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From State Rule to Practice: How ESOL Push-in Looks Like in the Classroom

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K-12 English Learners (ELs) in Georgia increased by 13.4% from 2010 to 2013, with an average annual growth rate of 4.28% (GaDOE Student Record) in contrast to the 1.95% in total K-12 population, inclusive of ELs, with an average annual growth rate of 0.65% from 2010 to 2013. There is little question that if this trend continues, all teachers will soon have an EL in their classrooms; hence it is critical that all teachers have the skills to be successful with ELs who come from different cultural backgrounds and have varying levels of English language proficiency. Moreover, the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, which requires K-12 districts and schools to establish common goals and shared ownership of curriculum and instruction to successfully reach all learners, including ELs, makes collaborative partnership between content and ESOL teachers on how best to meet the needs of their EL students undoubtedly crucial.

Collaborative teaching between ESOL and content teachers is a promising practice in K-12 classrooms because it ensures access to the core content curriculum and language proficiency standards-based instruction for English Learners. Teachers will develop lesson plans and create

activities together to help ELs reach or meet the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards through the integration of the English Language Development Standards. These are the underlying assumptions of the push-in delivery model.

In Georgia, collaborative teaching in ESOL (ESL in other settings) translates primarily into the push-in delivery model. It is also the only co-teaching model that earns the full time equivalent (FTE) credit. Per Georgia State Education Rule 160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for English Language, in the *push-in model (within reading, language arts, mathematics, science or social studies) – students remain in their core academic class where they receive content instruction from their content area teacher along with targeted language instruction from the ESOL teacher*” (p.21). It continues to say that “*the ESOL teacher and the content teacher are co-equals in the classroom, but each has a distinct role. The ESOL teacher is responsible for language support, while the content teacher is responsible for delivery of academic content.... When students break into groups, the ESOL teacher should work with ELs, while the content teacher focuses on mainstream students. The ESOL Push-in delivery model allows the teachers to collaborate in order to facilitate meaningful language instruction within the content classroom and to appropriately plan differentiated instruction and tasks to meet the various proficiency levels of the ELs* (Georgia Department of Education ESOL/Title III Resource Guide p.21).

Currently, almost all school districts in Georgia have push-in ESOL classes, yet several ESOL Coordinators and ESOL teachers still express reservations about the lack of consistency in the interpretation of the state guidance, resulting in a wide range of implementation practices. Given that collaborative teaching may be a tremendously effective way to teach ELs, and recognizing that teachers are willing to work in partnership, the reported divergent classroom practices, varied interpretations of the State Board of Education (SBOE) definition of push-in, and the demand for actual classroom implementation examples became the impetus for this

paper, which offers some conceptualizations of what push-in looks like in classrooms. While the state definition of the ESOL delivery model directs teachers to collaborate, there are no actualized examples to guide teachers enter into and sustain a collaborative partnership. Arkoudis (2006) wrote that assuming that any ESL and mainstream teacher can engage in cross-disciplinary planning is problematic. She wrote that in order to place the ESOL curriculum within a content curriculum and give the EL students the opportunity to access the language of the content area, the ESOL teacher has to make the language teaching meaningful in the content curriculum, assert his/her position as a language teacher and negotiate the curriculum with the content teacher. Such processes require training of ESOL teachers on how to develop effective collaborative practices and how to situate language instruction within the content curriculum.

This paper - through actual practices of and anecdotes/testimonies from successful push-in teachers - aims to illustrate the processes involved in developing successful teacher partnerships. To this end, it provides examples of “compliant” operational applications of the SBOE definition and classroom practices that promote teacher collaboration, such as ways of allocating classroom instruction time to maximize benefits for ELs and lesson planning. This paper also offers a prototype instructional sequence template using a standards-based instructional framework that may meet the SBOE’s definition of push-in ESOL delivery and earn Full-time Equivalency (FTE) credit. Finally, to provide context to the push-in processes and practices described in this paper is the discussion of selected results from a survey study that was conducted in 2009 to determine the state of affairs of push-in delivery model adoption and implementation in districts across Georgia including trends or patterns in the selection of content areas for push-in, level of administrative support, and teacher commitment. The complete analysis of the results of the survey study is not the purview of this paper.

Review of Selected Literature

The majority of the research on collaborative teaching or co-teaching has been done in special education (Friend and Barsack, 1990; Villa and Nevin, 2008; Friend and Cook, 2003). Much can be learned from this body of research. In fact, Haynes (2007), in her investigation of collaboration between a mainstream teacher and a push-in ESL teacher, proposed five Special Education approaches, which included teach and write, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, team teaching and lead and support. As such, examining the Special Education (SPED) co-teaching approaches and exploring various ways of adapting them in ESL settings, will inform ESOL practices, particularly in the (1) definition of teachers' roles and responsibilities, (2) decision on class configurations, and (3) allocation of time segments for lesson activities. There are instructional and logistic issues with each of the SPED co-teaching approaches, so that if the intention is to adapt one or develop a hybridized version, using a standard protocol of analyzing the strengths and drawbacks of each approach vis-à-vis the state definition of push-in and local conditions is extremely helpful.

