

A Collaboration between ESL and Regular Classroom Teachers for ELL Students' Literacy Development

Danling Fu^{*}, with Renee Houser and Amy Huang
University of Florida, USA

This article presents a teacher-research project on collaboration between an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher and a fourth-grade classroom teacher to enhance the literacy development of English language learners (ELLs). It illustrates how two teachers worked closely in helping their ELL students develop their writing skills and the benefits both the students and teachers gained from this collaboration.

The last decade has witnessed a heavy influx of new immigrants to New York City (a 32% increase from the 1980s and 130,000 annually (Fix & Passel, 2003)), and this growth has greatly affected the student population in the schools of New York City's Chinatown, which houses most of the newly arrived Chinese immigrants and their children. The new Chinese immigrants, though originating from the same cultural roots as Chinatown residents, speak a completely different dialect from the old residents and frequently come to the country as undocumented immigrants. Their children join them in this country after years of separation. Very often husbands, wives and children are strangers when they reunite in America and have problems living as a family. The adults struggle to make a living in a new land, and the children struggle to adjust to a new family, a new school and new social lives. All experience an intensely painful adjustment and transition (Fu, 2003).

Most of the Chinatown schools in New York City are filled with new Chinese immigrant children like this. School is one of the few places for them to connect with the outside world, and teachers are among few people in their social circle that are able to assist them with their literacy and English language development. There is a shortage of English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual teachers, especially those who can speak the same language as these new immigrant children. In the primary schools, most of these students are placed in mainstream classrooms as soon as they arrive in the school, spending one or two periods a day in a pull-out ESL

*Corresponding author. School of Teaching and Learning, PO Box 117048, College of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611, USA. Email: danlingfu@coe.ufl.edu

programme. According to Carrasquillo and Rodriguez (1995), 'This is the least recommended ESL programme. However, it is the most popular in the United States, perhaps because it is financially the least costly' (p. 72). The reason that pull-out programmes are least recommended by ESL researchers is that the English language learners (ELLs) are placed in mainstream classrooms with curricula and teaching models designed for proficient English speakers. Often this tends to be a 'sink or swim' situation for ELL students, and mainstream classroom teachers usually don't have the time or experience to meet the needs of ELL students, which can be overwhelmingly demanding (NCELA, 2002).

Unfortunately, with tightened budgets, many primary schools have to adopt this least recommended model for their ELLs. According to New York State law, the ELLs who haven't passed the mandatory Language Assessment Battery (LAB) test need to be provided with 180 to 360 minutes of ESL service weekly. Usually one or two ESL teachers have to serve over 70–80 students (about 20% of the student population). They see students in every grade level for one or two periods a day in classes that may be scattered all over the building. Except for these limited periods with an ESL teacher in a small group, these students are in the mainstream classrooms, trying to learn the same curriculum along with their English-proficient peers. 'Chasing the wind' is an image often used to describe ELL students in this kind of situation: they don't seem to be getting anywhere, but are exhausted from the chase (Hruska, 2000).

Both classroom and ESL teachers sense their ELL students' frustration and struggle to understand their difficulties. Mainstream class teachers wish that ESL teachers could move students faster in the development of their English language ability, without which students don't know how to handle their reading and writing work. On the flip side, ESL teachers wish that the classroom teachers would adjust their curriculum for ELLs more and give them more individual attention. ESL teachers feel that since ELLs spend five or six hours a day in the mainstream classroom, they should get more out of being there than they could in the one or two periods a day spent in the ESL programme. In addition, the classroom teachers think that ESL teachers only teach the basics of language, but not much about content such as reading and writing, while ESL teachers feel that the classroom teachers don't know how to help ELLs develop the skills and vocabulary they need and the reading or writing strategies they teach are simply beyond ELLs. This situation, in which each side wants the other side to do more for ELLs, has caused tension between ESL and classroom teachers in many schools (Penfield, 1987, de Jong, 1995, Roessingh, 2004, Schnorr & Davern, 2005).

Though the ESL pull-out programme does give ELL students help and the attention they need in their development of English language and content knowledge, the disconnect between the two curricula makes the students feel lost when they return to their mainstream classroom community after being away for one or two periods. They are usually behind or often can't follow the instruction when they are in the room. They feel even more out of place when they come back to the classroom after their work with the ESL teacher. When they re-enter the classroom,

they don't know what is going on and can't participate in class activities. They are either floundering or chatting among themselves. In order for them to join class activities or feel part of the class, the teacher has to re-teach what she has taught to the whole class. To be in this kind of situation every day is a problem for both ELL students and the classroom teacher (Penfield, 1987; Hruska, 2000; Roessingh, 2004).

