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*Iranian Journal  
of  
Language Teaching Research*  
ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Urmia University

## The Impact of Teacher Collaboration on ESL Students' Classroom Participation: The Case of Leo

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine how teacher collaboration influenced the participation of Leo, an ESL student, in a collaboratively taught classroom at a middle school in the Southeastern United States. To this aim, this study consisted of two collaborative cycles and used the constant comparative method to analyze the influences of teacher collaboration on Leo's participation. The findings showed that teacher collaboration generated more opportunities for Leo's increased participation. During the first cycle, Leo could focus on his own learning outcomes without assisting his friend and fellow student. Moving into the second cycle, Leo was able to confidently participate in the collaborative discussion because of the interactive lesson design and the ESL teacher's (Amanda's) impact on the collaborative process. The findings highlight the social nature of student participation that is defined by the teachers in collaboration. The findings also call for teachers' culturally responsive practices and additional studies to examine how teachers can work together to yield more equitable and inclusive spaces for student participation in the collaboratively taught classroom.

**Keywords:** English as a second language, middle school, teacher collaboration, student participation, content-area teachers' ideologies

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

**Received:** 8 Feb. 2023

**Revised version received:** 30 Apr. 2023

**Accepted:** 15 June 2023

**Available online:** 1 July 2023

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10.30466/ijltr.2023.121331

Teacher collaboration for English as a second language (ESL) students' content and language instruction is growing as a popular instructional model in the United States (US) (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2022). The model's increasing popularity is most likely a result of the expectation for ESL students to access and master rigorous content and language standards. Without the ESL teacher's assistance, content teachers report feeling unequipped to achieve this goal. In general, teacher collaboration can include many forms and can best be understood on a continuum of teachers' planning and/or teaching efforts to provide inclusive learning spaces for ESL students in the K-12 setting (Bell & Baecher, 2012). Researchers and practitioners call for increased teacher collaboration for English as a second language (ESL) students in the US because such partnerships can work toward equitable student learning outcomes in K-12 settings (Giles & Yazan, 2020; DelliCarpini, 2021; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2022). For the purposes of this study, we envision teacher collaboration as a generative space where both teachers assume planning and teaching roles to work toward increased ESL students' participation in the content area classroom.

Recent research on collaboration focuses mainly on contexts in both preservice and in-service teacher education (Aalto & Mustonen, 2022; Alhassan et al, 2022; Alvarado et. al, 2019; Bush & Grotjohann, 2020; Daniel et al, 2020; Gladman, 2015; Gill & Hooper, 2020; Haghghi, 2019) across many countries, including Finland (Aalto & Mustonen, 2022), Germany (Bush & Grotjohann, 2020), Japan (Gill & Hooper, 2020; Gladman, 2015), Chile (Alvarado et al, 2019), Sudan (Alhassan et al, 2022), Iran (Haghghi, 2019), and the US (Daniel et al, 2020). In these teacher education contexts, the studies report the importance of collaboration (Alhassan et al, 2022; Alvarado et. al, 2019; Bush & Grotjohann, 2020) to improve pedagogical practices (Daniel et al, 2020; Gill & Hooper, 2020). For example, Gil and Hooper (2020) showed that two teacher educators reported that collaboration helped them identify areas of misalignment between their stated beliefs and practices through reflection and dialogue in a Japanese educational context. In another example, Preservice teachers stated that collaboration led to increased confidence and problem-solving skills which strengthened their teacher identities (Alvarado et al, 2019). Moreover, in-service teachers reflected on ways to improve students' discourse in the classroom (Daniel et al, 2020). When focused on K-12 contexts, teacher collaboration mostly exists for students in special education (Aston, 2016; King, 2022).

Specifically regarding ESL and content teacher collaboration in the US, earlier studies supported that teacher collaboration can be enjoyable for both ESL and content teachers (Percy, Ditter, & DeStefano, 2016) and lead to teachers' learning opportunities when teachers work together for the shared goal of increased learning outcomes for ESL students in the collaboratively taught classroom (Martín-Beltrán & Percy, 2014). Previous studies also reported that different schedules (Percy et al., 2016), unequal planning/teaching roles (Giles, 2018), inconsistent administrative support (Hargreaves, 1994) and the inferior status of the ESL teacher (Ahmed Hersi, Horan, & Lewis, 2016; Arkoudis, 2003; Creese, 2002; McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010) can make these collaborative partnerships more difficult to sustain. Moreover, more recent studies on teacher collaboration occurred in elementary schools rather than secondary schools. Scholars have argued that rigid compartmentalization of subject areas can leave the ESL teacher without one subject department to claim (Bell & Baecher, 2012). The ESL teacher is tasked with teaching academic language across multiple subjects in many different grade levels. In many contexts, school districts only hire one ESL teacher to support all ESL students in all grade levels as was the case here. The ESL teacher, then, is positioned outside the secondary school community without additional curricular colleagues to support them.

## Student Participation

We view student learning outcomes from the lens of student participation in the collaboratively taught math classroom. That is, we argue that students have more learning opportunities when they participate in the classroom (Harklau, 2000). In our definition, student participation is socially constructed based on students' observable actions, utterances, and behaviors as well as their work samples resulting from the collaborative teaching sessions. Previous studies on student participation overwhelmingly point to the teacher as the main influence on student participation (Duff, 2001; Kayi-Aydar, 2014; Martin-Beltrán, 2010; Miller, 2000; Pappamihel, 2002; Yoon, 2008).