A search of literature on collaborative teaching in ESL settings establishes its positive effects on the content and language development of ELs in the most inclusive and efficient manner (Abdallah, 2009; Arkoudis, 2003; Crandall, Spanos, Christian, Simich-Dudgeon, and Willets, 1987; Creese, 2005; Davison, 2006; Dove and Honigsfeld, 2010a; Wertheimer and Honigsfeld, 2000; York-Barr, Ghese, and Sommerness, 2007; Zehr, 2006). Arkoudis (2003) described the social justice aspect of collaboration and called for an inclusive instructional model rather than pulling out English Learners, which according to her is believed to be a practice that marginalized this population. This social justice angle is supported by other researchers who wrote that co-teaching model could alleviate the historical wariness to maintain models that seem

to overtly imply racial, linguistic, and other forms of segregation (Mckay and Freedman, 1990; Nieto and Bode, 2008; Ovando and Collier, 1998; and Platt, et al., 2003). Case studies on co-teaching among teachers of ELs in U.S. and foreign contexts have expanded understanding of, and allowed a closer look at, co-teaching. McClure and Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) analyzed findings from two studies done in Georgia, one involving focus groups with new bilingual and monolingual ESOL teachers and the other involving an ethnographic study of one pair of ESOL and grade-level teachers to examine the complexities of co-teaching relationships. They proposed, “performance-based focus groups as one approach for articulating the challenging aspects of co-teaching partnerships, fostering dialogue and relationship building” both separately and together (p. 126). A case study conducted in Britain resulted in findings that showed the complementary roles of the second language teacher and the content teacher in providing different interaction patterns to their students (Creese, 2006). Using ethnography of communication, examining specific discourse patterns of co-teachers in British secondary schools, Creese (2006), citing Arkoudis (2003), argued that bilingual children might not have access to the different subject-specific discourses if not for the facilitative, accessing, and scaffolding discourse of English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers. Baecher and Bell (2011) conducted a qualitative and quantitative research initiative in K-12 settings in New York City public schools, which sought to better understand the way co-planning and co-teaching took place. Their findings indicated that there were two factors that greatly inhibited co-planning: lack of time for co-planning and the degree to which co-planning was highly personnel-dependent. Additionally, teachers reported that they could not attend curriculum planning held during grade-level meetings because of their large student caseloads. A three-year case study of co-teaching in an urban elementary school in the Midwestern United States examined teacher

perceptions of co-teaching as well as the model's impact on EL achievement on standardized assessments in reading and mathematics. Its findings showed increased positive teacher attitudes towards co-teaching as well as "considerable positive gains in both reading and math" for ELs (p. 323). This case study identified common planning and reflection among teachers, made possible by sustained administrative support in the form of additional staffing and other resources as key factors (York-Barr, et al. (2007). As these studies on ESL and grade-level teachers' perceptions of co-teaching indicated functional and logistical challenges and conditions for successful collaboration (Arkoudis, 2003; Baecher and Bell, 2011; Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning, 2010; Creese, 2000; Davison, 2001; Gimenez, 2011; Hoffman and Dahlman, 2007; McClure and Cahnmann-Taylor, 2011), they also underscored the importance of resolving serious challenges to collaborative teaching, in terms of supports and implementation, for it to be effective. In conclusion, common to the research literature on collaborative teaching between ESL/ESOL and content teachers is the recommendation that more empirical research on the benefits of collaborative teaching should be conducted to complement conceptual and/or anecdotal literature (Keefe and Moore, 2004; McClure and Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010; Coltrane, 2002; Harper, de Jong, and Platt, 2008; Menken, 2008; York-Barr, Ghery, and Summerness, 2007; Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010).

Components of Successful ESOL Push-in – A Georgia Study

In 2009, the Title III Program Manager asked this author to conduct a survey to determine the status of the push-in delivery model across the state. Previous research done on teachers' perceptions of conditions that favor or inhibit a successful teacher partnership or collaborative teaching influenced the current survey study (Gimenez, 2011; Hoffman and Dahlman, 2007; Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning, 2010; McClure and Cahnmann-Taylor, 2011). Survey

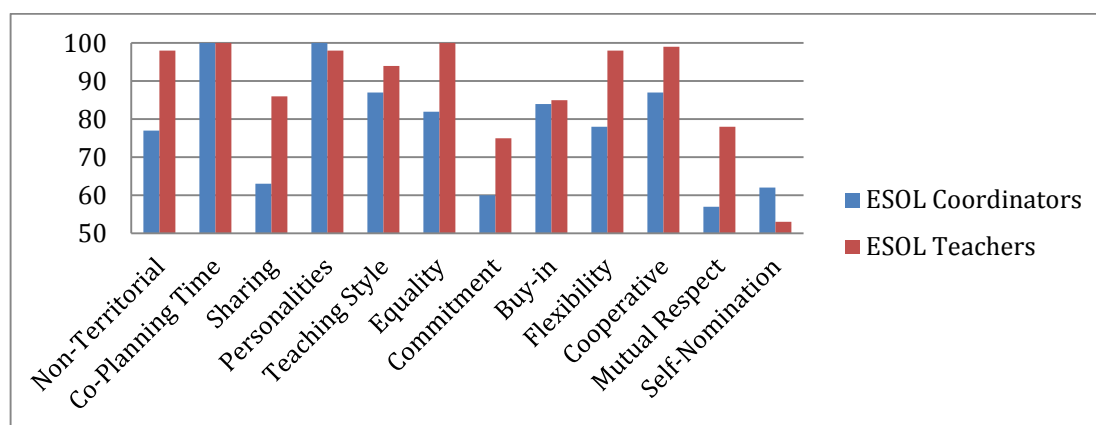
questions in both Phase I and Phase II, which investigated the perception of Georgia ESOL teachers and ESOL Coordinators regarding factors promoting or inhibiting effective push-in ESOL delivery drew from the results of these perception studies. Due to space limitation, discussion of results will primarily focus on ESOL teachers' perceptions of factors that affect a successful push-in delivery.

