study**

Analysis of the data indicated that team teaching can serve as a means of student teachers' professional development. As discussed in Chapter Four, when Irene was leading the task of picture description, Lynn's advice served as a cure which saved Irene as well as

the students from being in an embarrassing silence. Although Irene showed agreement in getting the students to talk at least for one and a half minutes at the outset, the further implementation demonstrated that some of the students simply could not meet the criterion, that is, the time requirement of 1.5 minutes. The real situation and Irene's reflection of the situation enabled Irene to develop deeper understanding of teaching. Analysis of the data showed that most of the participants' learning was triggered under team teachers' continuous communication and the socially mediated activities. Since their peer teachers did not impose great tension or provide judgmental feedback, the participants' teaching skills and knowledge of language teaching did not improve greatly.

Near the end of the research, the researcher conducted two separate interviews. One of them aims to elicit skills and knowledge, if any, the participants gain from team teaching (Appendix I). In addition to the question like what they gained most by working with a partner, the participants were also asked to talk about whether the experience was helpful in developing their *lesson planning skills, instructional strategies, classroom management skills, language learning strategies and skills, and professional knowledge*. However, after team teaching, the participants revealed that their teaching techniques and their knowledge as a foreign language teacher did not improve significantly. These results may be explained by considering the purpose of the GEPT courses under investigation. Take Andrea for example. When she was a college student in an educational college, she used to take some courses aiming to prepare prospective teachers to become a certified teacher at the primary level. With an eye to polish a prospective teacher's teaching techniques, a mentor teacher would provide constructive comments on a student teacher's teaching performance. At that time, she also had many chances to observe other classmates' teaching demonstration and to exchange feedback as a complete observer. Almost every student was interested in knowing more about how he or she gave instructions during class, and the observer usually



had checklists to focus on how instructions were given throughout the lesson. Nonetheless, the majority of the students who took part in the GEPT courses under investigation were college students that were not students in elementary or senior high schools. What's more, the courses were offered by the MA program and aimed to help undergraduates, graduates, or Ph.D candidates pass the GEPT. The purpose of the GEPT courses under investigation differed from that of the courses offered in Teacher Education Centers that intend to prepare certified teachers. As a result, the participants got used to having an observer in class but they rarely evaluated each other's teaching skills or lesson plans.

### **5.2.5 Learning Goes Beyond the Team Unit**

Results of the present study depicted the team teaching experiences as a confluence of partnership and individual ownership. Specifically speaking, there appeared to be a sense of collectivist perspective that occurred in collaborative teaching yet with personal gains and understanding. The preservice teachers were given opportunities to co-plan, co-teach and take equal responsibility. They remarked that their model of collaboration was a shared unit, not like the one implemented by their senior schoolmates as mentioned earlier. When lessons were planned or implemented, they offered and accepted each other's feedback. However, the ownership was nested in a co-teach relationship with their teaching partner.

Much to the researcher's surprise, the inter-team sharing and communication expanded the idea of a team unit. This is also found to influence their professional development. For example, all the participants acknowledged the other group of team teachers as another significant source of their emotional and cognitive support. The four preservice teachers exchanged their opinions and ideas during their meetings and lunch breaks, and they worked as one tight-knit community. Teaching in the similar contexts, two groups of team teachers provided each other feedback which served as the dialogue between individuals for assistance that might lead to internalized self-regulation. This



finding confirmed Vygotskian theory — in order for learning to become internalized, mediations must occur during the actual problem-solving and joint activity or shared task definition with other (Vygotsky, 1981).

However, the people who have impact on student teachers' development were not restricted to those who were GEPT teachers. All the student teachers acknowledged participating in this study to be helpful in their professional growth because the process of writing reflective logs and answering interviews questions involved deep reflection and critical thinking of the team-teaching process. The present study supports the notion of reflective practice (Gomez & Tabachnick, 1992; Schön, 1982) since writing reflective logs was found to encourage the participants to reflect critically on their teaching. Analysis of the data also showed that participants benefited from the process of having the interviews in this study. In order to provide the researcher with more thorough responses, if the questions were not fully answered, they usually kept the questions in mind and found chances to keep the researcher informed. The process of contemplating on the interview questions helped the participants do more critical thinking in several aspects of their collaborative teaching.

### **5.3 Future Suggestions**

Following the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher provides several suggestions to teacher preparation program and teacher practicum in Taiwan. It is hoped that the following suggestions could be adopted by teacher educators, school authorities and governmental organization that plan to implement team teaching to enhance preservice teachers' professionalism in the future.

### 5.3.1 Teacher Preparation Program

This study, although the study involved only four TEFL student teachers, raises important issues for teacher educators. The findings have led to the following implications for teacher education. First, the findings suggest that field-based learning may benefit student teachers' understanding of planning, teaching, social negotiation, and a sense of ownership. Take Irene for example. She considered it positive to create a teaching environment such as GEPT Courses for student teachers to practice teaching, for *“through which student teachers can build confidence to teach and accumulate teaching experiences”* (interview, Irene, 2009/07/27). As mentioned in Chapter Two, Vygotsky (1978) situated learning in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which he posited as being the *“distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”* (p.86). Working within preservice teachers' ZPD, teacher education programs should provide preservice teachers opportunities to experience an authentic teaching experience with *“task demands shared between and among peers”*. The high interaction embedded in the teaching activities may assist the development of preservice teachers' sense of partnership and promote collegiality among student teachers in a TEFL institute. The importance of novice teachers' sense of partnership is shown in Nadya description of what she liked best in team teaching— *“What I like the most is that when I was doubtful in teaching, I have a partner who could discuss with me. I think as far as new teachers are concerned, this is the most helpful aspect”* (open-ended questionnaire, Nadya). She further remarked, *“Because new teachers usually have great uncertainty about teaching, and we're often uncertain whether we are doing it best way. Novice teachers would feel much relieved when they have a person to discuss with”*.