To solve this problem, a push-in programme is recommended; this means instead of pulling ELL students out, the ESL teacher would come into the classroom to serve the students. Theoretically, the ESL teacher should try to help ELLs do what the rest of the class is doing, which means helping these students fit in the mainstream curriculum (New, 1993). This sounds ideal, but other problems arise. First, there are not enough ESL teachers to do push-in one room at a time. Second, the ESL teachers feel they have their own instructional agenda for the individual students. Third, it is impossible for them to know the curriculum of every teacher in every grade. Thus, the push-in model rarely fills its supposed role, but is done only when an ESL teacher has a free spot to fill with one or two students. Very often, an ESL teacher works with ELL students in the corner of the classroom with her or his own agenda which has little to do with the mainstream classroom's curriculum. Therefore, the push-in model is basically an ESL service in a mainstream setting rather than special help that assists ELLs with fitting into the classroom learning.

To deal with this dilemma and provide effective instruction for ELLs, collaboration models or team-teaching between ESL teachers and mainstream classroom teachers are highly recommended by researchers (Penfield, 1987; Hudson, 1989; Hurren, 1993; de Jong, 1995; Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997; Bryant & Land, 1998; Hruska, 2000). Among these researchers, some provide specific models drawn from the studies on team-work among teachers in different areas such as ESL, transitional bilingual, mainstream classroom or subject area teachers, school librarians and school counsellors. David Nunan (1992) examines the curricular practices of 800 teachers and finds that although the teachers favoured team-teaching, they had not done much to document this practice. And more than a decade later, my colleagues and I have found few research studies on collaborative efforts between mainstream classroom teachers and ESL teachers, though there is much discussion on this issue that remains at the level of 'why' and 'what should be done'. This article presents a study of the collaborative efforts of an ESL teacher and a fourth-grade classroom teacher in helping their beginning English language learners to develop as writers in both mainstream and ESL classrooms in a New York City Chinatown primary school. The aim is to contribute not only to the research field but also to classroom practice pertaining to literacy instruction for English language learners, the fastest growing and most diverse populations in today's schools.

The school where this study was conducted is called Public School (PS) 126 and located in lower Manhattan, seven blocks north of the site of the former World Trade Center. The newly arrived Chinese immigrant children made up 20% of the

student population, most of whom came from the families that could give little support for school work. With 1.5 ESL support positions available, the school could only afford a pull-out or push-in ESL programme, and all ELL students were placed in the mainstream classrooms upon their arrival at the school. The administrators of the school fully understood the challenges for both teachers and students, and they were trying hard to make the best of the existing situation. Frequently, they had faculty meetings in the morning or at lunch time to discuss the problems and help teachers work on finding solutions. During these meetings, the administrators would work with the faculty to help them explore ways to face the challenges in teaching. 'How the ESL and classroom teachers should work together to enhance the development of ELL students' literacy and English language skills' was proposed as a teacher-research project to the faculty at one of the meetings. An ESL teacher and a fourth-grade classroom teacher took the challenge and experimented in a year-long collaboration with the help of a university researcher.

This article presents this teacher-research project on collaboration between an ESL teacher and a classroom teacher in their enhancement of ELL students' literacy development. It illustrates how two teachers worked closely in helping their ELL students develop their writing skills and the benefits both the students and teachers gained from this collaboration.

Collaborators

Amy Huang had been an ESL teacher in PS 126 for two years. She was young and energetic, arriving at school an hour early and staying late after school every day to give ELL students extra help. She served about 30 ELLs each day with pull-out or push-in combined models. Though she could see obvious improvement with her students' language development month by month, she was frustrated as she felt that her ELLs didn't do much in the mainstream classrooms. With most of the day spent in the mainstream classrooms, students should have read and written more there than with her, or at least practised or used what they learned in her room with their classroom work. She wished she was able to work with her ELL students more, but it was impossible.

Renee Houser had been a fourth-grade teacher in PS 126 for three years. She loved teaching and her students. She was not afraid to try anything that might lead to improved learning. She worked hard and pushed her students hard too. She had 20 students, five of whom were ELL students and whose LAB test scores showed that they had very limited English proficiency and needed the ESL support daily. Renee had different lesson plans for these students and tried multiple ways to reach them: working with them in small groups, conferring individually with them on their writing and pairing them with the more English-proficient students who also spoke their native language. But with so many students to attend to, Renee couldn't give her ELL students the time each day that she desired. She noticed while she was teaching the whole class or working with other students, her ELLs looked either

confused or lost. She knew if they could be engaged in learning all the time, they could have made much more progress than they had.

Danling Fu, a university researcher, had been working in PS 126 as a literacy consultant and a researcher for two years with a focus on ELL students' learning. She observed how teachers worked with ELL students and how the latter behaved as learners in different settings. She also helped ELLs in both classroom and ESL settings and looked through their working portfolios to assess their learning behaviours and progress. She attended faculty meetings and debriefed with teachers individually to discuss and explore ways to help ELLs improve their literacy and English language learning. On Danling's mind was how to create a better learning environment for ELLs within such a research-disputed pull-out model. She realised changing the reality was unfeasible due to budget constraints and that she had to search for the best solution within these limits. For two years, Danling worked closely with the faculty and school administrators to explore ways to improve the instruction for ELL students in the school.