To exemplify, Duff (2001) showed how a social studies teacher's expectation for complex narrative assignments and references to pop culture constrained the ESL students' opportunities for participation in a secondary classroom. Similarly, Yoon (2008) found that teachers' beliefs and practices impacted ESL students' willingness to participate in the content classroom. In Yoon's (2008) study, Mr. Brown viewed himself as "a model of an English speaker" (p. 509) and did not assume his responsibility as a teacher of ESL students. ESL students consequently felt ignored and powerless in Mr. Brown's class. Mrs. Young alternatively conceptualized her role as "a teacher of children" (p. 505), which resulted in her use of differentiated and culturally relevant strategies in her classroom. The ESL students in Mrs. Young's classroom participated without fear of criticism because they felt their cultural and linguistic backgrounds were appreciated and welcomed. Similarly, Harklau (2000) concluded that teacher representations or labels (e.g., a hardworking student, a motivated student, a class clown) can impact a student's educational trajectory across multiple secondary and university settings. Later, Kayi-Aydar (2014) referred to these student labels as "positional identities" because they appear seemingly static and stable over time (p. 688). A synthesis of these studies emphasizes how a teacher's beliefs, pedagogical choices (Duff, 2001; Harklau, 2000; Yoon, 2008) and the teacher's perception of their students' language proficiency (Martin-Beltrán, 2010) can work to afford or constrain participation in the classroom. Such participation influenced students' feelings (Duff, 2001; Pappamihel, 2002; Yoon, 2008) and influence how students interact with their teacher (Duff, 2001; Harklau, 2000; Martin-Beltrán, 2010; Yoon, 2008) and other students (Martin-Beltrán, 2010; Miller, 2000).

No known studies on teacher collaboration in either elementary or secondary settings have focused on student learning outcomes as an outgrowth of collaboration. Our earlier work (See Giles & Yazan, 2020) focused on how an English/Language Arts (ELA) teacher changed her perspective about an ESL student working in collaboration with an ESL teacher. We focused on the changed perspective of the teacher's perceptions of an ESL student. That is, this study's primary purpose was to focus on the ELA teacher rather than the student. For this current study, the purpose was to focus on Leo's participation as an outgrowth of teacher collaboration. The central focus of Leo's participation is unique from earlier studies on teacher collaboration. Moreover, we aim to describe Leo's participation in a collaborative mathematics classroom where language learning is typically secondary.

### *School Site: Starcreek Middle School*

Located in the Southeastern United States, Starcreek Middle School is the study's school site. District leaders granted us permission, and the Institutional Review Board approved the research. Starcreek Middle School was one of three middle schools in the district and was the only middle school in the district classified as a Title I school, which is a federal classification signifying that at least 40 percent of the school's students received free and reduced lunch. Starcreek also instructed about 1000 students and had the largest number of ESL students of the three middle schools in the district and the only middle school that employed an ESL teacher in a full-time position.

During the 2017-2018 academic school year, 41 students were identified as ESL students and 13 percent of the students identified an additional language on a home language survey. ESL students received ESL services if they identified an additional language on a home language survey at registration and scored a qualifying score (i.e., 4.9 or below) on the World-Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA) Screener. The WIDA Screener is a computerized English language assessment that measures proficiency in the areas of literacy (i.e., reading and writing) and oral language (i.e., listening and speaking) where literacy comprises 70 percent and oral language 30 percent of the student's overall score.

From the first day of enrollment at Starcreek, students took core content classes in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies based on the student's grade level appropriate age regardless of English language proficiency. Students at Starcreek took a total of seven courses consisting of the four core content classes, one class in physical education, one reading strategies class, and one elective class. At the age of 13 or 14, an ESL student, for example, was placed in the eighth grade even if he reported that he had recently arrived in the US and reported never having spoken or learned English at a previous school in another country. The school's district specified an ESL program model, which meant English was the primary instructional language and the ESL student's home language was only used if this language helped the student learn English. All content classes were also instructed in English. ESL students took a 55-minute pull-out ESL class period to help them learn the English needed to access and master the academic content in their content classes. As its name implies, a pull-out ESL class period means that ESL students were pulled out from the instruction of their monolingual peers, and during this time, received English language instruction. Amanda, the first author and researcher, was the full-time ESL teacher who taught the ESL class period to all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade ESL students. ESL students took this ESL class period in place of a reading strategies or elective course. Given that ESL students only took one 55-minute pull out ESL class period, the majority of their English language instruction took place in their content classes. To measure English language proficiency annually based on federal and state guidelines, ESL students took the WIDA ACCESS for English Language Learners 2.0 each spring semester until the student made a satisfactory score of 4.8 or higher. When ESL students achieved this score, they exited the ESL program, no longer received ESL services, and were considered Former English learners (FELs).

ESL students might also receive special education services and may or may not take the ESL class based on the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and scheduling constraints. For instance, if Maria were an ESL student and also received special education services, she would not have room in her schedule to take the ESL class period if her IEP specified that she take a class in basic reading and math because this would take the place of both her reading strategies and elective course. However, if Maria's IEP only stated she needed basic reading or math, she would still be able to take the ESL class period in place of reading strategies or an elective. Regardless of classification, ESL students or ESL students in special education most often did not receive an elective course (e.g., art, theater, choir, band) with their monolingual peers because of the ESL class period and/or their need to take a basic reading and/or math class.

### ***The Co-Student Participant: Leo***

Born in the US, Leo was a 15-year-old male student whose family was from Mexico. Leo enrolled in kindergarten at an elementary school in the same district when he was five years old, and at that time, he qualified for English language services. He frequently told Amanda that he knew very little Spanish and once remarked that he spoke 1% Spanish and 99% English to show that he did not identify as a Spanish-speaker. Since Leo identified an additional language (i.e., Spanish) on a home language survey at registration and he made a qualifying score on the WIDA initial language screener, he received English language services in the ESL program.