This section briefly describes the participants and the methodology used in the study. It also presents selected findings (Wlazlinski, 2011). This study was conducted in two phases. Phase I, exploratory in nature, was conducted to fine tune the questions that would be used for Phase II, the actual survey study. Participating in the exploratory study was a limited sample of twenty-one ESOL Coordinators, who had an average of three years in their leadership position, and fifteen ESOL teachers who push-in in different content classes. The survey questionnaire, which was comprised of ten open-ended and close-ended (multiple-choice and categorical) items to determine the state of implementation of the push in model in ESOL classrooms in Georgia, was administered to both the coordinators and the teachers. Their responses were subjected to a thematic data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Recurring observations and themes were selected to include in the survey questionnaires used in Phase II. In Phase II, the actual study, a purposive sample of thirty-five ESOL coordinators and 203 ESOL push-in teachers from mega Metro to small rural districts across Georgia participated. The Coordinator Survey Questionnaire had 11 items and the Teacher Survey Questionnaire included 14 items (See Appendices A and B for the Phase I and Phase II survey questionnaires).

For the purpose of this paper, only the ESOL Teachers Survey Questionnaires are included and their results discussed. All respondents had some experience with or were involved in push-in ESOL delivery (Patton 1990). Almost 50% of teachers reported being certified in the content

they were pushing in. Participants reported English Language Arts and Reading as the most popular content areas for pushing-in, followed by Mathematics. Regarding the ESOL Teacher Survey Questionnaire administered in Phase II, three questions offered response choices from observations and themes culled in Phase I. These themes were presented as response options in ordinal close-ended questions. Furthermore, Phase II respondents were encouraged to add to the list of choices that reflect their own observations and experiences with push-in. These respondent-generated responses were subjected to thematic data analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998), and frequencies were calculated on all the responses to determine which responses were favored more by respondents. For instance, categorized under thematic codes were responses to the question: “What are the factors of successful teaching partnership?” Examples of such themes were institutional supports, personal attributes, and mutual respect for competencies and skills. The following section presents some highlights from the results.

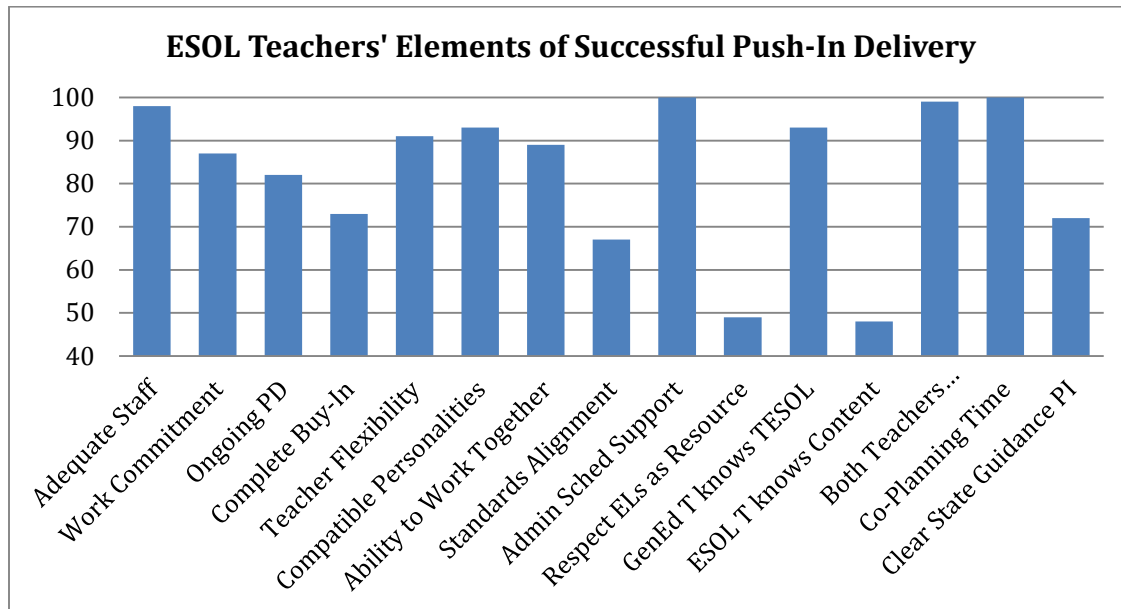
Finding 1: *What elements contribute to successful teacher partnership?*