After working together for a year, Amy, Renee and Danling decided to take on a year-long teacher-research project on their collaboration in enhancing ELLs' English language and writing development. Amy and Renee were the two major collaborators in instruction, and Danling gave them support with ideas and suggestions, kept track of their collaborative work through classroom observations, recorded formal and informal interviews and assessed the students' progress, which comprise the data corpus in the present study.

Collaboration between Amy and Renee

Collaboration was time consuming, especially for teachers whose days were already packed with too much work. In addition, both Amy and Renee were still working on their master's degrees. They didn't have much spare time. They had to conduct their collaboration during lunch or preparation time, or an hour or two before and after school. Sometimes, they even skipped their college classes when they had to meet Danling after school. Renee's words give a brief picture of how these two teachers collaborated:

Amy and I met briefly in the morning as we both arrive early, just to check and make sure our schedule worked, etc. This was nice for several reasons: we could update one another on kids' progress. Sometimes we saw different things, depending on different environments; some kids were more vocal with her in a small group. Amy would also attend our weekly grade level meetings where we sat and planned and problem solved ... Often Amy and I would sit down and compare our notes about the students. Amy spent a lot of time observing my teaching style and content in reading and writing, so that she could then build on the concepts. Amy and I could brainstorm together ideas for the entire class, and how to help ELL students.

Towards the middle and end of the year, Amy would commit an hour of her time to be in my class during the mini-lesson and then was able to form a small group and/or work with individual students in writing.... Sometimes we even worked together to co-teach a small group. This was AWESOME!!! The kids' writing improved a lot with our collaboration.

Based on the analysis of observation and interview data, four components of their collaboration were evident: observation of each other's classroom, sharing curriculum, assessing students' progress and the ESL teacher's push-in. Each category is illustrated in detail below.

Classroom Observation

The first thing Amy and Renee did was to observe each other's classes. They wanted to see first how their shared ELL students behaved in two different settings and also find out how the other teacher taught: the teaching style, the teacher's ways with the students, the curriculum focus. They believed that the observations would not only help them know their ELL students better, but also show how they could make their teaching more consistent. To enable these two teachers to work together, the school administrators decided to pair Renee with an 'out of classroom' teacher to spare her an hour a day so she could work with Amy. During this daily hour, Amy and Renee either visited each other's teaching, assessed their ELL students' work and progress, designed the specific instruction for them or co-taught the class in small groups.

After the observation, Amy decided to have her ELL students continue the work which they started in the mainstream class during the time she had them. In this way, there was continuity between what ELLs were learning in their ESL programme and what they were learning in their regular classroom. Also, Amy would teach ELLs the skills they needed in order to do their classroom work rather than the skills that she thought they should learn. Renee discovered that her ELL students were very different learners in the ESL programme than in her classroom. They were more 'relaxed, vocal and personal'. They were just like her other students, 'not that distanced and lost in the crowd' as when they were in her classroom. This discovery made her realise once the students were able to handle the work, they were more engaged and active. And also once these students were confident in their learning, they became closer to the teacher. In the ESL room, the students and the teacher shared more of their personal lives, so they had a closer relationship. Renee wanted to build this kind of relationship with her ELLs in her classroom as well.

Curriculum Collaboration

In the past, the ESL and classroom teachers didn't really know what the other was teaching. When Renee planned a special lesson for her ELL students, that would be just something she thought was at their level, such as having them read a book or giving them a different writing assignment. Amy's ESL lessons had little to do with what the students learned in their mainstream classroom. To make their teaching cohesive, Amy and Renee spent much time going over their lesson units week by week. Before a new unit started, they would sit down, lay out lesson plans and objectives together and see which skills they would each work on for their ELL students. For instance, for the unit on memoir writing, ELLs started their drafts in

the workshop in the mainstream class. Amy would let them continue their writing in her room, where she would confer with them, help them with the vocabulary they needed, or find a book for them to read as a writing model. When they were ready to publish their work, Amy would help them with their editing, teach skills they needed and assist them with their illustration and complete the publishing process.

Amy had all ELL students write to her three times a week in an interactive student-teacher journal. In this journal, they wrote about their new lives, shared their feelings and observations and also discussed the books they read. They started this journal on the first day of school and continued throughout the year. ELL students could write in their first language or mix their primary language with English words. Gradually, they were encouraged to write more in English when Amy knew they could. Amy responded to each journal entry in a personal way, through which she came to know them, so she knew what to teach and when to push them to do more. During the memoir unit, Renee directed her ELL students to search for topics from these weekly journals and taught them how to expand from a short journal to a long narrative. By knowing each other's curriculum and teaching style, Amy and Renee connected their teaching. The students had continuity in their learning and reinforced what they learned in two different settings in addition to the extra time and help with their work.