Leo attended Starcreek for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. When Leo first met Amanda, he attended the ESL class period two years prior to the study. Leo was the only student in this period because the administration wanted Amanda to teach Leo how to read. During this ESL “reading” class period, Leo selected books at his level (i.e., 2nd to early 3rd grade level) and read aloud to Amanda daily. Amanda would help Leo sound out words when he stumbled over them, and she taught him a combination of English phonics and comprehension strategies. Leo reported that Amanda helped him really learn to read and emphatically stated, “I had a blast in [her] class. I never wanted to miss a minute of [Amanda’s] class. [She] really made the class fun and was patient when I was learning to read” (Fieldnotes of a portion of a letter that Leo wrote to Amanda). Over the next two years, Leo still took the ESL class period but was not the only student in the class, because after his sixth grade year, his reading ability was at a comparable level to the other ESL students. In addition, Leo was very social, happy, and thrived in environments with his peers. Knowing that his reading had improved and wanting him to be around his peers, Amanda decided it was best for him to be in the ESL class period with her other students. During the study’s duration, Leo’s language proficiency was a 2.6 according to the WIDA Access for English language learners 2.0 at the beginning of his eighth-grade year, and 3.9 at the end of his eighth-grade year. Despite this tremendous growth, Leo’s score still qualified him for ESL services the next year, and since he had been an ESL student since kindergarten, Leo was considered a long-term ESL student, meaning that he had spent most of his schooling in the ESL program. In addition to his language level, Leo received special education services and had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) because he had a specific language disability in reading. This meant that Leo’s schedule included the four core classes, physical education, a basic reading class, and an ESL class taught by Amanda. He began receiving these special education services when he was in elementary school.

Despite Leo’s language and reading difficulties, Leo always wore a large smile and displayed an agreeable personality that enabled him to make friends easily. Leo’s diligent work ethic helped him compensate for his academic struggles, and his teachers, including Amanda, lauded Leo’s diligence and good-natured demeanor. Leo reported that his favorite subject was mathematics, and while he was not good at reading, he liked to read books that interested him. He enjoyed spending time with his friends and family and often reported to Amanda that he visited his cousins on the weekends.

Leo was purposefully selected because of the “uniqueness” of his case (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Leo’s case is unique because his participation as an outgrowth of teacher collaboration in a secondary mathematics context, where collaboration is typically not the norm. In addition, his learner profile as a secondary ESL student, is unique. First, Leo not only received language services, but he also received special education services and needed targeted assistance in reading. Second, Leo’s self-reported favorite and best subject was mathematics, the focal subject in this case. Lastly, Leo had a strong relationship with Amanda because he had known Amanda for three years based on Amanda’s perceptions and Leo’s opinion of Amanda’s class. These three years were critical in Leo’s language and literacy development in a secondary school, which is traditionally an underexplored focus in the research on teacher collaboration.

### ***The Collaborating Teacher: Carol***

Carol is the collaborating teacher and had 19 total years of teaching experience. Majoring in business in college, she obtained her teaching certification in mathematics through an alternative master’s program. She also had an Educational Specialist degree (EdS) in teacher leadership, was a National Board Certified Teacher for four years, and spoke English only. Even with two advanced degrees in education, Carol reported no training related to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students except for some activities in her EdS program. These activities were limited to what she described as empathy building exercises related to better understanding the

background of these linguistically diverse students. When asked about specific strategies to help ESL students access the mathematics content in her classroom, she reported, “Anything you do for an ESL student would benefit any other student; I don’t distinguish between the two, really” (Interview #1). Carol’s statement reflects that she did not have a nuanced understanding of how to teach the ESL students in her classroom because she lumped all students into one large category without differentiation. Her statement is also common among general education teachers who reduce language specific strategies to “just good teaching” (de Jong & Harper, 2005, p. 102).

Carol volunteered to participate by signing a consent form, and when Amanda asked her why she wanted to collaborate, Carol responded, “you understand the value of math. You’re not afraid of math. You’re willing to work with students in math, whereas so many people, parents and other teachers are like well I can’t do math” (Interview #1). While Carol’s response attested to Amanda’s strength in mathematics, she did not express a need to better teach the ESL students in her classroom. She only agreed because her previous professional relationship with Amanda evidenced the fact that Amanda knew enough about the eighth-grade standards to teach mathematics.

### ***The Collaborating ESL Teacher: Amanda***

Amanda is the collaborating ESL teacher, researcher, and first author. She had eight years of total teaching experiences all of which were at Starcreek. Amanda had two certifications in ELA for grades 6-12 and Spanish for grades P-12. The study’s state allowed for a teacher who had certifications in either ELA or a foreign language to teach ESL, of which Amanda held both certifications. In addition to having taught at Starcreek, she also was a graduate of Starcreek Middle School. Carol taught Amanda eighth grade mathematics at Starcreek when she was a student. When Amanda first began teaching, she taught ELA on the same academic team as Carol. Amanda perceived her professional relationship with Carol as solid given their multiple interactions and Amanda’s various teaching roles at Starcreek.

Amanda’s conversations with her principal about assuming the role of ESL teacher began during her second year of teaching even though Amanda did not assume this role until 2015. Even though she was excited about this new opportunity, she felt inadequate and unequipped to assume the position of ESL teacher when offered the position. These feelings led her to pursue her PhD degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching where she met Bedrettin, the second author, in 2015. Collaboration with content teachers became the topic of her dissertation research because she believed that such collaboration was the best pathway to provide equitable educational outcomes for ESL students in general education; thus, she engaged in collaboration with four content teachers who taught the largest number of ESL students in their classrooms and examined teacher and student learning outcomes as the outgrowth of this partnership.