The chart shows the response frequencies in percentages. The data indicated that 100% of ESOL teachers regarded co-planning time and being co-equal as critical to a successful partnership or push-in collaboration. Teachers should learn/know each other’s curricula and plan together so that they can facilitate and scaffold content for varying levels of English proficiency. Deliberate

planning is important to determine at what point in the content lesson meaningful language instruction is given. Ideally, during planning, two teachers, each recognizing his/her individual professional expertise, negotiate how to best meld their competencies and make concerted efforts to maximize use of resources and professional expertise to address students' needs. Co-planning will allow also teachers to decide on the kind of Special Education co-teaching model or combination of models they will adapt for their classroom. Ninety-six to ninety-eight percent of the ESOL teachers responded that partners who are non-territorial, flexible, and cooperative were also important to successful teacher partnerships. These results support ESOL teachers' reports of push-in classroom contexts where ESOL teachers were not accorded equal status as the content teacher, and ESOL teachers' responsibilities were limited to those of a paraprofessional. Arkoudis (2003) argued that the lower status of the ESOL teacher could be explained by society's and education's valuation of teachers' roles, that is whereas content teachers transmit subject knowledge to the many, ESL teachers deliver support and facilitation to the few. A compatible teaching style was also important to 97% of ESOL teacher-respondents. This means that both teachers should agree on the amount of whole class versus small group instruction, the amount of lecture or teacher-led activities versus interactive and hands-on activities, and types of resources to use. To summarize, the results (as shown in the chart) indicated that ESOL teachers would like to work with content teachers who treat them as equal partners; accommodate their schedules to better utilize their expertise in planning, delivering, and assessing their lessons; are open to new ideas; like to share responsibility; like to learn ELs' culture and language; and are willing to "give up" a little of their classroom for the benefit of their EL students.

Finding 2: *When does push-in delivery work?*



The above chart shows that 100% of ESOL teachers regarded administration's support in scheduling as critical. Building administrators are responsible for creating teacher and student schedules. Highly regarded as essential to success by 98% to 100% of the respondents were co-planning time and adequate staff. In this regard, teachers reported that pushing in different content areas taught by different content teachers in different grade levels and worse, in different schools (in the case of itinerant teachers), did not allow ESOL teachers any collaborative time to develop/nurture partnership with their push-in partners. Literature on collaborative teaching stresses the fundamental requirement of building collaborative time into the schedules of ESOL teachers, so that they can plan and discuss instruction and curriculum with other teachers (Dove and Honigsfeld, 2010b; Honigsfeld and Dove, 2012). In a district with inadequate ESOL staff and a low incidence of ELs spread out in different schools, an ESOL teacher may not likely be scheduled to have any planning time or common planning time with other teachers because of logistical constraints. As regards to how teachers regarded state guidance on the push-in, it is interesting to note that only 71% of the teachers thought it was important.

Finding 3: ***What is the biggest challenge to successful implementation?***

Four themes emerge as critical for this model to be successfully implemented. These themes focus on a need for communication between co-teachers for full integration of language lessons, administrative support, similar philosophies, and planning time.

- (1) *Segmenting time is not easy.* Teachers reported that each grade level/content area was different and segmenting of instructional time or how the period was to be divided into activities or events greatly depended on the content teacher. Adding to the challenge was the administrators who might also dictate what should occur during that time period. Finally, they also reported that whatever the content teacher had planned to be accomplished at the end of the week directed daily agenda.
- (2) *Lack of planning time. Time commitment from ESOL and content teachers to co-plan and discuss lesson/activities cannot be guaranteed.* Teachers reported that finding common planning time to collaborate was a big challenge.
- (3) *Teachers vary in teaching philosophies and practices.* Teachers reported that there was disagreement over student grouping and class time spent on scaffolding activities.
- (4) *Lack of administrative support.* Teachers reported that they received from very little to no institutional and structural support, related to teacher and student schedules and availability of resources conducive to an effective implementation of push-in.

Teacher Beliefs, Practices, and “Tools” of Push-In ESOL Delivery: Lessons from the Trenches

The literature and the results from the Georgia ESOL teachers survey study discussed in the previous section indicated many challenges inherent in the push-in delivery model. Additionally, many administrators and ESOL teachers wrestle with the issue of “proper” interpretation and

implementation of the SBOE Rule, specifically the statement, *the ESOL teacher and the content teacher are co-equals in the classroom, but each has a distinct role. The ESOL teacher is responsible for language support, while the content teacher is responsible for delivery of academic content.... When students break into groups, the ESOL teacher should work with ELs, while the content teacher focuses on mainstream students* (Georgia Department of Education ESOL/Title III Resource Guide p.21). The risk of a narrow interpretation of the rule is high, which is that there are two separate teaching processes occurring simultaneously. Consequently, it suggests one of three possibilities: (1) that language lesson is provided to EL students outside of content instruction during small group time, (2) that there is unconnected language instruction, or (3) that no language instruction is provided during whole group instruction.

Fortunately, there are successful push-in teachers from whose experiences we can learn. Beyond the scope of the survey study, this author has visited more than 100 push-in classrooms and interviewed more than 200 ESOL and content partner-teachers across the state. ESOL teachers whose practices are included in this paper were selected because this author had observed their classrooms, or they were recommended by their ESOL Coordinators for their effective instructional delivery. All teachers reported having overcome their challenges through determination, initiative, and consistent modeling of best practices, thereby gaining the support of their administrators and content teacher-partners. Due to space limitation, this section can include only a few ESOL teachers' narratives/anecdotes describing their collaboration with content teachers. It also includes a few examples of "tried and tested" effective practices and products, developed by successful push-in teachers whose classrooms were visited in school year 2011- 2012 and 2012-2013 by this author. The examples are understandable and easily applicable. As luck would have it, coordinators and teachers who have continually asked the question, *How do we implement the Push-In ESOL Delivery Model correctly and effectively*

while working within state guidance constraints? may very well find their answer from the experiences of these ESOL push-in teachers. For the purpose of organization, a question precedes examples of teacher practices and products.

How does a district ensure that roles in push-in are clarified and delineated?