Assessing Progress and Setting Goals

In addition to chatting briefly about their shared ELL students' work in the hallways, in the morning or during lunch time, Amy and Renee would sit down every other week to look through each student's portfolio. They talked about what the students had done, how much progress they made and what the next step was for individual students. Both felt this process was the most beneficial component of their collaboration because it allowed them to track their students' progress and set reasonable goals for the students. In the following section, two students' progress will be discussed as examples of how these two teachers assessed their students individually and designed their teaching plans accordingly.

Xu Hua was a student who came to America at the beginning of the school year when the study was conducted. When he first came, he knew very little English and could hardly understand anything in class. Amy and Renee decided that they both should work on his daily vocabulary and expressions for the first month of his school. Amy had him write his weekly journal in Chinese. She could not read Chinese, so she would ask the other ELL students to translate what Xu Hua wrote in the journal. She responded to his writing in English, and then explained what she wrote to Xu Hua. Every day, Amy would teach Xu Hua to write one sentence from his journal in English and have him try to learn that sentence in both speech and writing. While in the mainstream classroom, Renee used repetitive pattern books to help Xu Hua read and had him express his everyday life through drawing. Then she would label the drawings either with an English word or a phrase such as 'school' or 'have breakfast' for Xu Hua. Then Xu Hua would be expected to integrate these English words or

phrases he learned into his journals, which was written predominantly in Chinese. With this cohesive learning in both class settings, Xu Hua made significant progress and by January, he could write all his weekly journals in English, though mostly in Chinese syntax (see Figure 1).

Another student who benefited from the collaborative assessment and individualised instruction was Zhuming. This student had been at PS 126 for one and an half years. He could understand most of the everyday and classroom English and express himself in simple English, but was struggling in reading and writing. He didn't like to read and rarely wrote more than a paragraph when he was asked. His writing was forced and full of grammatical errors. Amy and Renee decided that, first of all, they had to help Zhuming become interested in reading. Among ELL students, Zhuming spoke the most fluent English. He was proud of this fact and tended to speak up in small groups whenever he had a chance. Amy and Renee decided to have book discussion groups in both classroom settings. When Amy had ELL students, she