### **Methods**

This qualitative case study emerged from a larger study (see Giles, 2019, for the dissertation study) to explore how teacher collaboration influenced teacher and ESL students’ learning outcomes in four collaboratively taught content classrooms. This current study focuses on how teacher collaboration influenced Leo’s participation in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom in the Southeastern US. The following research question guided this qualitative inquiry: How does teacher collaboration influence Leo’s participation in the collaboratively taught eighth-grade mathematics classroom in the Southeastern US?

### ***Data Collection Methods***

The data collection methods consisted of two collaborative cycles. Drawing on our earlier definition of teacher collaboration to include teachers' planning and teaching roles, we conceptualized the collaborative process to include elements of collaborative planning, teaching, reflection, and assessment (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2018). More specifically, we designed the two collaborative cycles to include semi-structured interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Roulston, 2010), two collaborative planning sessions (CPS) (Peercy et al., 2016), two collaborative teaching sessions (CTS) (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2022), two collaborative viewing sessions (CVS) (Steege, 2016), two reflective journals (RJ) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) authored by Carol, and classroom work samples or artifacts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) authored by Leo and other ESL students during the study's duration (See Table 1 for the sequence and date of each method and how many instances Leo's participation was discussed). Each element of the collaborative process was a method and had a specific purpose to help us analyze how teacher collaboration influenced Leo's participation. Each method and its purpose are described in the following paragraphs.

Qualitative researchers stress the importance of the interview as a data collection method because this tool affords analysis of participants' dialogue and feelings toward a particular subject (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Roulston, 2010). The first interview was semi-structured and used to analyze the collaborating teachers' expectation for collaboration and described Leo's typical participation, knowledge of content, and English language proficiency in the mathematics classroom prior to collaboration. The second interview in the study served to describe Carol's responses in the reflective journal, her learning outcomes, and expectations for the second collaborative cycle. The third interview served as the culminating data collection method and helped us explain Carol's learning opportunities and final remarks related to Leo's participation.

Table 1

*Data Collection Methods of the Collaborative Process*

Academic School Year: January 4, 2018 – May 23, 2018			
Data Method	Medium	Date	Instances for Leo
<b>First Collaborative Cycle</b>			
Interview #1	Audio-recorded	March 30, 2018	5
Collaborative Planning Session #1	Video-recorded	April 4, 2018	1
Collaborative Planning Session #2	Video-recorded	April 9, 2018	0
Co-Teaching Session #1	Fieldnotes	April 9, 2018	0
Work Sample #1	Artifact	April 9, 2018	NA
Collaborative Viewing Session #1	Audio-recorded	April 16, 2018	20
Reflective Journal #1	Journal entry	April 19, 2018	1
<b>Second Collaborative Cycle</b>			
Interview #2	Audio-recorded	April 19, 2018	1
Collaborative Planning Session #3	Video-recorded	April 30, 2018	1
Collaborative Planning Session #4	Video-recorded	May 2, 2018	1
Co-Teaching Session #2	Fieldnotes	May 3, 2018	1
Work Sample #2	Artifact	May 3, 2018	NA
Collaborative Viewing Session #2	Audio-recorded	May 14, 2018	14
Reflective Journal #2	Journal entry	May 17, 2018	2
Interview #3	Audio-recorded	May 18, 2018	1

The CPS served as a site to define the lesson objectives for each cycle, create the lesson materials if needed, and negotiate teaching responsibilities for the future collaborative teaching session. Qualitative researchers encourage the use of video recordings to create an atmosphere that does not disrupt the typical events of the participants in the research setting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The first CPS sought to define the first cycle's lesson objective. This lesson objective was for students to write numbers in standard and scientific notation. The first CPS session also served as a site to identify and/or create materials needed for the collaborative teaching session. Carol and Amanda identified a worksheet that Carol previously created as the primary material needed in the lesson. During the second CPS, Carol and Amanda discussed teaching roles. More specifically, Carol asked Amanda to serve as a classroom assistant in which she meant that Amanda needed to assist the ESL students in the classroom. During the third CPS, the collaborating teachers identified the lesson objective in the second cycle. This second lesson objective was for students to apply their understanding of geometric vocabulary of parallel lines cut by a transversal. In addition, Amanda and Carol stated that Amanda would create a vocabulary graphic organizer. Carol also wanted to utilize a kinesthetic activity where students applied their understanding of the vocabulary in an activity where each student used their feet to represent each angle. The collaborating teachers also wanted to use a coloring sheet that functioned as a formative assessment for students to show visually their understanding of the vocabulary words. During the fourth CPS, Carol and Amanda discussed that they would switch teaching roles for both teachers to present the vocabulary word, illustration, application, and a justification statement. They would both serve as facilitators during the kinesthetic activity and when students colored the angles on the coloring sheet.

The two CTS were video-recorded and served to record the words, behaviors and actions of the collaborating teachers and ESL students. The CTS showed whether Amanda and Carol enacted their expected teaching roles as discussed in the CPS. Like the video in the CPS, the video-recorded CTS helped us visualize, analyze, and relive the events of the CTS in a way that did not make difficult the routine teaching practice of the collaborative teachers (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The teaching model in the first CTS was defined as "One Leads, and One Teaches on Purpose" (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2018, p. 58). In this way, Carol instructed the lesson on writing numbers in scientific and standard notation, while Amanda purposefully assisted Leo and other ESL students as they worked on the assignment. There were instances where Amanda answered questions and retaught material to assist the ESL students in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom. The teaching model in the second CTS was "Two Teach the Same Content" (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2018, p. 76). Carol and Amanda switched between teaching roles to teach students the geometric vocabulary and facilitate students' application of the vocabulary on the kinesthetic activity and the coloring sheet.