All stakeholders must know their roles and responsibilities towards proper implementation of the delivery model. Margo Williams, the EL Coordinator in Dekalb County Schools, states that the induction process begins with the professional development of administrators, which should include training on how best administrators can (1) provide resources/materials/technology, (2) consider suitability of teachers' personality and disposition, (3) understand ELs' cultural, linguistic, and academic needs, (4) provide professional development to content teachers on ESOL-related topics, (5) schedule planning time and expect collaboration, (6) ensure inclusion of ESOL teachers in grade-level planning meetings, and (7) secure space for ESOL teacher to meet with other teachers. Training teachers must include development of guidelines and protocols, which once finalized, must be implemented and consistently maintained. Williams stresses that teachers must be clear on their responsibilities; that is, while the ESOL teacher is responsible for teaching language during the segment and accountable for the language development that occurs during the segment, the content or general education teacher-partner is responsible for teaching content during the segment and accountable for the content learning that occurs during the segment. Both teachers, however, should know that they are equally responsible for finding the time to collaborate, which may either be face to face, virtual, or by phone conference. One tool Williams uses to help push-in teachers make monthly plans is the "Bird's Eye View of the Curriculum" (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2008). It is a template divided into 3 columns for the Month, Key Ideas (or Content Goals), and Most

Challenging Concepts (or Language Goals) and 4 rows for Week 1, Week 2, Week 3, and Week

4. This tool provides both teachers a convenient way of “being in the know” about the curriculum, so that they have enough time to plan their activities and resources.

Kelly Underwood, an elementary ESOL teacher in Jeff Davis County Schools, explained

for push-in to work, the classroom teacher needs to embrace the “push-in” delivery model with a positive outlook. Some teachers feel threatened by another teacher being in “their” classroom. This will often lead to the ESOL teacher becoming more like a paraprofessional in the classroom instead of an equal. There also needs to be common planning time between the regular education teacher and the ESOL teacher. If the ESOL teacher is walking into the classroom “blind” then she/he can’t adequately add anything meaningful to the lesson. There again, this may lead to the ESOL teacher becoming more like a paraprofessional.

How can districts prevent personality divergences and how do successful ESOL teachers overcome role conflicts?

Many ESOL teachers maintained that building administrators could minimize role conflicts if personalities of teachers and their willingness to work as partners were considered before scheduling them to teach a push-in class. They added that real partnership developed over time, so administrators should allow ESOL teachers to work with the same content teachers for at least 2-3 years. An ESOL teacher in Paulding County Schools described how she determinedly demonstrated that she was worthy of the respect and acceptance of her content push-in partner.

I have to learn the content curriculum, particularly the content standards of the course. This is very important. How can I make the lesson comprehensible to my students if I do not make the standards accessible to them? Without being asked, I create and share activities that are effective in differentiating content not only for second language learners but also for other students. I also share strategies, offer resources, and volunteer to teach language activities. When my content teacher has pressing responsibilities or deadlines, I offer to take care of the class. In the beginning I just led small group activities and usually stayed in the back of the room with my students, but now, the entire room is my real estate and my content teacher always asks for my opinion about instruction and assessment.

How can content and ESOL push-in teachers use or share time effectively? How do we break down a class period of 45-55 minutes for a push-in class?

For push-in to succeed, ESOL teachers must have dedicated time for working with ELs to adequately provide language support and monitor progress. In a push-in where the content teacher has his or her content standards and content objectives to teach, ESOL teachers' input in the development of a lesson plan and in the creation of supplementary activities that are differentiated for the levels of English proficiency of ELs must have intentionality. In the following table, Lindy Patterson, an ESOL teacher in Gilmer County Schools, sketches how she and her push-in partner plan their instructional period of 45 minutes.

The following is a sketch of what a collaborative first grade classroom may look like. The instructional diet for the read aloud (45 min. period) is as follows:

Segment: 8:00-8:45	Gen Ed/ESOL Teacher and EL Student Activities
8:00 - 8:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students are instructed to write in a daily journal using a sentence prompt. • While the students are writing, both teachers will be conferencing with the students based on a weekly schedule. • This provides the ESOL teacher with an opportunity to work individually with the ESOL students and provides the students with an opportunity to converse with the teacher. • As an observer, this session of time could best be described using the co-teaching model in a student-centered classroom.
8:10 - 8:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regular education teacher will introduce the vocabulary words for the read aloud to the mainstream students. • The ESOL teacher will introduce the vocabulary words to the ESOL students. • The ESOL lesson will be conducted in a more intimate setting using pictures, graphic organizers, and/or realia to differentiate the vocabulary lesson to ensure understanding. • As an observer, this session of time could be described as parallel teaching.
8:20 - 8:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regular education teacher and ESOL teacher will alternate (either daily OR page by page) reading the story aloud to the class. • While reading, the teacher will stop and ask preplanned comprehension questions. • The students will respond using the think-pair-share or a similar strategy. Based on the reading approach, an observer could describe this session of time as either one teach, one assist or the true essence of the term, co-teaching. • It is important to include that not all read alouds lend themselves to the teachers alternating pages and the one teach, one assist model must be utilized.
8:35 - 8:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students will work in groups or independently to complete writing tasks based on the story. • The ESOL teacher will assist the ESOL students with their work. • Based on the performance level of the students, the ESOL teacher will differentiate the writing activity and support the students with their responses. • As an observer, this session of time could probably best be described as station teaching. • Whether the students are truly completing a group activity or individual activities, the students will be strategically be seated so the ESOL teacher can provide support as necessary.