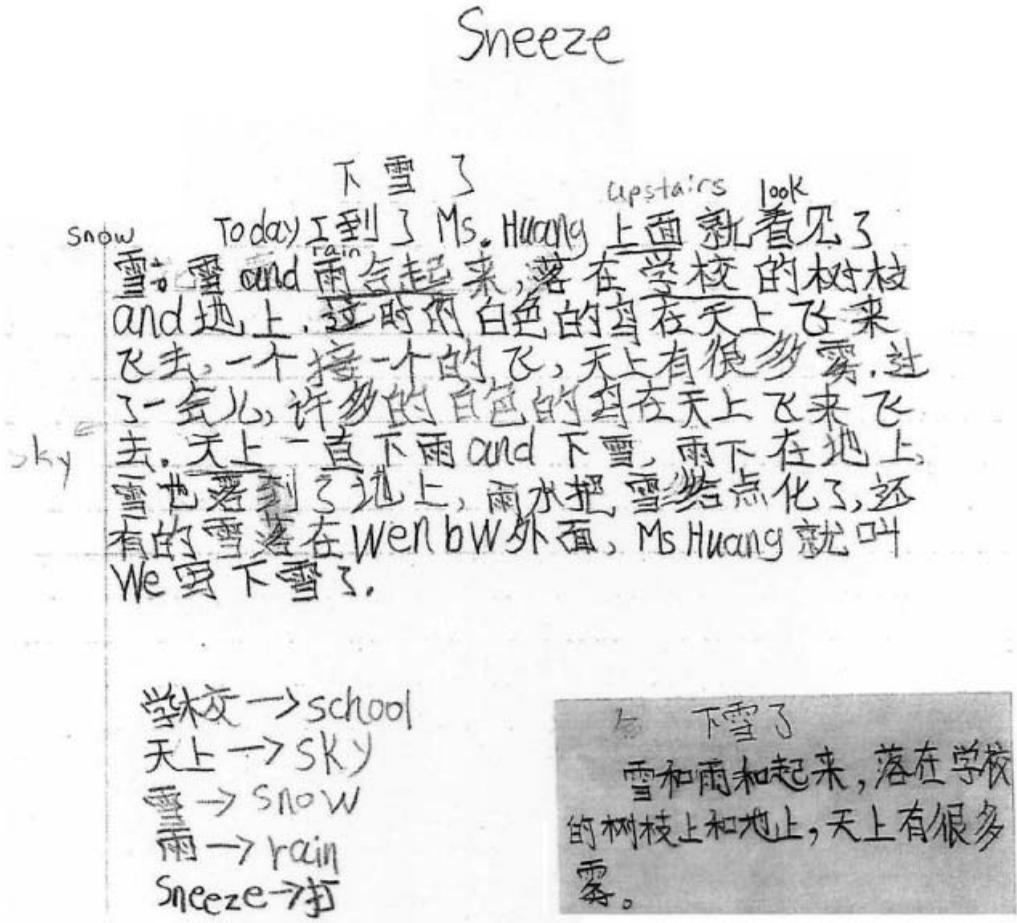


Figure 1. Xu Hua's journal writing

would let them choose a book to read together and have a book-talk in small groups. Zhuming had to read and think hard to participate in the group book-talk. When Zhuming came back to the mainstream classroom, Renee would ask Zhuming to discuss his book with a small group and sometimes even with the whole class. Doing book-talks in both settings had helped Zhuming not only speak better, but also made him want to read so he could have something meaningful to say at the group book-talk. By January, Zhuming rarely refused to take books home to read and his reading responses became longer. Amy and Renee then decided that they should put more emphasis on Zhuming's writing improvement in the spring.

Each of the five shared ELL students was different. Amy and Renee assessed them individually, and they decided at each meeting what the individual students could do, what they could do more of, and what the next step was for each of them. Sometimes they would get anxious about certain students' slow progress, and then they would calm each other down and remind each other that every student was different, and they shouldn't expect them all to move at the same pace. As Renee said:

It was important for these children to be receiving the same message from both of us when learning anything new. Consistency is a crucial part to the overall process. Because Amy and I were in a constant dialogue about the children—their work, our lessons—we were very aware of what was going on and some of the possibilities we could do as the next step. I think it also set an amazing role for the children (all the children) to see her coming into the class and to see us working together as a team for their benefit.

Amy's Push-in to the Mainstream Classroom

Amy scheduled to work twice a week with ELL students in Renee's room during the reading or writing workshop time, so the students would feel they were part of the class community. Sometimes she worked with the five ELLs together, sometimes she grouped them with other mainstream students and other times she conferred with them individually, depending on the needs of the students or what they were studying at the time. Amy felt that helping the students learn alongside their peers and with the same curriculum was the most effective instructional arrangement. Both Amy and Renee wished that Amy could work every day with ELL students in the class, but it was impossible as Amy had many other ELLs to serve. Because of the high percentage of new ELL students in Renee's room (25%), Amy could afford the time to provide a push-in service twice a week for one room. Push-in ESL service is costly and requires ESL and the classroom teachers to work as closely as Amy and Renee did in order to reach effective results for ELL students' overall literacy development.

Collaboration on a Non-fiction Writing Unit

Based on the assessment of individual students' progress in their English language and writing abilities, and on a comparison of what they achieved previously and

during the year of Amy and Renee's collaboration, obvious improvements were shown in ELL students' literacy learning.

Both Renee and Amy felt that the overall gain for all their shared ELL students during the year was student confidence. They were able to take more risks. The children who didn't verbally participate in any whole-class discussions in the beginning of the year would speak up a lot towards the end of the year. For example, Zhuming participated in the whole-class reading aloud discussions, which rarely happened during his previous years of schooling, and Xu Hua was active in small-group partner work with other English-proficient peers. Usually for beginning ELLs, it would take 2–3 years before they could do any book talk in English in a small group or class with their English-proficient peers. The students' writing also showed great improvement within just one year, from no English (only writing in their home language), to partial English (mixing their first language with English words), to mostly English with many correct sentence structures and interesting vocabulary (see Figures 2–4).

A writing and reading workshop was conducted every day in Renee's room and she taught a variety of genres through connected instruction of reading and writing. Table 1 illustrates in detail how Renee and Amy aligned their instruction in both classroom settings with ELL students in a non-fiction unit, which lasted eight weeks, with a focus on feature article writing. Before the unit started, Renee and Amy spent many hours before winter break planning how they could connect their instruction in both settings and help ELLs develop their specific understanding and writing of a feature article.

Working in both classroom settings in eight weeks and through a dozen drafts, all five ELL students published their feature articles along with their peers. Their final work was typed with digital illustration and bold-faced enlarged titles, read aloud to the class and posted on the wall together with their peers' work. ELL students had never before felt so proud of their work or so connected with their mainstream classroom peers. After the unit on feature article writing, the class worked on personal narrative, fictional story and book reviews. During those lesson units, ELLs received similar support in both settings and went through a similar process: much reading, many drafts of revisions and editing, as shown in Table 1. Their work was all published along with their peers'. Renee and Amy stated that their ELL students had never before done and published so much writing of such quality, and in the past, fewer ELLs had achieved their potential levels within one year.