The work samples served as classroom artifacts and helped to evidence ESL students' participation during the CTS. Put simply, the work samples showed what Leo and the other ESL students were thinking and doing during the CTS, thereby functioning as a formative assessment of ESL students' participation and learning. The work samples in the first collaborative cycle included guided notes and practice problems where students wrote numbers in both standard and scientific notations. The work samples in the second cycle included vocabulary note-taking graphic organizer and a coloring sheet.

The purpose of the two CVS was for teacher reflection, which is a crucial component of teaching and learning (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2018; Steeg, 2016). Teachers can see their pedagogical practice in action and make decisions to improve their teaching. Following each CTS, Carol and Amanda watched the CTS together, reflected on their collaborative teaching practices, and commented on Leo's and the other ESL students' participation. The CVS offered a unique opportunity for the teachers to see the ESL students' participation in action, which often provided an alternative perspective of the student's participation.

Lastly, the RJs served to document Carol's thoughts on the collaborative process, her own learning outcomes, and her perceptions of Leo's and the other ESL students' participation. This was the only method that Carol separately completed following the CVS. Dove and Honigsfeld



(2018) stress the importance of reflection because of its possibility for improved pedagogical practices and changes to better assess and serve ESL students in the collaborative classroom. As a method to analyze Leo's participation, Carol briefly summarized in one or two paragraphs how collaboration influenced Leo's participation. Carol wrote two RJs during the collaborative process.

### ***The Collaborative Cycles***

In general, the first collaborative cycle began with an interview that discussed the lesson objective for the first CTS and to ascertain Leo's typical participation and expectations for participation during the first cycle. After this interview, Carol and Amanda planned the lesson together in a CPS and then taught the lesson together in a CTS. Following this CTS, Amanda and Carol watched the CTS together reflecting on their pedagogical practices and Leo's participation. The first cycle concluded with a RJ authored by Carol and a second interview to discuss emerging teacher and student learning outcomes and state the expectation for the second lesson in the second cycle. During this first cycle, Carol stated that she wanted to teach scientific notation, and more directly, she wanted students to have a conceptual understanding of scientific notation and be able to write numbers in standard and scientific notation (e.g., The number 4500 is written in standard form;  $4.5 \times 10^3$  is written in scientific notation). For student participation, she wanted ESL students to pay attention to instruction, complete the notes page, and write numbers in both scientific and standard forms based on their classroom work sample. Regarding Leo, his successful participation consisted of completing the note taking worksheet with the scientific notation practice problems with the assistance of Amanda.

The methods in the second cycle continued similarly as the first cycle with the addition of a second lesson based on the content and language standards. The second collaborative cycle concluded with an interview and RJ where Carol discussed her refined understandings of learning to work with culturally and linguistically students as well as her stated impressions of Leo's participation during the entire collaborative process. During the second cycle, the collaborative lesson objective was teaching students vocabulary related to parallel lines cut by a transversal. After learning the vocabulary, students needed to be able to apply this vocabulary knowledge to determine the value of missing angles (e.g., congruent, supplementary, and complementary) in a transversal. The expectation for student participation was to complete the guided notes, color code the transversal according to the vocabulary, and participate in a kinesthetic dance activity to apply students' understanding of the geometric vocabulary.

### ***Data Analysis***

We used the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006) to answer how teacher collaboration influenced Leo's participation in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom. Our analytic methods consisted of three coding cycles: initial, focused, and axial coding cycles. We read through the data and sifted through the data only looking for information pertaining to the research question. That is, we delineated our focus on data from Leo's participation in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom only. During the initial coding cycle, we relied on in vivo and descriptive codes to emphasize the dialogue of the participants in collaboration. For example, Carol stated that Leo "wants to learn, and he's doing everything he can to keep up" (Interview #1). We coded this line as "wants to learn" as the in vivo code during the initial coding cycle and "hard-working student" as the descriptive code. These codes were important to ascertain the analytic gist of the line and/or paragraph. During the focused coding cycle, we categorized our initial codes. Sample focused codes included "typical participation," "expectations for participation," "Leo's actions during the co-teaching session," and a "notable difference in Leo's participation. Lastly, we weaved the focused codes together to tell how teacher

collaboration impacted Leo's story of participation in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom.

## Findings

The findings showed that teacher collaboration was a generative space that worked toward providing Leo with increased participatory opportunities in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom. In the first collaborative cycle, Leo had an opportunity to focus on his own learning outcomes without having to tend to the needs of his friend and other ESL student in the first co-teaching session. He also had the opportunity when needed to receive assistance from Amanda who primarily focused on Leo's and the other ESL students' learning outcomes. During the second cycle, Amanda encouraged Carol to create a more interactive lesson, and this lesson design contributed to Leo's increased confidence and participation. Based on our research question, this section will begin with explaining Leo's participation in the first cycle. Following this information, we will move to the second cycle and show how the interactive lesson design worked to increase Leo's participation in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom.

