

**Team Teaching Conceptualization, Perception and Application
Comparative Analysis
Case Study ;Spain (Granada) vs. Algeria (SidiBel Abbes)**

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Abstract:

Team-Teaching is a new pedagogy towards teaching. It stands for the complete cooperation of two teachers within the same classroom. Notwithstanding its significant effect on both teaching and learning; scarcely is it applied. Hitherto, the present paper endeavours to illuminate the eminence of team-teaching approach. It studies teachers' perceptions to the notion, then pinpoints the reasons behind its absence and how to adapt it. The investigation takes place at the department of translation and Interpretation, University of Granada, along with the English Department at the University of Sidi Bel Abbes, Algeria. It is a comparative analysis study whereby an unstructured interview with six teachers of each department is used. Finally, it suggests some solutions for its appliance.

Keywords: Team-teaching; Teachers; Sharing; Granada; Algeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a noble profession, and teachers are most of the time perceived as an ideal for students. They are bound to be competent and ready to handle classroom distinct situations. In fact, teachers' competency cannot be limited to, only, research making, attending seminars and conferences; it can also be the upshot of collaboration between teachers, i.e. team-teaching. Indeed, if teachers share their different experiences, subject background and teaching materials, they are more likely to improve their teaching skills as they learn from each other. Hitherto, the present paper is a comparative analysis between team teaching in Granada and SidiBelabbes , whereby an unstructured interview with six teachers of each department is used.

2. Definition of Team-Teaching

Team-Teaching, which is commonly known as collaborative, or cooperative work is the process of collaboration between a specialist /or an expert and a general education teacher, or two (can be more) teachers of the same field. That means, the two teachers share the whole teaching responsibility, which encompasses planning, organizing, monitoring, evaluating and assessing a whole class together . Then, since each teacher has got his own personality, methodology and way of thinking, co-teaching is believed to render teaching more fun and creates different and varied teaching methods . Thus, students may find it more enjoyable to learn from two teachers who possess different perceptions and backgrounds, than having only one source of knowledge provision.

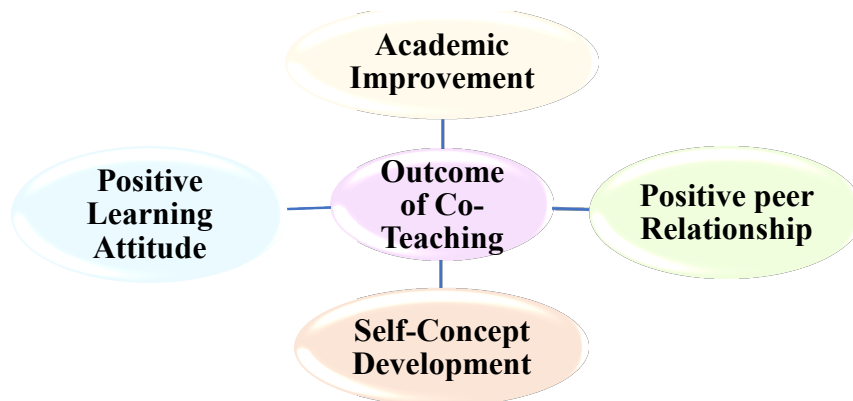
As a matter of fact, in each module, there is a great possibility for teachers to work together, share their background and knowledge and to complement each other. In this sense, the programme cannot limit the appliance of team-teaching. Indeed, teachers need to have the readiness to group work, acceptance towards others in terms of personality and sharing culture.

3. The Origins of Team-Teaching

The origins of co-teaching dates back to the second half of the 20th century. It started in 1950s when educators in the United States, together with, several developed countries sought to question the traditional school structures and procedures besides to their efficacy (Hanslovsky, Moyer, & Wagner, 1969) . The upshot was the growth of another archetype of teaching that was referred to as ‘team-teaching’ . Being implemented at all the levels (junior, middle or high schools), team teaching meant the presentation of a course by the most expertise teacher, among all the teachers, in the specific domain (Shaplin, 1964) . Such understanding to team teaching led educators to work collaboratively as to divide teaching responsibility .

Consequently, school workers started to believe in the efficacy of collaborative work. It was appreciated by students, teachers, parents and boards of education. As Thomas’ study (1977) reported, collaborative work had impressive outcomes, i.e. academic improvement, students’ positive attitudes towards learning, development of learners’ self-concept, and positive peer relationship. As far as teachers are concerned, they marked a professional development, personal support and communication growth .