Benefits to Teachers

It was not just ELL students who benefited from the two teachers' collaborative efforts, but also the teachers themselves. As Amy and Renee explained, they began this collaboration purely for the sake of their ELL students' learning, but they found they learned a lot about teaching and about themselves as teachers through observing each other's teaching, talking about their own teaching and their students, and assessing the students' progress. They felt that this collaboration was like taking

November
I.W.P

三只小猪盖房子

从前，在一个森林里住
着三只小猪和猪妈妈。
猪妈妈出门时，告诉三只小
猪，让它们盖房子。稻草
木头砖都可以盖房子，
但是砖盖的房子最好。
三只小猪开始盖房子了，小
黑用稻草盖房子，说稻草
盖的房子又快又好。小花
用木头盖房子，说木头盖
的房子比稻草结实得多。
小花盖的房子比稻草结
实得多。一阵风吹来，就
把稻草房子吹倒了。小花
不赞成小黑的说法，小花
盖房子。小花和小黑说干
吗要盖这么大的房子。小
花说稻草和木头都不结实，
只有砖是结实的。
老狼听说三只小猪要盖
房子，就先把小黑做的房
子弄坏。小黑跑到小白的
房子里，老狼把小白盖的房
子弄塌了。小白哭了，和
小黑跑到小花的家，说老
狼把我们的房子弄坏了。
小花说你们别伤心。老
狼来到小花的房前，老
狼用力把小花的房子弄
塌了。可是房子没塌，老
狼就从烟囱里进去，三只
小猪在下面生火，老狼一
进来就被活活烧死。三
只小猪高兴极了。小黑
和小白说我们也用砖盖
房子，两只小猪就

Figure 2. Xu Hua's Chinese writing

December 5, 2002.

Today is Thursday. I in school 等 teacher. Teacher 来了, 我就 go 排队.

到了班上, teacher 叫 I and Lin Ge go computer 那边. I and Lin Ge 到了 computer 那边, teacher 叫 I and Lin Ge 坐下, I and Lin Ge 就坐下. Teacher 耳机的听机那个弄在 computer 里, I and Lin Ge 就戴上, teacher 把碟片输入 in computer 里. computer 里有一个画, 有 English 的画, computer 里 one 一个的读, 画里的字读完了, 画也换了 one 个.

过了 one 会儿, Haiqiang Liu Ming De Guang 从 Ms. Huang class 回到班上. 我就跟 teacher 说 go Ms. Huang class, Teacher 说 yes. 我就 go 叫 Lin Ge go Ms. Huang class, Lin Ge 就跟我 one 起 go.

到了 Ms. Huang, Sister and Zheng Hong 已经到了. 我就 go 借 book. Ms. Huang 说: Today 下 snow, 你们就 go 写下 snowing.

过了 one 会儿, 写完 snowing 就 get Ms. Huang look. Ms. Huang 说挺好的, 然后, I and sister Zheng Hong 就回到班上.

到了班上, teacher 叫 we go gym. in gym 里, gym teacher 叫 we 坐 in chair up, gym teacher one 一个的选. I no go pla, 就坐 in chair.

Figure 3. Xu Hua's writing in mixed languages

King

I.W.P

March 28

Long time ago, a lion in the Woods, animals told lion do this Woods King.

One day, lion going to the Woods and said, "get me the food." Then everybody go home took his food, a monkey come, he took a banana, and cat took a fish, when everybody took his food, and lion was very happy, because he is the king, he ask animals do what, everybody go to do what.

One day, a tiger comes and lion said, "What are you doing baby." And tiger was very angry, then he push the lion, and lion tell everybody to fight the tiger, then the tiger went to ran, and the king fight the tiger's eyes, and the tiger ran away, and the lion was so happy.

Figure 4. Xu Hua's writing in English

Table 1. Renee and Amy's collaborative instruction for ELLs

Dates	Regular instruction in the classroom (Renee)	ESL instruction in the classroom (Renee and/or Amy)	In ESL room (Amy)
Jan 6–9	Reading and discussing non-fiction and learning about feature article	Small group instruction on the elements of non-fiction and feature article	Reading non-fiction, discussing non-fiction elements and feature-article writing
Jan 13–14	Choose topics for writing	Individual conferences with ELLs	Work on topic choice
Jan 15–16	First draft: quick writing of what is on your mind	Help individual students keep on track	Continue to work on the first draft
Jan 17	Re-read the first draft and categorise writing	Work with ELLs on: how to group ideas into themes	Continue to work on their writing
Jan 20–21	Get data through interviews and how to do interviews	Small group instruction on interview questions	Learning how to ask questions and take notes
Jan 22–23	Conduct interviews	Trying interviews	Put notes into sentences
Jan 24	How to report the interview data	Go over their interview notes	Organising interview information
Jan 27–28	Work on the 2nd draft with interview data	Conference with ELLs for their writing	Continue to work on their writing: learning the vocabulary and sentence structure needed for writing
Jan 29–30	What is second-hand data?	Help ELLs find out what second-hand information they need for their work	Search for books and on Internet for second-hand data
Feb 2–5	Research second-hand data through reading	Reading and conferring with ELLs	Continue to read for second-hand data
Feb 9–12	Add the research data into the writing	Take notes of second-hand data	Weave second-hand data into writing
Feb 16–18	Work on revision	Conference with ELLs on how to use direct quotes	Continue to work on their writing
Feb 19–28	Revision and editing, polishing and publishing	Work on revision, cut/paste. Mini-lesson on quotation marks	Learning skills: tenses, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation and paragraphing. Publishing. Help ELLs practise reading their work and present to the class

education courses while doing an internship at the same time; they were not only getting new ideas, but were able to try them immediately.