### *Leo's Participation in the First Cycle*

At the beginning of the first cycle, Leo was described as quiet, friendly, and hard-working with a mathematical ability slightly below grade level (Interview #1). His slightly below grade level mathematical ability was attributed to his lack of basic understanding of fractions. When fractions were not involved and/or Leo could use a calculator to perform basic functions, he was "good" in mathematics. This is important because neither lesson in either cycle asked students to perform mathematical operations with fractions, and when needed, students could use a calculator. Carol stated that her expectation for Leo during the first cycle was the following:

*He needs more confidence in what he's doing because I really think he's pretty good but he lacks confidence and the best way to give them confidence is to get them successful in something, and sometimes you gotta go back a few levels to get there. (Interview #1)*

Carol's statement shows that she hoped that Leo displayed "confidence" as an outgrowth of the collaborative cycle. Carol meant that Leo was "quiet" in class and would not ask a question in a whole class discussion because of his timid personality. She also recognized that Leo had numerical and mathematical sense, although the extent to Leo's content knowledge was vague because Carol used the words, "pretty good." While his knowledge of mathematics was "pretty good," it is likely that she did not believe Leo performed at an eighth-grade level because she believed we had to "go back a few levels" for Leo to be "successful." To Carol, Leo's confidence in the first cycle would be evidenced by asking questions and/or receiving assistance from Amanda and/or Carol.

Leo's friend, Juan, was an ESL student in the collaboratively taught mathematics classroom. Carol reported that Leo's friendly personality and willingness to assist Juan often prevented Leo from full participation in the mathematical classroom because he sat next to Juan and was often observed assisting Juan. Carol stated that if Amanda assisted Juan, then Leo might display more confidence because he would not feel as if he had to help Juan (CPS #1). With Amanda in the classroom, she could help Juan, and Leo could concentrate on his own mathematical outcomes.

In the first co-teaching session, Leo looked at the board while Carol reviewed basic powers of ten, which served as an activity to activate students' background knowledge needed to understand scientific notation. In addition to looking at the board, Leo also worked on the practice problems

for this review as Carol reviewed powers of ten. Leo completed the guided notes as Carol transitioned to deliver the lecture on scientific notation (Please see Figure 1 for Leo's guided notes). Carol used the projector to model how she wanted students to complete the guided notes. In looking at Leo's guided notes (see Figure 1), Leo followed Carol's instruction and completed the guide with minimal errors that did not impede Leo's understanding of the mathematical objective. For example, Leo wrote "protive" to complete the blank, which meant that scientific notation was written as a "product" of two numbers. While Leo did not write the correct word, he kept up with Carol's instruction by filling in the blank and worked out the practice problems. Carol reported that she "love[d] the co-teaching, and when [Amanda] was in here. I think the difference when I look at their work is encouraging...Leo to copy down more of what I'm doing (CVS #1). Carol's words show that she noticed a "difference" in Leo's participation because Amanda was in the classroom to ensure that Leo had all the notes. She believed Leo was "copying more of what [she's] doing, signifying that Leo had the guided notes completed because Amanda was a co-teacher in the classroom. Put another way, Leo might not have all the notes if Carol and Amanda had not decided to co-teach this lesson. While Leo did complete the guided notes, he did not use his pencil to visually show the decimal point moving for scientific notation. Later Carol commented that "it just to me helps" to have this decimal visualization so that Leo and other students would be able to use this visualization to identify the correct number of decimal places. While Leo did not show the number of decimal spaces, he did complete the guided notes and the problems that went along with the notes.

<b>SCIENTIFIC NOTATION</b>	
<b>SCIENTIFIC NOTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scientific notation is a shorthand way of writing really <u>big</u> or really <u>small</u> numbers.</li> <li>Scientific notation is written as a <u>protive</u> of two numbers:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The first number must be between <u>1</u> and <u>10</u> (less than 10)</li> <li>-The second number must be a _____ of 10</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>CONVERTING STANDARD TO SCIENTIFIC</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a number between <u>1</u> and <u>10</u> by moving the decimal.</li> <li>Count the number of times that you moved the decimal. This number will be your <u>power</u> of 10.</li> <li>If your number is greater than one, the exponent will be <u>positive</u>.</li> <li>If your number is less than one (like a decimal), the exponent will be <u>negative</u>.</li> </ol>

Figure 1. Leo's Guided notes in the Collaboratively Taught Mathematics Classroom

Regarding the practice problems on the guided notes, Leo showed that he understood how to write numbers in scientific and standard notations. While Carol worked out one example, she allowed students to work some of the problems independently to ensure students' understanding. Moreover, following the guided notes, students worked on problems for extra practice. Students had to finish the practice problems for homework if they did not finish in class. Leo was able to finish six problems in class and finished the rest for homework. In analyzing Leo's practice problems, Carol noted that "he's got it all" (CVS #1), which simply meant that Leo completed the assigned homework task. In discussing his mathematical understanding of writing numbers in scientific and standard notations, Amanda noted that he understood how to use positive and negative exponents because he wrote the numbers correctly on the practice problems. While Leo showed that he had a basic understanding of writing in scientific and standard notations, he made

some errors on the homework problems (e.g., #24). To exemplify this error, Leo did not move the decimal correctly to have a number between 1 and 10 (See Figure 2 for a section of Leo's practice problems). The next instructional step for Leo was to reteach that the first factor in the product had to be a number between 1 and 10. Carol stated that this was a "hard" concept, and this practice was only the "beginning," signifying that Leo satisfactorily met her expectation for mastery and participation at this stage in the learning objective. In Amanda and Carol's view, assigning practice problems for homework was intended as a formative assessment to identify areas that needed to be clarified, and accordingly, Carol planned to reinforce this important rule about the first factor during the next day's activity.

Moreover, Carol overall believed that teacher collaboration influenced Leo's participation in a positive way because Leo was "especially focused with [Amanda] in the room. He also didn't feel a need to help Juan (which he often does)" (RJ #1). With Amanda as a co-teacher, Leo did not have to assist Juan in learning how to write numbers in scientific and standard notations because he knew that Amanda would help Juan. As such, Leo attended to his own learning outcomes without concerning himself with his friend. In this co-teaching session, Amanda's role in co-teaching was that of a classroom assistant helping both Leo, Juan, and other students in the classroom. As noted previously, Carol's stated expectation at the beginning of the process was for Amanda to assist Leo (CPS #1 and CPS #2), and Carol reported that this cycle was enjoyable because Amanda provided targeted assistance to students in the classroom to the point where this assistance made a noticeable difference in the participation of Leo and the other students.