Second, findings of this study also suggest that team teachers should be encouraged to reflect on their teaching regularly so that teaching is guided by individual's continuous self-reflection and informed decision. Such reflection can take many forms, such as engaging in casual conversation about the lesson team teachers taught together, writing a reflective journal and exchanging it with their partners.

Third, it was found in this study that for team teaching to be successful, student teachers must be prepared to accept their co-teachers as equals, respect their teaching styles and expertise, and be ready to improvise because no plan has been engraved in stone and one never knows how the other teacher will react to his/her teaching style (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Awareness of different teaching styles among team teachers is important because some team teachers might react unfavorably to their co-teacher's teaching method that are different from theirs while other are not prepared to face any negative responses. Thus, several important issues which need to be carefully thought about before team teaching should be introduced by the TESOL programs and the general teacher preparation programs. As with any innovation in teaching, team teaching will work best if teachers understand what it is, what its goals are, how it works, and what problems to anticipate (Richards and Farrell, 2005). As mentioned earlier in Chapter Two, in discussions of the role of teacher education in promoting team teaching, Welch (1998) asserts that "Teacher education programs must consider developing courses and field experiences that introduce principles of collaboration" (p.32) so that teacher candidates could apply newly assimilated knowledge or skills in the contest of collaboration. These identified knowledge and skills include problem solving and decision making, communication skills, conflict management skills, awareness of micro- and macro- cultures, etc" (p.32). To sum up, the TESOL programs and the general teacher preparation programs should put more emphasis on the possible difficulties in collaborative teaching and provide scenarios or case analysis for

student teachers to gain the above-mentioned knowledge and skills in order to bridge the gap.

### **5.3.2 Teacher Practicum**

In Taiwan, one part of the Teacher Education requirements for the secondary English teachers is to fulfill teaching practicum, and then they have the qualification to take Teacher Qualification Examinations. There is an agreement that the purpose of teaching practicum is for preparing prospective teachers to understand the real picture of the school life and to equip them with the ability to face the real classroom life. What's more, it is generally believed that with mentor teacher's guidance, the apprentice teacher can gain more understanding of their teaching. According to what was earlier discussed in Chapter One, there is a persistent concern that such experiences may not reach their full potential value (Goker, 2006). There is a growing recognition of the shortcomings of typical pattern of practicum teaching (see Chapter One for further details). Moreover, another issue embedded in this traditional model of field teaching is the hierarchical inequality. The challenge for student teacher is clear: "survival appears uppermost in their minds, with risk taking being minimal and the need for a good grade essential" (Widden et al., 1998, p.155).

It has been suggested that one of the major causes of educator burnout is the absence of a social support network (Schwab, Jackson & Schuler, 1986). Framed along the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), this study has indicated that "peer-scaffolding" provided by the presence of another is of a different nature compared to the traditional practicum teaching in that the participants consider their peer teacher less intimidating because they considered themselves at the same stage of inexperience and unconnected with the assessment of teaching competence. Furthermore, providing student teachers with peer support in planning and carrying out class teaching is also of different nature because



pupils often act differently when the class-teacher is in the room (Smith, 2004).

Therefore, it is especially important for the authorities concerned or the teacher education experts to critically reflect on how to infuse collaborative problem-solving task as one of the crucial approaches in preparing prospective teachers. To foster collaborative partnerships in the schools where student teachers serve their teaching practicum, perhaps practicum can be sequenced in a more structured school schedule and framework with the opportunities to not only learn from the experienced teachers teach but also cooperate with other apprentice teachers.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

Although a single case study allows the researcher to work more intensively with fewer participants, providing more detailed descriptions of specific student teachers within their particular teaching settings, the results of the current study may not be readily generalized to other team-teaching situations. Also, it is not the researcher's intention to extend the findings of this study to a greater population. Recognizing that each teaching context is unique and serves a particular population, the researcher intended to investigate the impact of team-teaching on four TEFL student teachers' professional growth, and to provide more holistic and in-depth descriptions and analysis of their team-teaching experiences by utilizing a qualitative case study design (see Chapter Three for more details). In light of such intention, it is important for the researcher to acknowledge the limitation of inquiry, that is, the findings yielded from this study may not be generalized or extended to other greater populations.

#### **5.5 Recommendations for Future Research**

This study contributed to the current literature by describing and analyzing the four

TEFL student teachers' team-teaching experiences in Taiwan. While this study has its limitations, it is hoped that it can serve as a basis for further study in different contexts, such as in different countries and in different disciplines. Those examples of team teaching could serve as classroom materials for pre-service teachers to study, discuss, and analyze. In this way, co-teachers-to-be could know better about some factors to be the most important when setting up a team-taught class. Researchers can also consider involving learners in their studies. It is of interest to understand students' perceptions and attitudes toward collaboration in order to identify the issues that arise. Moreover, it could be beneficial to assess what contributions, if any, collaborative teaching makes to the students' learning.