Amy and Renee were specialised in two different areas in literacy education in their training to be teachers—one in ESL or the area of applied linguistics, the other in general literacy education. Though each had some knowledge of the other's area, through this collaboration, each found the other knew so much that 'I didn't know'. In Renee's words,

[this learning] experience has ultimately opened areas of my personal teaching pedagogy that otherwise would not have been stretched or challenged. To have a colleague brainstorm ideas with decreases the anxiety, stress and pressures than if you have to do it alone.

They indeed enjoyed learning from each other. From observing how Renee taught reading and writing, Amy could see the insider's eye as a reader and writer, which Renee demonstrated in her teaching but Amy noticed that she had missed in her reading and writing instruction. Amy loved to see how Renee conferred with her students, and what Renee said about reading and writing made Amy want to write and read herself. Likewise, Renee was amazed by how Amy was able to help her students speak up despite how limited their proficiency in English was. It seemed in Amy's class that her pupils had an urgent desire to express themselves and were not afraid to take risks and share themselves with each other or with Amy. Amy knew how to push, how to nurture and how to guide them through difficult tasks.

Before the collaboration, like many other ESL and classroom teachers, these teachers tended to blame each other for not working enough for ELL children and felt the reason for the students' slow literacy and language development was the other's fault. A missing link between their teaching slowed the students' progress. Through collaboration, Amy and Renee realised that the other not only was indeed the expert in what she was doing, but tried very hard to help her students.

Their collaboration also helped Amy and Renee see their students from two different perspectives. With different training backgrounds, it was easy for them to emphasise different aspects in the students' literacy development. For instance, to assess the students' writing, Amy was keen on the students' language and vocabulary development, and Renee focused on idea and organisation development. From their two different perspectives, the students were guided and pushed in their writing, which resulted in a better balance in their overall literacy development. Through collaboratively helping their ELL students in their literacy and language skills, Amy and Renee helped each other to grow and expand beyond their formal training as educators. Now Renee was more confident with ELL students and Amy was more comfortable teaching reading and writing.

Conclusion

Collaboration between ESL and mainstream classroom teachers in a school that adopts a pull-out or push-in ESL programme benefits ELL students' overall literacy development a great deal. It makes ELL students' learning cohesive and enables them

to be part of the classroom community. It requires commitment from both teachers and school administrators. The collaboration takes a lot of extra effort and time from the teachers, and teachers have to be open and willing to learn from each other and appreciate each other's perspectives. In Renee's words, 'both parties need to be willing to sacrifice some of your own agenda in order to accommodate the team, ultimately for the kids'. The school administrators have to support the teachers as well. The principal released Amy to spend an hour a day to work with Renee, so they were able to observe, assess and co-teach their students. Time is a large concern in collaboration.

The growth of their shared ELL students as writers and language learners over the year has evidenced that Amy and Renee's collaboration was successful. The writing workshop approach Renee adopted also contributed to their successful collaboration. Calkins (1994) states: 'One of the special advantages of a writing workshop is that in it, as in an art studio, children with very different levels of proficiency can work side by side' (p. 113). Samway (2006), an ESL educator, also confirms that a writing workshop provides a most effective approach to teaching ELLs to write because it gives freedom to both students and teachers, the former to work at their own pace, and the latter to help their students according to their individual needs. Through mini-lessons, teacher conference and small-group work, the key components of a writing workshop, Renee and Amy provided specific and direct instruction to their ELL students with each draft of the process. Their instruction plan and strategies were based on each one's needs, but not on a uniform programme or grade requirement. ELL students, like all struggling learners, especially need this kind of specific guidance, flexibility and individuality in a supportive environment to grow as writers and language learners. A scripted programme will not provide all these learning and teaching conditions because of uniform requirements and fixed assessment.

Amy and Renee's collaboration was a rewarding experience but also made for a challenging year. They frequently had a working lunch and often came before school started and stayed later in the afternoon. However, the students' obvious achievement excited them and gave them much incentive to go on with their collaboration. Amy and Renee would like to continue their collaboration for the benefit of their students. Renee reflected on what she would do differently in their following year's collaboration:

I would spend more time in early September looking at work, and assessment, and planning more individualised curriculum for students. So in a guided reading group, I could work on the same things Amy would be working on in her pull-out situation. I should do more reinforcement rather than always looking to move on to the next topic or project. I would set up a more organised meeting time. This year it happened to work out with Amy and me because we both happened to be rather flexible and arrive early at school.