**Write each number in scientific notation.**

17) $0.069 \times 10^5$ 6900	18) $8.5 \cdot 10^{-1}$ 8510
19) $0.0000969$ $9.69 \times 10^{-5}$	20) $5.3 \cdot 10^{-1}$ 5310
21) 780000 $7.8 \times 10^5$	22) 790000 $7.9 \times 10^5$
23) $33 \times 10^{-3}$ 0.033	24) 7.6 $76 \times 10^{-1}$

Figure 2. Leo's Homework Practice Problems in the Co-Taught Mathematics Classroom

Aside from asking Amanda questions during the co-teaching session, Leo did not ask questions in a whole group setting because Carol never called on Leo. Even though Amanda knew she met Carol's expectation for collaboration as a teaching assistant, Amanda knew that she had to take a larger role in the planning and possibly teaching the lesson in the next cycle if Leo was going to have increased participatory opportunities. Carol even stated that Amanda did not "[give] input on this one," meaning that Amanda did not help create the lesson activity on scientific notation. Moving forward, Amanda resolved to "create parts of the activity so that ESL students would have more opportunities to participate" (Fieldnotes, April 20, 2018). Amanda's statement reveals her own internal tension that she believed she needed to take a stronger role in planning the lesson activity to work toward more participatory learning outcomes for Leo and the other ESL students.

### Leo's Increased Participation in the Second Cycle

In the next cycle, teacher collaboration increased Leo's participation because the interactive lesson design provided him and other students more opportunities to participate. This interactive lesson activity began with guided notes that scaffolded students' ability to write justification statements to show the angle relationships of parallel lines when cut by a transversal. In the CPS #4, Carol and Amanda agreed to alternate teaching roles to provide opportunities for students to complete the guided notes. For example, on Amanda's notes during this planning session, she placed an asterisk on her assigned teaching role (See Figure 3 for an excerpt of the lesson activity of Amanda's notes). As Figure 3 illustrates, Amanda taught students about vertical angles, while Carol taught students about corresponding angles. The last column in Figure 3 asked students to write justification statements, and the activity is scaffolded so that students write more of the justification statement independently.

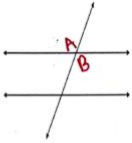
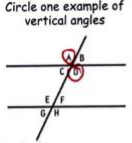
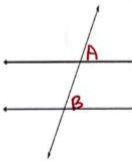
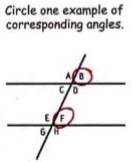
<p>* <b>Vertical Angles</b></p> <p>Two angles whose sides form <u>opposite</u> rays.</p>		<p>Circle one example of vertical angles</p> 	<p>Angles <u>A</u> and <u>D</u> are congruent because they are <u>vertical</u> angles.</p>
<p><b>Corresponding Angles</b></p> <p>Two angles that lie on the <u>same</u> side of the transversal in corresponding or similar positions.</p>		<p>Circle one example of corresponding angles.</p> 	<p>Angles <u>B</u> and <u>F</u> are congruent because they are <u>corresponding</u> angles.</p>

Figure 3. Amanda's Notes from CPS #4

During the co-teaching session, for example, Amanda instructed students in the mathematics classroom:

**Amanda:** Vertical angles are opposite from one another. The key word here is opposite [Amanda wrote "opposite" on the blank line]. In the picture here, vertical angles make a cross [As Amanda spoke, she used her fingers to show the cross]. So, I can write angle A and angle B are congruent because they are vertical angles [Amanda wrote on the guided notes]. Let's look at the next diagram. Who can give me an example of vertical angles? Leo, can you help me identify an example of a vertical angle in this diagram?

**Leo:** Angles C and B.

**Amanda:** That's right. That's one example. Who can give me another example? [Another student raises his hand].

**Another Student:** Angles A and D.

**Amanda:** That's right. We can continue on to the bottom and say that angles E and H are vertical angles as well as F and G. Is that right?

***Students nod their heads and some say yes.***

**Amanda:** When we write our justification statement, we can write about vertical angles because we know they are congruent. Remember congruent is just a fancy word that means the same. So here, I can write Angles A and D are congruent because they are vertical angles [Amanda filled in the guided notes as she talked]. Can anyone give me another example of a justification statement? [Leo raised his hand] Okay, Leo?

**Leo:** Angles C and B are congruent because they are vertical angles.

**Amanda:** That's right. Good job. [Carol began talking about corresponding angles] [CTS #2]

This excerpt highlights how Amanda gave students more opportunities to participate as she instructed the lesson. She invited Leo specifically to participate by asking him to assist her with the explanation during the whole-group discussion. Leo accepted this opportunity and appropriately identified one possible vertical angle. Afterwards, another student who is not an ESL student also took advantage of this opportunity. This is significant because Amanda designed and then instructed the lesson in such a way to create opportunities of participation, and more directly, specific opportunities of success participation, which in the instance related to correctly identifying a vertical angle. Leo continued to accept more participatory opportunities by offering to read/say aloud his justification statement that was different from Amanda's. In this way, Leo displayed confidence by participating in the whole-group discussion, which was Carol's expectation for Leo's participation. In this way, Leo was specifically afforded successful participatory opportunities.