Figure 1. Outcome of Collaborative Work on Students' Learning



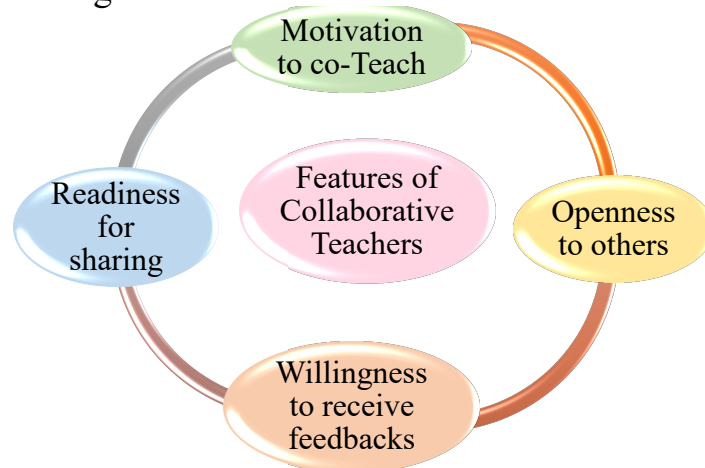
However, by time, the teaching practices had changed. It typically signifies the cooperation of two tutors in a big classroom in order to teach the same students. Special education has witnessed a large growth as soon as team-teaching has improved. Indeed, the 1960s, traditional separate special education was questioned (e.g., Dunn, 1968). The necessity for distinct resources called for the requirement of both special and general educators to work together at the same place (e.g., Warger&Aldinger, 1986). Such experience was the first to appear in the late 1980s and 1990s. Yet, students were not pleased with such teaching. Researches had shown that being taught by qualified and specialized teachers is better. As a result, further efforts were made for the sake of improving the quality of co-teaching and establishing appropriate team-teaching programmes .

Despite the understanding of the word ‘team-teaching’ as the existence of two teachers within the same setting teaching the same class, it still has several meanings. It can be explained in terms of division of responsibilities between teachers, or, can be restricted to cooperative planning and assessment of students’ learning (Sandholtz, 2000). Such vast understanding of the term gave birth to sundry practices. Still, not all team-teaching practices can result in professional teacher development.

4. Features of Collaborative Teachers

Engaging in team-teaching experiences requires teachers to possess certain personality traits. Indeed, first and foremost, teachers need to be ready to share their teaching experiences since their primary objective is to maximize the opportunities of both learning to teach and fostering students’ learning (Tobin et al., 2001; Roth et al., 2002; Roth & Tobin, 2002). Furthermore, teachers need to be open to their partner, and willing to discuss, give and receive feedbacks because after all, the efficiency of collaborative teaching relies on a good harmony between teachers. When there is a harmony between two teachers, there is a great chance for easily solving classroom problems and avoiding obstacles.

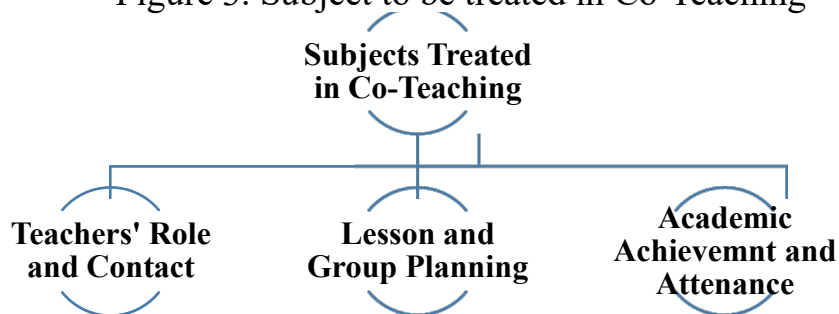
Figure 2. Features of Collaborative Teachers



5. Essential Elements in Team-Teaching

Teachers' willingness to team-teach is not necessarily linked to long experiences. Novice teachers can also be engaged in such teaching. The most important factor is the complete readiness for partaking, knowledge, ideas, methods, and feedbacks with the other teacher, alongside the capability to adapt to the other teacher. In fact, in such teaching, multiple subjects are addressed: teachers' roles and contact besides to their distinct perception to both teaching and learning, planning lessons, the influence of co-teaching on learners, their behaviours, their academic achievement, and attendance .