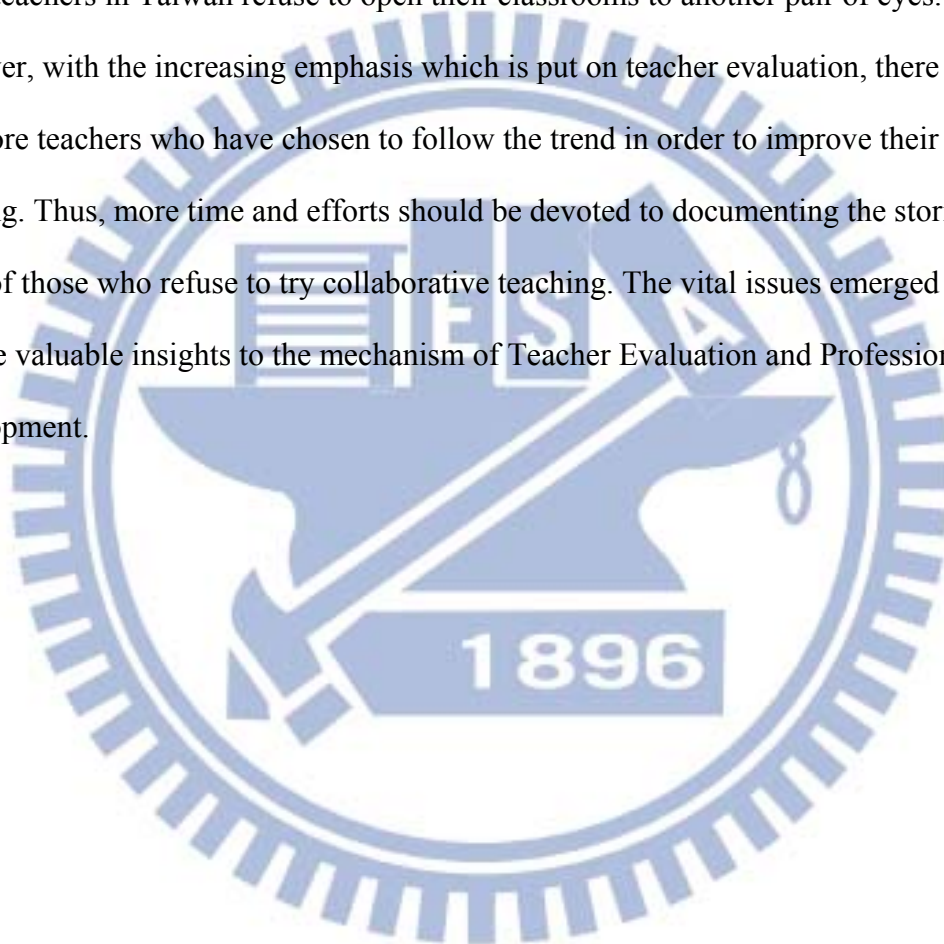
In fact, numerous schools across Taiwan have joined the project of Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development proposed by MOE in order to address critical learning gaps, and to identify ways to improve the quality of teaching for all students. One possible future direction to further the research on teacher learning is to investigate how teachers will respond to and grow from engaging in the professional development activities involved in the process, such as organizing one's teaching portfolio and reflecting on the phases of colleague watching, colleague feedback, and further improvement. To further these kinds of studies, future researchers could adopt different qualitative approaches, such as life history and narrative inquiry to document teachers' voice and stories about learning from other colleagues. If there is more time and energy from the investigators, another possibility is to conduct longitudinal study to understand teachers' developmental trends across their life span.

In July, 2009, the researcher conducted an interview with Lynn, she endorsed teaching with a co-teacher. However, she added:

*It is because now I am a student teacher who has little teaching experience that I like the feeling of co-teaching with peers. Maybe after years of teaching, I become a practice teacher who has much experience of teaching and my teaching beliefs are deeply rooted, I may dislike co-teaching with others. Many in-service teachers don't like to change and accept new things (interview, Lynn, 2009/07/27).*

Many teachers in Taiwan refuse to open their classrooms to another pair of eyes.

However, with the increasing emphasis which is put on teacher evaluation, there are more and more teachers who have chosen to follow the trend in order to improve their quality of teaching. Thus, more time and efforts should be devoted to documenting the stories and voice of those who refuse to try collaborative teaching. The vital issues emerged shall provide valuable insights to the mechanism of Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

# 徵求全民英檢特攻隊老師參與研究計畫

國立交通大學英語教學所研究生 陳心彤 誠摯邀請全民英檢特攻隊老師們參與我的研究計畫。本研究計畫徵求四名英語教學所、計劃參與協同教學的全民英檢班老師。本研究概述下：

#### 研究目的：

本研究主要探討協同教學對職前英文教師之專業發展影響。希望參與協同教學的職前英文教師能在一個互相學習、共同討論的機會中成長，也期待本研究結果能為英語師資培訓機構、學校單位及後續研究提供建議，以供未來實施之考量。

#### 資料收集期間：

全民英檢上課期間共五週

#### 研究對象（參與者）：

對本研究計畫有興趣並有意願教授全民英檢考試技巧、相關知識之交大英語教學所學生（不限年齡或經驗）。

#### 進行步驟：

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
One week before team teaching	Week 1-5	Week 5	Week 6
背景資料訪談(錄音)	教師心得(中英皆可)	質化問卷(中英皆可) 訪談(錄音)	課程結束後之 兩次訪談(錄音)
課室觀察(錄影) & 非正式訪談			

1. 整個研究過程自民國九十八年七月初至八月上旬左右，為期共五週。
2. 教師心得為老師針對當日教學的反思札記，字數不拘，採中、英文書寫皆可。



#### 維護研究對象之權益：

研究者將確實遵守以下原則，以確保參與者的權益：

- 第一、所有資料都會保密（不會把參與者的基本資料公開，一切會匿名。研究資料僅用於學術用途，絕對不會非法散佈。如有其他用途必須經過參與者的同意）。
- 第二、研究結果將請參與者確認正確性（即您有權檢視我的研究內容，並有權利請我修改）。
- 第三、本研究注重研究者與被研究者之間的互動、信任感，因此參與者有權全盤了解並參與整個研究過程。



#### 參與研究的回饋：

為了回饋參與者在教學過程中可能因為採買教具、參考書籍的花費，研究者將提供一些費用作為小小的協助。此外，在參與者的教學過程中，如果需要研究者提供教學相關的回饋、扮演傾聽者或課業上的幫忙等，我將非常樂意協助。更衷心希望透過研究過程中雙方的交流，能帶給參與者在教學和研究上更多的成長。



#### 研究指導教授：

黃淑真  
政治大學外文中心助理教授  
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#### 研究負責人、聯絡人：

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## Appendix B

### Consent to Participate in Research (Version for Student Teachers)

#### Study Title:

Learning by teaching together: An exploratory study of TEFL student teachers' team teaching experiences in Taiwan.