By stopping to allow students to speak during the lesson, Amanda not only afforded them opportunities, but she also formatively assessed students' understanding of angle relationships on a transversal and used this to guide her instruction of the lesson. The guided notes and the scaffolded approach served as a discussion guide, which could have also been the catalyst that allowed ESL students and other students to participate. Rather than lecturing about angle relationships, Amanda turned the activity into a guided discussion where all students, including ESL students, could participate successfully in the collaboratively taught classroom. Carol also adopted Amanda's approach, and while Carol's approach was not as interactive, she did stop and allow students to share their justification statements.

Following this activity, students played a Kahoot game to reinforce their understanding of angle relationships. Afterwards, as an exit slip, students used their knowledge of angle relationships to color these relationships on a transversal. During the next day of instruction, Carol and Amanda placed mini transversals around the perimeter of the classroom, and as a kinesthetic activity with music, students had to show their knowledge of angle relationships by moving their feet appropriately. In reflecting on Leo's participation during the kinesthetic activity, Carol stated that "Leo has got it. He's figured it out. You know, once [students] had corresponding, every time it came up [they] could go to the same one. Or, they could go to different ones" (CVS #2). Carol meant that Leo had mastered the lesson objective because he moved appropriately when a new angle was called, which in this case was corresponding angles. Carol also raised a good point that this activity enabled students' multiple possibilities to arrive at the correct angle relationship. Put simply, there was more than one possible corresponding angle on the transversal so students could show their understanding in multiple ways, which ultimately afforded more opportunities to participate. Carol credited students' increased participation to the kinesthetic activity (CVS #2). More specific to Leo's participation, she noted that "he was very attentive during explanations...I think he likes the support of a friendly face in the room" (RJ #2). In this instance, Carol noticed

Leo's increased attention during the second co-teaching session and credited his participation to Amanda being a co-teacher. Leo might not have had as many opportunities to participate, and in this way, Amanda in collaboration with Carol worked to provide more participatory opportunities in the collaboratively taught classroom.

## Discussion

The findings showed how Amanda's collaboration with Carol worked to provide more opportunities for participation in the collaboratively taught classroom. By the second collaborative cycle, Leo displayed confidence by participation in a whole group discussion about angle relationships on a transversal. Amanda invited Leo into the conversation by calling on him to provide an answer, and Leo accepted this opportunity and continued to participate in the discussion following this initial question.

Such findings confirm the arguments in earlier studies that the teacher is the most pivotal influence on student participation (Duff, 2001; Kayi-Aydar, 2014; Martin-Beltrán, 2010; Miller, 2000; Pappamihiel, 2002; Yoon, 2008). Amanda's collaboration with Carol led to the creation of an interactive lesson design that created more opportunities for discussion in the classroom. While maintaining the academic rigor of the mathematics standard, Amanda scaffolded her instructional approach, which allowed ESL students to participate without fear of not knowing the correct answer. Moreover, the kinesthetic lesson design afforded ESL students to move their feet to show their knowledge of angle relationships. When given opportunities to participate in a safe environment, Leo displayed confidence and showed his knowledge and application of the lesson objective.

The findings also confirmed earlier work that proved that collaborating teachers must work toward a shared goal centered on student learning outcomes (Martin-Beltrán & Peercy, 2014). At the beginning of the collaborative process, Carol and Amanda developed a shared understanding and/or expectation for collaboration for each ESL student. In Leo's case, she wanted him to demonstrate confidence by answering aloud in class. Leo's work samples and participation attest to his confidence that will most likely continue to grow as he is afforded opportunities to participate. The findings also argue the socially constructed nature of student participation (Harklau, 2000; Kayi-Aydar, 2014). Leo's participation depended on the collaborating teachers' perspectives of participation for each student constructed in teacher collaboration. The social nature of participation means that teachers will continue to grapple with what counts as student participation, which will be negotiated as teachers work toward increased student participation in the collaboratively taught classroom.

Teacher collaboration also means that teachers will engage in multiple, sometimes different, and varying degrees of planning and teaching roles while engaged in collaboration. While earlier studies commented on the problematic role of a classroom assistant (Ahmed Hersi, Horan, & Lewis, 2016; Arkoudis, 2003; Creese, 2002; McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010), this study showed how Amanda enacted agency to take a stronger role during the second collaborative cycle. Amanda's agency is complemented by her strong relationships with teachers, students, administrators while serving as an ESL teacher at Starcreek. Without these strong relationships and knowledge of the sociocultural context, Amanda would not have been able to assume such a pivotal planning and teaching role at Starcreek. This highlights the importance of strong relationships when teachers choose to collaborate. The actual teaching role is not always what is most important; instead, it is what those teaching roles allow the teacher to do that is most important. In this case, Amanda's classroom assistant role allowed her to focus only on Leo and the other ESL students in the classroom, which in turn, created more opportunities for Leo

during the first cycle because he did not have to worry about his friend. Moving into the second cycle, Amanda learned from and sought to take a stronger role, which was allowed because of her strong relationships with Carol and students.

### Future Research Directions

In conclusion, we examined the impact of teacher collaboration on one student in one collaboratively taught classroom. In working to provide learning outcomes for ESL students, we call for additional content and ESL teachers working in collaboration. Similarly, the impact of collaboration on more students is needed to attest to the validity of these findings. To build and sustain collaborative partnerships, teachers must continue to experiment with planning and teaching roles over a sustained period of time. This case study is limited to one academic semester. Collaborating teachers might need longer periods of time to develop professional relationships and to determine the appropriate lesson activities that might positively influence student participation. Studies of longer duration create more opportunities to highlight the voices of ESL students as their teachers engage in collaboration. Teacher collaboration can yield a generative partnership as teachers work together to create equitable and inclusive learning spaces for ESL students in secondary settings.

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