Figure 3. Subject to be treated in Co-Teaching



6. How to Apply the Team-Teaching Approach

It is true that team-teaching seems too good to adapt, but, in fact, the process of applying it may take both time and efforts from teachers. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, teachers need to have a great motivation along with patience, if they are to work together. Prior studies need to be undertaken before team-teaching any class.

To put it simple, the first step towards a team-teaching experience is 'meetings'. Teachers need to know each other before engaging in the teaching. Each one needs to have an idea about his

partner, his teaching principles, and interests. It is also possible to get to know and adapt to the teachers' personality to make contact and interaction easier. Although it sounds too easy, the fact of getting to know a person may take several sessions.

Once teachers are familiar with each other, they can start working together. That is to say, they can share their teaching objectives, materials and references. This can be done by meeting a number of times as to agree on the common points. Then, both teachers cooperate in the lessons' preparation. They both exchange plan and organize for the lessons, their new ideas as to bring about a fruitful lesson. When the lessons is well planned, they start dividing responsibilities in terms of lesson presentation. This later does not necessarily mean that each teacher needs to strictly respect and stick to his own part, but interaction is encouraged.

That is to say, once in class, if one teachers is explaining a specific point, and his partner has a comment or an add, it needs to be highly welcomed. Teachers contact and interaction in classroom reflects on their teaching, and can create a positive image about teaching among learners. After that, both teachers select the appropriate system of students' evaluation in classroom and in their final exams. In this later, both teachers correct students' exam paper, they can even exchange papers to reflect each one's correction. At the end of the team-teaching experience, both teachers reflect their teaching in order to notice the positive and negative points occurred, and try to improve.

7. Research Method and Tool

Since the present paper aims at studying the teachers' understanding to the concept of team teaching at two distinct department and two different countries, the prime methodology followed is a comparative analysis. In fact, there are several methods of doing comparative analysis and Tilly (1984) distinguishes four types of comparative analysis namely: individualizing, universalizing, variation finding and encompassing. The one selected is the variation finding which seeks to 'establish a principle of variation in the character or intensity of a phenomenon by examining systematic differences between instances'. That is, comparing numerous forms of a single phenomenon to discover logical differences among instances and establish a standard of variation in the character or intensity of that phenomenon. Then, the chief tool chosen in this research is an unstructured interview. It is composed out of six main questions dedicated for six university professors at the translation department in charge in Granada, Spain, and at the English Department, at SidiBel Abbes, Algeria.

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it is a qualitative study, data gathered are interpreted

depending on participants' answers.

- What is your understanding to Team-teaching concept?
- Have you ever had a chance to team-teach a lesson with a specialist educator or colleague at the same class?

This questions aims to discover if teachers at both selected departments in SidiBel Abbes and Granada are aware of the team-teaching concept or not. Thus, both teachers' answers were on the same line. That signifies that all teachers' participants perceive the notion as the alternative to group learning. They understand the team teaching concept as the collaborative work between teachers within the same module, and not within the same class. That is to say, some modules are taught by two teachers separately within the same semester. That collaboration implies having two teachers, sharing their scientific background, personal researches, different point of view regarding distinct teaching and learning situations.

Although some teachers express their likeness and appreciation to the idea of team teaching, it is rarely to happen. In fact, particular cases of team-teaching are possibly to occur at the translation department in forms of workshops, where the presence of two teachers is necessary to run the activities. Meanwhile, at the English department, some teachers confess that they have already cooperated with other colleagues in psychology module. They elucidate that they worked in collaboration with an expert of psychiatry in order to explain the lecture of positive thinking. Other example of a team-taught lesson was entitled 'cooperative learning'; the aim of both tutors was to prove that cooperation is not limited to learning, but can also be extended to teaching.

- What do you think of team teaching in comparison to teaching alone?

The aim of above question is to further discover teachers' perception towards the idea of team-teaching in comparison to the common adapted method of class solo teaching. Teachers' participants avow that cooperation in teaching can help filling the gaps between teachers, considering each learning/teaching situation from a dissimilar angle, aid to solve learning/ teaching problems and come up with innovative teaching techniques. Nonetheless, since it is not something much spread, its benefits are not recognised.