#### Researcher:

Sin-tong Chen, a graduate student who studies at National Chiao Tung University, under the direction of Professor Shu-chen Huang at National Cheng Chi University

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

#### Your participation is voluntary:

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making decision about whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

#### Purpose:

The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the collaborative experiences between EFL student teachers inside and outside English classrooms with a particular focus on what and how EFL student teachers learn from their co-teachers in the team-taught General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) courses.

#### Procedures/Tasks:

The duration of this study would be five weeks (June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009). Once student teachers have agreed to participate in this study, the researcher will (1) conduct background information interview, (2) ask student teachers to keep reflective logs after every team-teaching lesson, (3) observe and video-record teachers' classes, (4) ask reflective questions about their teaching practice in the weeks when they have free time (10 to 15 minutes), (5) ask student teachers to complete an open-ended questionnaire, (6) conduct three formal interviews (one in week 5, the other two in week 6) with foci on student teachers' experiences and perspectives of team teaching (one to one and half hours for each interview), and (7) collect teaching materials such as lesson plan, worksheet, etc.

All of these data collection methods will be applied simultaneously throughout the entire



collection process. Except for the background information interview, informal interviews will only be conducted three times in the collection process. Each interview will be audio-recorded for further analysis and transcription.

#### **Duration:**

The duration of this study would be five weeks (June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009). You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with the researcher.

#### **Risks and Benefits:**

As the proposed study is to explore learning opportunities occurring in a collaborative group consisting of EFL student teachers, you, through participating in this study, will benefit from knowing better about your strengths and weaknesses of English teaching, being able to learn from your peers, and further improve your teacher knowledge and teaching practice. For example, while being interviewed, you will be provided with time and opportunities to reflect on your own team teaching experience and to become more aware of various learning opportunities in team teaching context.

As for the risks, you might feel some stress because of participation in the study, because you will be observed and video-taped when you are teaching English or be audio-taped when you are interviewed. You might feel uncomfortable with my presentation as a researcher and worry that your response to interview questions will be judged. To ease the stress, the researcher will not discuss your teaching with other student teachers, schoolmates, GEPT students, or school administrators, and will not interrupt or disturb your teaching process. In addition, the researcher will share interview transcripts with you for your approval or further elaboration.

For interviews, you might consider some questions sensitive or personal because you will be asked to evaluate your own teaching practice as EFL student teachers and reveal your feelings and experiences of collaborating with their peers. It is not surprising you might be concerned that their own personal opinions will be judged by the researcher or your feelings about team teaching will be divulged to your peers. To minimize the risk, the researcher will ensure the confidentiality of the data. Your personal comments or opinions will not be judged with personal ideas and will not be disclosed to other people. Besides, the researcher will use pseudo names when reporting your response in the thesis so that



your identities will be securely protected.

**Confidentiality:**

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. This information will never be released without your permission and authorization.

**Incentives:**

As an appreciation of your valuable time and contribution, you will receive NT3000 dollars at the beginning of the study.

**Participant Rights:**

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Contacts and Questions:**

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Sin-tong Chen at 0980-064188 or [sintong828.tesol96g@g2.nctu.edu.tw](mailto:sintong828.tesol96g@g2.nctu.edu.tw)

**Participant**

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this signed form.

By signing below I am giving consent to participate in the above study. I give my permission to be audio- and video-taped.

---

*Signature*

---

Date/Time

**Investigator**

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A signed copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

---

*Signature*

---

Date/Time



Appendix C  
**Curriculum Design of the TESOL Graduate Institute**

MA thesis and a minimum coursework of 29 credits are required.

- 4 required / required elective courses (11 credits)
- at least 6 elective courses (18 credits)

1. Required Courses (3 courses ; 8 credits)

Courses	Credits
TESOL: Theories and Methods	3
Research Methodology	3
Thesis Writing	2

2. Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Required Elective Courses (3 credits)

Courses	Credits
Psycholinguistics	3
Sociolinguistics	3
Pragmatics	3
Discourse Analysis	3
Phonology	3
Syntax	3

3. English Teaching Elective Courses

Courses	Credits
Computer-Assisted Language Learning	3
Computer-Assisted Writing Instruction	3
Internet: Mediation Foreign Language Learning and Research	3
English for Specific Purposes: Pedagogy and Research	3
Teaching Reading: Theory and Practice	3
Teaching Writing: Theory and Practice	3

Teaching Listening: Theory and Practice	3
Teaching Speaking: Theory and Practice	3
Teaching Grammar: Theory and Practice	3
Teaching Children English	3
Professional Development for EFL Teachers	3
Second Language Acquisition	3
Sociocultural Theories and Second Language Learning	3
Learning Motivation	3
Language Testing	3
Second Language and Literacy Development in Children	3
Second Language Writing	3