If time permits, the students are encouraged to read their responses orally. In the past, I have learned that the same students often volunteer to share. For this reason, on occasion, I draw sticks (with the students' names printed on them) for sharing.

Shown in another table is a push-in plan for multiple content classes, which shows intentional language support provided to ELs. Jennifer Suarez, a high school ESOL in Cobb County Schools, deliberately plans for her push-in classes in ELA 9-12, Social Studies 10th, and Science 9th grade in a 90-minute block (See Appendix C). Regardless of content area, whether she takes the lead or assists the content teacher, Jennifer clearly provides language support to ELs. Similar to the two plans is a general template called “How a push-in looks like in the classroom” (See Appendix D). It was developed by this author to illustrate how an ESOL push-in class of 45-55 minutes could be taught by ESOL and content teachers while meeting the state definition. It drew ideas from the works of Dove and Honigsfeld, (2010) and Conderman, Bresnahan, and Pedersen (2009). This template, which uses a standards-based lesson structure, has three basic parts: opening or activating, work, and closing. The different examples of teacher and student activities/events under each part are meant to clarify what each teacher may be able to do during the instructional period. Although not exhaustive, the examples under each session are authentic and concrete and should serve as catalysts for more ideas and options. A close look at the examples in the column, “What ESOL teachers can do,” shows that the six approaches of co-teaching in special education may be adapted. Victoria Isabelle, Clayton County Schools; Cadeisha Cooper, Candler County Schools; and Lisa Schlabra, Gilmer County Schools reviewed and critiqued the prototype of the current template. Since its inception, the template has undergone multiple revisions based on numerous comments/feedback from ESOL professionals from across the state who had used it as a guide to create their own instructional plans. In fact, some comments that may further help users of the template were listed under the column “Challenges,” so that teachers trying the template may be prepared to take counter action. An

ESOL, using the template as a guide, added ESOL differentiated activities to a content area plan (Appendix E).

In conclusion, this template offers push-in ESOL teachers several benefits, such as accessibility to an already familiar standards-based lesson plan framework to plan their own lessons, examples of language support activities integrated into the lesson, ideas for ways of segmenting instructional time to result in more clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for teachers, multiple examples of options to draw on for scaffolding/differentiating the activities of content teachers, and different combinations of Special Education co-teaching models to adapt.

What are some collaborative instructional experiences of push-in teachers?

Collaborative teaching should be based on data which reveals specific areas in which the students need support. For teachers of ELs, collaboration starts best with the examination of the ACCESS scores of their ELs and interpreting them for content teachers. Mary Kay Clyburn, a K-12 ESOL teacher in Oconee County Schools, explains that when she meets with a classroom teacher to discuss a student's performance on the ACCESS, she brings

the current ACCESS teacher report, any previous years' reports, copies of the Speaking and Writing rubrics and the CAN-DO descriptors for that grade cluster. On the CAN-DO page I highlight the columns that coincide with the student's ELP scores in each domain so the teacher can use the descriptors as a reference when planning instruction and assessment. I often bring a copy of the WIDA ELD standards also. In the case of a student with a low writing score, we would look at the WIDA Writing rubric and the CAN DO descriptors and note the tasks that the EL student can perform and which tasks we need to target for continued growth.....The classroom teacher and I would discuss a number of strategies that support this, such as pre-teaching certain terms, pictorial clues, checking for prior knowledge, personal picture dictionaries, word banks, and computer-based vocabulary programs. I would share information from the WIDA amplified standards and the Model Performance Indicators to help the teacher set goals and design strategies to scaffold the student's language acquisition.

Julia Phillips, an elementary ESOL teacher in Atkinson County Schools, discusses with her content teachers the student profile she has created, which includes the student's personal, cultural, linguistic, and academic background information. She recounts that

Prior to reviewing a student's ACCESS Scores, there are a few things that have to be taken into consideration and discussed with the teacher. For example, I had a student in her very first school term living in the United States. She's from the Dominican Republic and attended a school in a thriving community. Prior to attending school in the US, she was at the top of her class, which (naturally) means that she is (very) literate in her L1. At this point, I'd explain how an EL's literacy in her L1 can really help/hinder her ability to learn English. Then, I will explain the meaning of the ACCESS scores and discuss the Can Do Descriptors in a very detailed manner. Finally, I will offer the teacher some strategies and resources specific to the EL's needs.

When ESOL and content teachers plan together, they can ensure that content lessons are presented to ELs using effective ESOL strategies. Stephanie Herb, a middle school and secondary ESOL teacher in Hart County Schools, describes the joint planning between herself and the content teacher:

I push in to Mrs. Smith's 7th grade Science class. Our teachers have been trained in SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol), which has made a great foundation. Initially, Mrs. Smith and I discuss the next unit she will teach. We go over the materials that will be covered and assessed in the Holt's Science series and discuss the videos and worksheets that will be used to help the students comprehend the content. For our next meeting, I will gather any materials that I find to support the content. I usually look at the Oxford Content Area Dictionary, Science A-Z, and Enchanted Learning. Our science book includes resources in Spanish, which I occasionally use. Mrs. Smith uses videos from the science series, as well as, YouTube, where she has found great songs that complement the content and help all the students remember the material. I also have found wonderful resources on Reading A-Z that are written at different reading levels. This allows me to differentiate for different language levels using the same content. After we have gathered all the material we will use for the unit, Mrs. Smith will begin the unit. In our lesson plan, which has an opening, a work session, and a closing, I make sure we have transition activities and differentiated activities for the ELs who have different levels of English proficiency. We always include a Model Performance Standard (MPI). For example, for the S6E4 standard: "Students will understand how the distribution of land and oceans affects climate and weather," one of our MPIs is "The student will draw and describe cloud types using clouds reading passage in the textbook." One of our activities is "Students will work in pairs to complete cloud foldable and reading comprehension questions.