Still, they argue that planned and meditated team-teaching may contribute to enhancing the educative experience, with benefits for the students and teachers as well. Nevertheless, it requires previous planning between teachers. Indeed, they explain that team-teaching enables students to better understand the lessons as they are exposed to two different sources of knowledge and two distinct way of data delivery. Besides, teachers contact and communication with each other

and learners in classroom can open the space for further debates with students. The classroom atmosphere would be more like a community where every student can contribute with his point of view than just a simple class.

Alongside, Algerian teachers of the English language share the same point of view. Teachers avow that team-teaching develops the direct teacher-to-teacher and students-teacher contact. To put it in a different way, both teachers are put face to face while classroom discussion, at that case, teachers are also learners. This fact encourages students to engage in classroom debates, and to exchange opinions, and information.

In addition, Team-teaching offers a wide space for knowledge exposure. Teachers with their discrete area of expertise handling the same topic represent a good knowledge resource for each other and students alike. Indeed, it allows teachers to share everything related to the teaching and learning processes and expand their linguistics' background. To put it clear, in a team teaching class, both teachers can intervene when necessary, no limits or foundries are put between each other. Such behavior between educators would lead students to adapt the idea of cooperative learning, and encourages sharing.

• According to you, what are the main reasons behind the absence of team-teaching practices at the current department?

The above question tries to discover the chief causes of the non-practice of the team-teaching at the two departments. Primarily, at the translation department, teachers' participants avow that the chief reason is the non-awareness of the team-teaching method. While other colleagues explain that, some teachers at the same department already used the team-teaching approach but not all of them. They add that its absence in some other classes is due to the fact that it hasn't been suggested for the moment. It should be the initiative of the corresponding teachers to do so, and start to work as a team. Undeniably, teachers are not mindful about the functioning and the basics of the concept. If the approach has been introduced and presented to teachers, there is a possibility for them to accept and admit its benefits.

Besides, individualism is another aspect that cannot be denied. The term individualism has always gained a negative connotation . Owing to the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville, the term first appear in America . It is a culture mostly spread in the western countries and signifies the domination of egoism over unselfishness; it is also linked to individual full concentration on their self-fulfillment . Thus, when teachers feel individualistic, completely concentrated on attaining their success, they tend to rarely pay attention to others' teaching practices.

Likewise, when two teachers share the same module, wages will be added to the annual salary of teachers. That means, money is another factor that plays a role in the team-teaching appliance. Indeed, instead of paying only one teacher for the module, two teachers will be paid for a shared module. That later seems to be a bit costly to apply.

On the same line, Algerian teachers agreed that the lack of the identification and the real conceptualization of the team-teaching concept is the major reason of its non-appliance. Most teachers are not really aware of the real meaning of team teaching. Though some teachers recognize the inference of two teachers teaching or collaborating together to realize a specific lecture, still, teachers are not really conscious of the whole process and steps it involves. Indeed, team teaching is not limited to only classroom lessons' presentations, but, it is also a matter of meeting to decide the subject-matter content, methodology and tools used in the lecture, assessment and evaluation.

In addition, sharing is the key word on which the cooperative teaching is based. The absence of the sharing culture at the current departments hinders its adaptation. Teachers denying or refusal to the significance of sharing knowledge, resources, ideas and divergent perspectives about teaching can only result in a maintained teaching level and the dominance of the solo teaching class. Notwithstanding the fact that teachers' personal efforts may enhance their efficacy, still; team-teaching is viewed as an efficient way to progress professionally.

Moreover, apart from the fact that team-teaching may be expensive, the hardest challenge is to find out two teachers who can perfectly create a certain harmony among the group. Indeed, teachers turn the point to teachers' personality as a vital element in the realization of the team-teaching experience. To put it clear, since there are no two persons alike, teachers are of no difference. Each educator has his own personality, personal beliefs and teaching methodology. As explained by Geyer Peter, there are five factors model dimensions (Emotional Stability, Extraversion (or Surgency), Openness (or Culture, Intellect), Agreeableness (or Friendliness), and Conscientiousness (or Dependability) . Thus, teachers who are extraverted, welcoming data sharing, exchangeability along with cooperation, tend to better perform in a teamwork, and more likely to create a harmonic and well-coordinated group . However, introverted teachers prefer to teach and control their classes alone. Hence, the concordance between the two teachers requires from both of them to have at least the same teaching and learning ideas and principles along with common personality traits. Otherwise, that would be hard, if not impossible.