## Appendix D

### 國立 OO 大學師資培育中心修業規章

85.7.25.八十四學年度第 7 次教育學程委員會通過

85 年 8 月八十五學年度第 1 次教務會議通過

90.10.4 九十學年度第 5 次教育學程中心會議修訂通過

90.12.14 九十學年度第 2 次教務會議通過

91.9.6 九十一學年第 2 次教育學程中心會議修訂通過

91.10.24 九十一學年第 3 次教育學程委員會會議修訂通過

92.5.13 九十一學年第 5 五次教務會議通過

95.10.25 九十五學年度第 3 次師資培育中心會議修訂通過

95.12.28 九十五學年度第 1 次教育學程委員會會議修訂通過

96.6.7 九十五學年度第 4 次教務會議核備通過

96.10.15 九十六學年度第 4 次師資培育中心會議修訂通過

96.10.19 九十六學年度第 5 次師資培育中心會議修訂通過

96.11.7 九十六學年度第 2 次教務會議修訂通過

96.12.10 教育部台中(二)字第 0960185888 號函同意備查

- 第一條 本辦法依師資培育法第五條第三項及大學設立師資培育中心辦法第五條規定訂定之。
- 第二條 本校大學部二年級（含）以上及碩、博士學生在校期間，符合「國立 OO 大學學生修習教育學程申請及甄選辦法」規定者，得申請修習教育學程。教育學程學生，其取得教師證書之歷程，包括修畢師資職前教育課程及通過教師資格檢定。師資職前教育課程，包括普通課程、專門課程、教育專業課程及教育實習課程。成績合格，發給「修畢師資職前教育證明書」。
- 第三條 教育學程申請及甄試方式，依「國立 OO 大學學生修習教育學程申請及甄選辦法」辦理。
- 第四條 修習教育專業課程應修學分數：共計二十六學分。修習內容與學分數：
- 一、必修科目及學分：計十四學分
- (一) 教育基礎課程：至少修習二科四學分。即教育哲學、教育社會學、教育心理學、教育概論等四門課為教育基礎必選課程，修畢教育學程前須由四門中選二門修習。

(二) 教育方法學課程：至少修習三科六學分。即教學原理、輔導原理與實務、教育測驗與評量、班級經營、課程發展與設計、教學媒體與操作等六門課為教育方法學必選課程，修畢教育學程前須由六門中選三門修習。

(三) 教學實習及教材教法課程：至少修習二科四學分。即分科/分領域教材教法、分科/分領域教學實習等二門課為教學實習及教材教法必修課程，修畢教育學程前須選讀。

二、選修科目及學分：計十二學分

三、必修科目超過上述規定必修學分數，得優先列入選修。

第五條 學分抵免暨跨校選修：依「國立 OO 大學國內外校際選修實施辦法」、「國立 OO 大學教育學程學分抵免暨跨校選修辦法」辦理。

第六條 修習次序：

一、凡獲甄選進入教育學程之學生，第一學期至第四學期須至少修習一門教育學程開設課程，唯符合本校「教育學程學分抵免暨跨校選修辦法」者得縮減。

二、修習教學實習及教材教法課程，應先修畢教育基礎課程及教育方法學課程，有特殊情況需專案申請核准。

第七條 修習教育學程之科目成績以六十分為及格。

第八條 修習教育學程之學生成績考核及格，並修滿應修學分，並在學習護照上累積規定之點數，即由本校發給教育學分成績證明書。

第九條 教育學程修業年限應至少兩年，另加半年全時教育實習。

第十條 修習教育學程之學生未在規定修業年限內，修滿應修學分者，得申請延長修業年限一至二年，其延長之年限應併入大學法及其施行細則所定延長修業年限內計算；學士學位修業年限至多六年，碩士學位至多四年，博士學位至多七年。

第十一條 修習教育學程之學生於修習期間，考取本校更高學位之碩、博士班時，得繼續修習教育學程，且已修習之學分數得併入計算。

第十二條 中等學校各學科或各領域專門科目認定標準，由相關系所擬訂，報請教育部核定後實施。

第十三條 中等學校各學科或各領域專門科目之認定，由修習該學程之學生向本中心

提出申請。本中心依「國立 OO 大學培育中等學校各學科教師專門科目學分對照表暨施行要點」規定，綜理專門科目之學分審查，轉交各學科領域之負責學系審查合格後，由中心核發專門科目證明書。

第十四條 依師資培育法第八條、第九條第一項至第三項規定，修習師資職前教育課程之學生，符合下列情形之一，始得參加半年之教育實習課程：

一、依大學法之規定，取得畢業資格，並修畢普通課程、專門課程及教育專業課程者。

二、已取得學士學位之碩、博士班在校生，於修畢普通課程、專門課程及教育專業課程且修畢碩、博士畢業應修學分者。

第十五條 本校教育實習相關規定，依照「國立 OO 大學師資培育中心自覓教育實習機構辦法」、「國立 OO 大學教育學程教育實習輔導辦法」、「國立 OO 大學實習教師實習整體輔導計畫（一年教育實習）」、「國立 OO 大學教育實習課程實施辦法（半年教育實習）」辦理。

第十六條 本規章由教務會議通過，並報教育部核定後實施，修正時亦同。





## Appendix E

### Background Interview Protocol with Each Team Teacher

#### **Personal Information**

1. Name
2. Please introduce yourself (Probe: age, educational background, motivation of pursuing the M.A. Degree in TESOL, etc.)
3. Please describe your previous teaching experience (Probe: years of teaching, level(s) of language class(s), etc.)
4. Please describe the class you are currently teaching now (Probe: level(s) of language class(s), average teaching hours per week, size of class(s), etc.)
5. Please elaborate on why you choose \_\_\_\_\_ to be your co-teacher. (Probe: level of familiarity, shared teaching beliefs, etc.)