Similarly, Lindy Patterson of Gilmer County Schools consistently plans and teaches collaboratively with her content teacher. She states that

Mrs. Morrow, a first grade teacher, and I prepare each week's language arts lessons through a weekly meeting and follow-up via emails and instant messages. At the beginning of the year, we designated this "sacred time" and included it on our schedules and in our lesson plans to ensure that other meetings did not interfere with our planning. Also in the beginning of the year, we discussed initial classroom management concerns including whether or not the students would be allowed to get water or go to the restroom during instruction, which of us would make copies, who could discipline the students, and who would contact parents. These initial conversations created an atmosphere in which the students saw Mrs. Morrow and me as equals.

For our lessons on adjectives (CCGPS ELACC1f), Mrs. Morrow and I met with our folders (our collections of past activities), the standards, and the performance levels of our English Learners. We began sorting through the activities we had used in the past to determine which we found beneficial and would like to reuse. From these, we determined the order we needed to instruct the curriculum and assigned the specific responsibilities. Like the majority of the lessons we presented, we began the initial instruction with team teaching. Mrs. Morrow and I were both at the board providing instruction. With collaboration from the students, we led a brainstorming activity and created anchor charts to display in the classroom for the students to reference. For the next few days, the students practiced with adjectives to describe themselves and other nouns in the classroom using words, phrases, or sentences. As the week progressed, the co-teaching styles transformed from team teaching to one teach, one assist (during review time) and alternate teaching (as students with lower performance levels needed extended review). The adjectives lessons concluded with a standards-based report card assessment. If observed, a monitor would have observed parallel teaching. Although Mrs. Morrow and I were providing the same instruction, the students in my group needed additional time to think about and write their answers.

Brandy Douglas, of Coffee County Schools, works very closely with her content teachers and creates scaffolded activities for her EL students. She gives her students visual and tactile activities. To her delight, the content teachers also use some of them with the other students.

Brandy stresses the importance of planning and professional development. According to her,

one of the keys to a meaningful experience is consistent collaboration between the ESOL teacher and the content teacher. Scheduling collaborative planning is often a challenge but makes the biggest impact in ensuring effective implementation. I try to meet face to face with the teachers I will be co-teaching with on a weekly basis. When that is not possible, we rely on email and phone calls. These virtual planning sessions often occur outside of the normal school day. With each teacher, the act of planning varies depending on the teaching style of my partner, the amount of time I have already been working with him or her, and the

demands of the course, standards, or weekly activities. With some teachers, I simply amplify what he or she has already planned. Often these are plans created as a department. With other teachers who may not be part of a department, we plan the week together more closely giving and sharing ideas of how to meet the needs of all the students within our care. Once I know what will be happening in the classroom, I can begin creating differentiated materials that allow all English Learners to access the grade-level standards. The majority of the work that helps make the Push-In model successful happens before I ever enter the classroom. The “marriage” of co-teachers builds over time but intensifies with support through professional learning experiences. The General Education Teachers who attend conferences and other ESOL specific professional learning opportunities are more confident and accepting to the Push-In model. This makes my job as the ESOL teacher much easier.

Jessica Little, of Habersham County Schools, stated:

During the initial meeting, I will set up a time to meet with the classroom teacher for afternoon collaborative planning. These meeting occur at least once a week but oftentimes collaboration will happen more than just once a week. During these collaboration meetings, we will discuss what content will be covered during that week and how the content will be taught in a collaborative effort between us. Each teacher is responsible for her own lesson plans and creating any materials or other resources needed for the lessons. These collaboration meetings either happen after school or during the classroom teacher’s planning if it is at the same time as my planning.

Dorothy Shouppe, another Habersham ESOL teacher, said that

being an ESOL teacher requires a great amount of flexibility when practicing the push-in model. It is a long-term and on-going process to build a collaborative relationship among classroom and support teachers. In addition to physically being in the classroom during the ESOL segment, it is important for ESOL teachers to collaborate regularly with the classroom teacher (and with other support teachers if there are any in the classroom during the ESOL segment). At our school, we meet weekly for 30 minutes to collaborate. During this time we look at the current and upcoming standards, discuss instruction, and group students strategically using whatever data is available. We also try to discuss what worked well and what did not in our recent instruction.

Common to all the teachers quoted in the foregoing section is collaborative planning with their content teacher-partners during which they discussed content and language standards, differentiated activities, classroom management and student data prior to instruction.

What may teachers do to overcome the lack of time to co-plan?

Finding the time for co-planning is one of the most difficult hurdles that has to be overcome by push-in partners. Many ESOL teachers do not have the benefit of a common planning time

with content teacher-partners, or they are not able to attend grade planning time because of multiple grade push-in assignments. Fortunately, teachers find recourse in communicating via email. More recent technological developments offer teachers more options for collaborating and sharing best practices if their schedules do not allow a face to face co-planning. Time-constraint becomes less of an issue. Teachers may co-plan via Skype and via Google Hangouts, which is a web-based tool created by Google for communicating through live video conferencing. Setting up a Google account plus at <http://www.google.com/+learnmore/hangouts/> is very easy and up to 10 people can “hang out” at one time.