- What are your suggestions to encourage the adaptation of team

teaching at the current department?

In trying to seek some plausible suggestions for the adaptation of the team-teaching approach, teachers advocate that it should be primarily well introduced. The introduction of the notion and its appliance needs to be well presented. Teachers need to understand first the basis for this approach, to identify their roles, and determine the ways to partake the teaching responsibilities. This could be done in a form of conferences, seminars, study days or even small workshops. This way, teachers may understand the team-teaching notion, and probably adapt it.

9. Comparative Analysis of both Interviews

Team-teaching, as commonly known collaborative, cooperative teaching is a new teaching pedagogy for teachers' participant in the two dissimilar countries and departments. Basically, the notion stands for the presence of two teachers together within the same class and the same time delivering a lesson for students. However, all teachers perceive the concept as a stretch collaboration between them to establish the objectives, competencies required and the evaluative method. Notwithstanding the fact that team-teaching may occur in some workshops at the translation department, and some of the Algerian teachers' participants did try it in some lectures, still it is not something very common.

As confessed by all teachers' participants, collaborative teaching does not only provide a variety of knowledge sources, but it is also gives the birth to innovative teaching. They confirm that team teaching can open the space for a wide range of information provision. When the two teachers explains the lessons, students can better understand the content, and may even debates more the issues than having one class teacher. It also encourages good management skills.

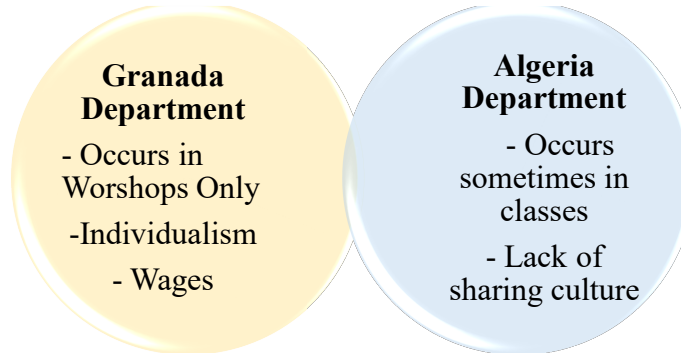
Prior to team-teaching implementation, Dieker and Murawski (2004), suggest that the first step towards a successful team-course is the preparation. Teachers need to have a clear idea about team teaching class. Besides, they need to start by knowing each other, each one's method, knowledge and preferences. They can discuss topics together, and grab into the literature to gain knowledge enough to develop the subject.

In fact, teachers' participants avow that one of the greatest challenges for the team-teaching appliance is to find out a teacher who is extraverted and like sharing. This implies the role of personality in creating a team. Thus, teachers need to have some previous meetings before lessons presentations, and try to work on their relationship since it reflects on their methodology before presenting any work in front of their students. This step is too much time and efforts consuming, as teachers need to plan their meeting several times

beforehand.

Another aspect that is revealed by teachers in Granada was that team-teaching is expensive. As previously explained, if two teachers co-teach simultaneously a class, the university will have to pay both of them rather than one. Likewise, in Algeria, if teachers team-teach a lecture, the class's hours would be counted as supplementary hours; something that is common in the country. That signifies that in both countries, team-teaching defy is overpriced.

Figure 4. Similarities and Differences in Team-Teaching Perceptions



4. CONCLUSION

In short, team-teaching can be a new interesting and intriguing teaching pedagogy. The concept starts from teachers' willingness and motivation for sharing and accepting the partner. That is to say, team teaching cannot be limited to a set of steps to be followed, but it is based entirely on teachers' readiness to fully collaborate in teaching a class. As such, meetings prior to each lesson is necessary, in case teachers do not know each other. Teachers need to assemble as to prepare that piece of knowledge together. They also need to decide about the content to be taught, the distinct points to be explained by each of them and even preparing some questions to be asked to students. Lastly, additional experimental inquiries are needed to investigate teachers' unique personalities and the role they play in a co-teaching class. It would also be worth to reveal the connection between teachers' traits, team-teaching and the development of the learning process as to better the understanding of the teamwork notion.

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