#### **Perception of Team Teaching before the Team-Teaching Experience**

1. Please define team teaching in your own words.
2. What will you have to do to help your students learn English well via team teaching?
3. How will your previous teaching experience (if any) facilitate team teaching?
4. What role do you expect yourself and your co-teacher to play in team teaching?
5. As a teacher, what skills (e.g., classroom management and language instruction) do you need to improve on? How can you improve on this aspect? Will team teaching help you improve this aspect? How and why?
6. Teachers need different kinds of knowledge (e.g., pedagogical knowledge and knowledge about students and context) to function well both inside and outside the classroom. In what areas do you feel your knowledge is lacking or inadequate? How can you gain knowledge about these areas? Will team teaching help you gain knowledge about these areas? How and why?



Appendix F  
**Teacher's Reflective Log - Sample**

**SAMPLE LOG #1**

---

NAME OF TEACHER : Jamie Chen

DATE AND TIME OF REFLECTION : October 20, 9:30 p.m.

For me personally, team teaching fits in very well with my working style although a lot of preparation time is needed. I'm not much of an idea person, but once given an idea, I feel that I have the ability to really take it and develop it into something good. I have trouble working from scratch, so the teamwork of team teaching gives me the feedback that I need to get ideas, and to bounce my own development of ideas off someone else.

**SAMPLE LOG #2**

---

NAME OF TEACHER : Karen Wu

DATE AND TIME OF REFLECTION : October 20, 10:00 p.m.

Today Jamie lectured I felt pretty free to interject when I thought I could clarify something or gives a salient example. There was, in fact, one point where I can remember doing just that. It seemed like that the sharing of the leadership role in the class was a lot more delegated than teaching alone.

**✎ Guidelines for keeping the reflective log**

It is recommended that the log be kept soon after each team-teaching lesson, or the very night you return home. You can write down whatever comes into your mind about your team-teaching practices, and it is suggested that your reflections to the following questions are included every time:

1. What are the date and the time of this reflection?
2. What are the collaborations done by you and your partner for this specific lesson?
3. Do you and your partner have good rapport during the class?
4. What is the role you play in this team-taught lesson? Is there an equal power and responsibility shared between you and your partner?
5. What are the difficulties or enjoyment found while working with your partner?
6. Is there any part you feel very competent at teaching this time? Why?
7. Is there any part you feel less competent at teaching this time? Why?
8. Any other inspirations gained from working with your partner?
9. Anything you consider worthwhile to write down in this reflection?