Amy shared Renee's thoughts, but was afraid that if she had more new students coming and spread across different grades, it might be hard for her to have enough time to observe and work with the students as she did with Renee during the year.

The ELL students in Renee's classroom during the year had made a leap in their overall literacy development because of the collaborative efforts between Renee and

Amy. But how should this successful model be implemented in all classrooms so all ELLs can make such leaps in their learning? With a limited national and local education budget and pressure from the No Child Left Behind Act, there is no easy answer to this question. This research has documented Amy and Renee's collaborative efforts in teaching their ELL students, which evidences that there are many teachers like Renee and Amy and school leadership like theirs, who are working hard to search for effective ways to help students achieve despite all the pressure and mandates they are facing in their profession. In the years to come, Renee and Amy will continue their collaboration as much as they can and also help others at their school to do the same.

Notes on Contributors

Danling Fu, the author of this article, is Professor in the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida and a researcher on literacy education for new immigrant students. She conducts research in New York City schools with large populations of new immigrant students and consults on K–12 ESL and bilingual education. Her publications include *An Island of English: Teaching ESL in Chinatown* and *My Trouble is My English: Asian Students and Their American Dreams*. She has published numerous articles, written many book chapters and has given presentations on literacy instruction for English language learners across the United States.

Renee Houser, whose work as a teacher-researcher is presented in this article, is staff developer in Teacher's College Reading and Writing programme.

Amy Huang, whose work as a teacher-researcher is presented in this article, is currently an ESL specialist in New York City public schools.

References

- Bryant, M. & Land, S. (1998) Co-Planning is the Key to Successful Co-teaching, *Middle School Journal*, 29(5), 28–34.
- Calkins, L. (1994) *The Art of Teaching Writing* (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann).
- Carrasquill, A. & Rodriguez, V. (1995) *Language Minority in the Mainstream Classroom* (Philadelphia, Multilingual Matters Ltd).
- de Jong, E. (1995) From Marginalization to Integrated Language Minority Education, paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, Phoenix, AZ, 14–18 February. Available online at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal> (accessed 9 April 2004).
- Fix, M. & Passel, J. (2002) US Immigration Trends and Implication for Schools, paper presented at the *National Association for Bilingual Education's NCLB Implementation*, New Orleans, LA, 28–29 January.
- Fu, D. (2003) *An Island of English: Teaching ESL in Chinatown* (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann).
- Hruska, B. (2000) Prioritizing Needs/Negotiating Practices: Student Placement at River Valley Elementary, paper presented at the *Puerto Rican Studies Association Conference*, Amherst, MA, 28 October. Available online at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal> (accessed 28 August 2005).

- Hudson, P. (1989) Instructional Collaboration: Creating the Learning Environment, in: S. H. Frad & M. J. Weismantel (Eds) *Meeting the Needs of Culturally and Linguistically Different Students* (Boston, College-Hill Press).
- Hudson, P. & Fradd, S. (1990) Cooperative Planning for Learners with Limited English Proficiency, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 23(1), 16–21.
- Hurren, P. (1993) Expanding the Collaborative Planning Model to Meet the Needs of ESL Students, *Emergency Librarian*, 20(5). Available online at: <http://bll.epnet.com.lp.hcsl.ufl.edu/> (accessed 9 August 2005).
- National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) (2002) NCES Survey: Over 40 percent of U.S. Teachers Teach LEPs, *NCELA Newslines Bulletin*, article II, 11 June. Available online at: <http://www.ncela.gwu/newline/2002/0611.htm> (accessed 11 June 2002).
- Necochea, J. & Cline, Z. (2000) Effective Educational Practices for English Language Learners within Mainstream Settings, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 3(3), 317–332.
- New Levine, L. (1993) Sharing the Wealth: The Collaboration of ESL and Mainstream Teachers, *Idiom*, 23(3), 1–5.
- Nunan, D. (Ed) (1992) *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching* (New York, Cambridge University Press).
- Penfield, J. (1987) ESL: The Regular Classroom Teacher's Perspective, *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(1), 21–39.
- Portocarrero, G. & Bergin, J. (1997) Developing Literacy: A Co-teaching Model Using Readers' and Writers' Workshop. paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Orlando, FL, 11–15 March. Available online at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal> (accessed 4 September 2005).
- Roessingh, H. (2004) Effective High School ESL Programs: A Synthesis and Meta-analysis, *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 60(I.5), 611–636.
- Samway, K. D. (2006) *When English Language Learners Write: Connecting Research to Practice, K–8* (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann).
- Schnorr, R. F. & Davern, L. (2005) Creating Exemplary Literacy Classrooms through the Power of Teaming, *The Reading Teacher*, 58(6), 494.

Copyright of *Changing English: Studies in Culture & Education* is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.

Copyright of *Changing English: Studies in Culture & Education* is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.