Why push-in at all?

Push-in takes a lot of practice, compromises, and coordination to become successful and benefit the students. Colquitt County Schools’ push-in partners described their collaboration as unique:

We believe all teachers are essential in the classroom setting. All teachers have both knowledge and expertise that, when combined in a true co-teaching atmosphere, make education something special. We appreciate the value in allowing students to interact with all educators, and develop a personal relationship with the regular classroom teacher as well as the specialized teacher. At C.A. Gray, students often do not realize the area of specialization for each teacher, or that students are divided into smaller sub-groups (such as EL). This is mainstreaming at its best. The adults are aware of the special needs of students, and actively address these needs without excluding the students from the group. Students view all teachers as “their teachers”, and realize that each adds something unique to the lesson. Discipline problems are greatly reduced, because students respect all teachers equally. All lessons are standards based and on grade level, with strategies and activities to differentiate and accommodate, so that learning is a possibility for every student.

Connie Johnson, of Clayton County Schools, sums up the benefits of push-in and the concerns of ESOL teachers:

There are many obvious benefits to co-teaching for students. ESOL students have both academic and social benefits. They are exposed to the mainstream content but have the support of a second teacher. They are not pulled out of the class, so they learn with their classmates.

ESOL teachers, however, cite many concerns. They do not want to lose ownership of their students be relegated to the status of an aide. They feel that collaboration is a lot of additional work especially if they are co-teaching with several different teachers. They are also concerned about ESL beginners, who they feel do not really benefit from learning in the large group setting.

As an ESOL teacher, I think the benefits of collaboration outweigh the drawbacks. When teachers share the responsibility of instruction, lessons are more creative because two people are planning them. It's nice to have another adult in the room to be able to provide a range of support to students and to share those "ah-ha" and "light bulb" moments.

Conclusion

The teachers' anecdotes about their practices and the instructional tools they have developed indicate that the ESOL push-in delivery model is a viable approach to teaching both language and content to EL students. As an ESOL teacher puts it, *Academic or extra-curricular classes are not omitted from student schedule. All EL students receive grade level, standards-based instruction and support on an equal basis as their native English-speaking counterparts.*

Evidently, in this delivery model, EL students benefit from the expertise of two teachers. The content teacher brings to the partnership his/her content area expertise, teaching style and the state content standards, while the ESOL teacher brings his/her second language acquisition and pedagogy expertise, the English language standards, and his/her teaching style. To be

effective push-in teaching partners, they must weld their individual attributes into a cohesive whole, while still maintaining their individual identities.

The elements that contribute to successful partnership and the biggest challenges to successful implementation of push-in delivery model (or collaborative teaching) that were identified in the Georgia survey study are supported in the literature. Based on the Georgia survey results, 97% of ESOL teachers regarded compatible personalities as an important element that contributes to a successful teaching partnership. Ninety-two percent regarded compatible teaching styles as important. This means that push-in partners have to complement each other's teaching style and personalities. Teacher anecdotes revealed how teacher-partners discussed classroom management during the initial planning. Being cooperative was considered important to a successful partnership by 98% of the respondents. This has an important implication because teachers are often autonomous, so it is important that they forge a teaching philosophy that is based on a strong commitment to aligning the content and language curricula, meeting the needs of EL students, effecting differentiation and engaging in reflective practice because of a shared goal and vision. The anecdotes clearly indicated that push-in teacher-partners benefit from many opportunities to grow professionally. Because planning and instruction are shared, push-in teachers have the ability to experiment with and implement fresh and innovative teaching practices.

Gleaned from the literature and from teachers' anecdotes is that collaboration among ESOL and content teachers is not a natural and easy process. However, the good news is many schools in Georgia have ESOL teachers already effectively pushing in to classes in spite of implementation challenges. As evidenced in the teacher anecdotes/quotes and examples of collaborative practices, these challenges are surmountable. However, like any educational

practice, the push-in delivery model can be successful only if implemented in a school that embraces and promotes collaborative teaching for EL students. As the survey results indicated, 100% of ESOL teachers responded that support from administrators was crucial to a successful push-in implementation. Since teaching partnerships have to be developed over time, administrators should allow push-in teacher-partners time to define their roles, develop relationships, and co-plan. Additionally, administrators should offer ongoing training on collaborative teaching to teachers so that they could cultivate their collective and individual responsibilities (Dove and Honigsfeld, 2010a).

To summarize, the push-in ESOL delivery model will benefit teachers and most important, EL students, if and when the elements of successful push-in exist. Its success draws from teachers who are willing to share their classrooms and students, egalitarian, skilled, cooperative, and flexible. It also draws from a strong support from administrators who provide common planning time and instructional resources, offer training in collaborative teaching to ESOL and content teachers, and give incentives and rewards to teachers for pushing-in. All these factors combined will yield student success and effective push-in classrooms. While the survey results, teacher anecdotes, and examples of instructional tools provided a description of the state of affairs of push-in ESOL delivery model and clarification of what push-in looks like in the classroom, results of empirical investigations in Georgia's schools to evaluate the success of EL students in this delivery model, specifically in measuring their rate of progress in acquiring English language proficiency and content mastery, would strongly support the assertion that push-in is a scientifically research-based delivery model and that adopting it is to the best interest of EL students.

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