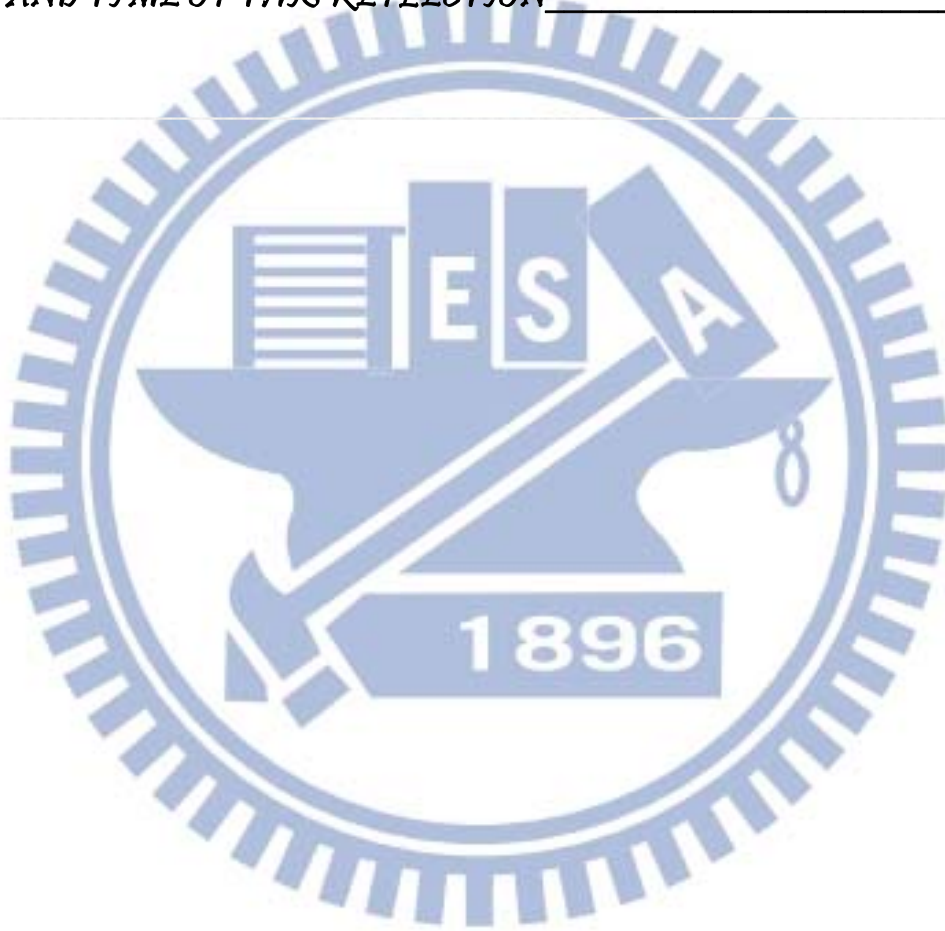
Teacher's Reflective Log – Blank Form

*Teacher's Reflective Log*



*NAME OF TEACHER* \_\_\_\_\_

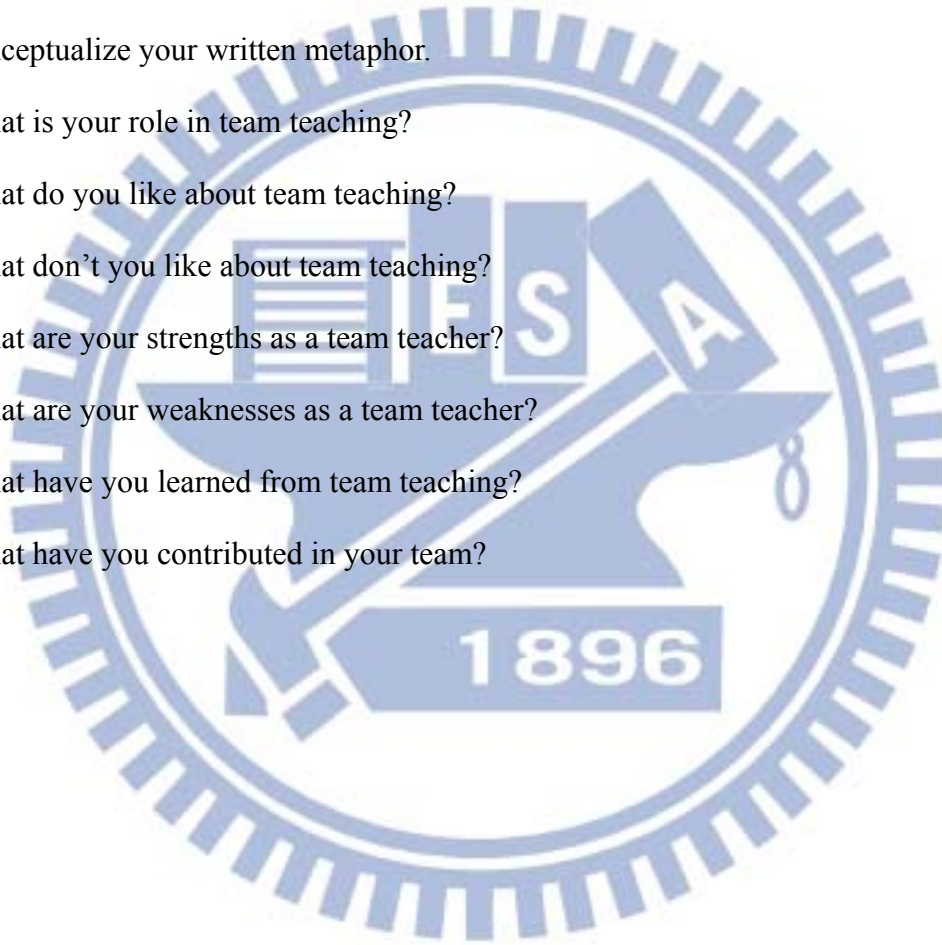
*DATE AND TIME OF THIS REFLECTION* \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix G  
**Open-Ended Questionnaire**

**Direction:** Please respond to the following questions as clearly as possible. All information will be used for research purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you.

1. For you, what is team teaching? Use a metaphor to discuss what team teaching is for you (i.e. Team teaching is like...). Additionally, please provide a picture to conceptualize your written metaphor.
2. What is your role in team teaching?
3. What do you like about team teaching?
4. What don't you like about team teaching?
5. What are your strengths as a team teacher?
6. What are your weaknesses as a team teacher?
7. What have you learned from team teaching?
8. What have you contributed in your team?



## Appendix H

### Semi-Structured Interview after Team Teaching (1)

#### Perceptions of team teaching

1. Before co-teaching with a peer teacher, what did you expect to learn?
2. Before co-teaching with a peer teacher, what kinds of challenges, if any, did you expect to encounter?
3. Describe your feelings and thoughts when you knew you are going to co-teach English in a real classroom?
4. Before each lesson begins, how do you plan with your co-teacher?
5. In your opinion, how helpful/significant is team teaching for you to teach a real class? What did you gain/learn from this experience?
6. Describe the first class in which you carried out your team teaching, including your feelings, your interaction with the peer teacher, your teaching, student feedback and co-teacher's feedback (Please answer each of the aspect)? Did anything change significantly from the first class to the last class?
7. Who is more powerful in the team? How are decisions usually made?
8. Do you like to teach English with a co-teacher? Explain and support your answers.
9. Please (a) describe the most memorable incident in team teaching during the intensive GEPT class, and (b) elaborate what you learned from this incident.
10. What did you consider the most rewarding from this team-teaching experience?
11. What was the most frustrating thing that happened to you throughout this team-teaching process?
12. What are the challenges you face in team teaching?
13. After team teaching, what do you consider the most important component which is essential in a collaborative-teaching relationship?



14. Are there any changes in your perception of team teaching itself after the experience of collaborative teaching? Explain and support your answers.
15. If you could go backward and teach it all over again, what kinds of changes would you made?
16. If you could go backward and do it all over again, would you prefer to work with another student teacher or no teaching partner?
17. Does the team teaching experience affect your personal beliefs in English language teaching? If yes, how (please offer specific examples to illustrate your responses)? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?
18. Does the team teaching experience influence your decision for choosing the future career? If yes, how (please offer specific examples to illustrate your responses)? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?
19. Do you think the team teaching experience is helpful for student teachers' professional growth? If yes, in what ways (please offer specific examples to illustrate your responses)? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?
20. Do you consider the opportunity for student teacher to teach in a real classroom positive or negative? If the answer is positive, why (please offer specific examples to illustrate your responses)? If the answer is negative, can you think of any possible reasons?
21. If your junior schoolmates plan to teach GEPT classes in the coming future, will you suggest them to co-teach? If yes, why (please offer specific examples to illustrate your responses)? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?
22. Do you have any suggestions for your institute in regard to team teaching? (Probe: the size of class, providing help or suggestions from the supervisors)

## Appendix I

### **Semi-Structured Interview after Team Teaching (2)**

#### **Any skills and knowledge the participants learn from team teaching**

1. Please describe the important professional development activities, if any, you participated during team teaching (e.g., workshop, training, conference...). How did these activities impact you as a student teacher?
2. What did you learn from the co-teacher in general? What area do you think you gain most by working with your partner?
3. How helpful is your co-teacher in helping you overcome your personal weaknesses in teaching?
4. What did you learn from observing your team-teaching partner?

#### **A. Lesson Planning**

5. What were the problems, if any, you had ever faced during the process of developing a good lesson plan? How did you solve the problems?
6. Is the team teaching experience helpful in developing your lesson planning skills (e.g., variety, sequencing, pacing, and timing)? If yes, in what aspects is team teaching helpful in developing your lesson planning skills? What are the reasons that make you think team teaching is helpful for you in this area? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?

#### **B. Instructional Strategies**

7. Please describe how you equipped students with the essential knowledge and skills of passing the General English Proficiency Test?
8. Is the team teaching experience helpful in developing your ability to implement effective instructional strategies (e.g., use simple language and short expressions, use visual clues, give a demonstration or example or choose students to demonstrate)? If

yes, in what aspects is team teaching helpful in developing your ability to implement effective instructional strategies? What are the reasons that make you think team teaching is helpful for you in this area? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?

### **C. Classroom Management**

9. Is the team teaching experience helpful in developing your classroom management skills (e.g., make good use of eye contact, learn and use students' names, students' group arrangements)? If yes, in what aspects is team teaching helpful in development your classroom management skills? What are the reasons that make you think team teaching is helpful for you in this area? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?

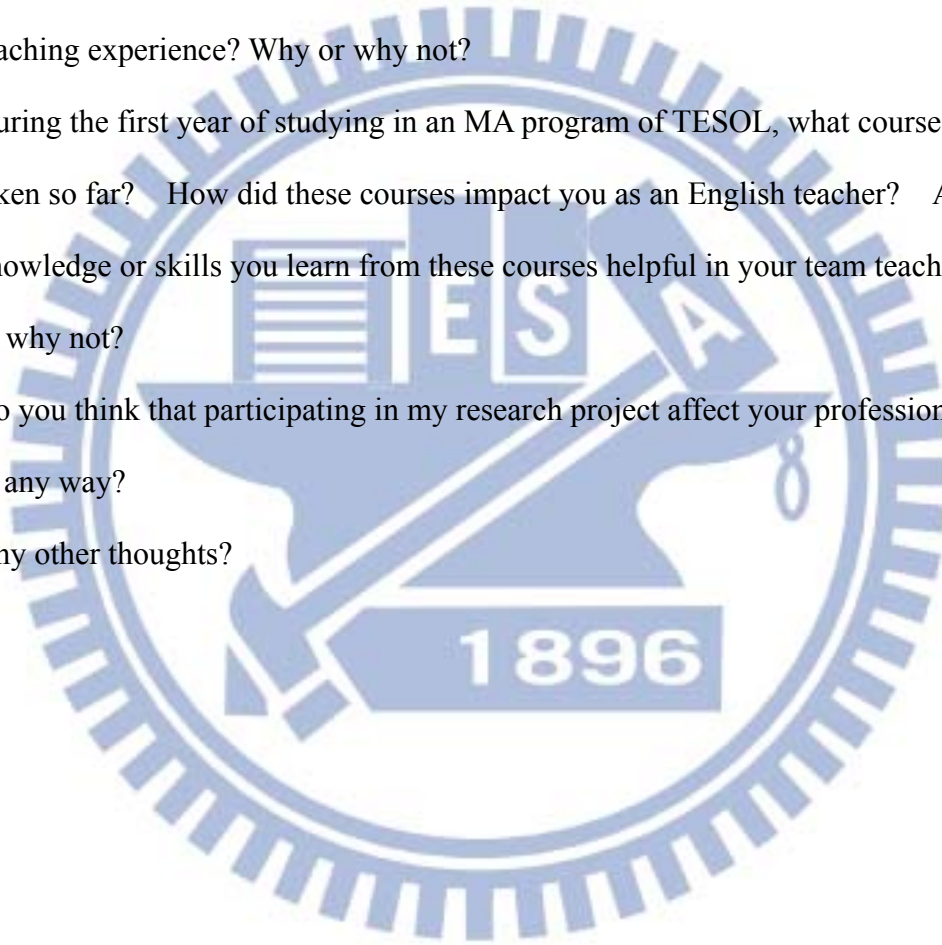
### **D. Language Learning**

10. Is the team teaching experience helpful in developing your understanding about language learning strategies and skills (e.g., how to overcome writer's block, strategies for prewriting (e.g., note-taking), writing strategies or skills found through discussing students' writings)? If yes, in what aspects is team teaching helpful in developing your understanding about language learning strategies and skills? What are the reasons that make you think team teaching is helpful for you in this area? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?

### **E. Professional Knowledge**

11. Is the team teaching experience helpful in enhancing your professional knowledge (e.g., pedagogical knowledge, subject matter knowledge, knowledge about learners or educational context) as a foreign language teacher? If yes, in what aspects is team teaching helpful in enhancing your professional knowledge? What are the reasons that make you think team teaching is helpful for you in this area? If no, can you think of any possible reasons?

12. Is team teaching helpful in developing, if any, your new beliefs and attitudes about language learning and teaching? If so, what are your new beliefs and attitudes after experiencing team teaching?
13. What aspects do you think you need to brush up to be a competent English teacher after team teaching experience?
14. Overall, do you think you can teach more effectively/confidently after such team teaching experience? Why or why not?
15. During the first year of studying in an MA program of TESOL, what courses have you taken so far? How did these courses impact you as an English teacher? Are any knowledge or skills you learn from these courses helpful in your team teaching? Why or why not?
16. Do you think that participating in my research project affect your professional growth in any way?
17. Any other thoughts?





Appendix J  
**Observation Sheet**

Observation Sheet

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Object

Reflective Notes (insight, hunches, themes)