



Teacher Collaboration in English Language Teaching (ELT) Research: A Systematic Review

İngilizce Dil Öğretiminde Öğretmen İş Birliği: Bir Sistematik Derlem

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Abstract

One of the recent concerns in English language teaching (ELT) is collaborating with other stakeholders to facilitate the language teaching process. With this in mind, this systematic review attempted to uncover the most recent national and international research focusing on the issue of collaboration in the area of ELT. A total of 40 studies on this issue were reviewed in terms of design, setting and population, sample, type of collaboration, data collection instruments, findings, and implications. Most of the studies, 26 of them, were qualitative-based studies, while eight were quantitative, and six were mixed. The majority of the research was done in English as a foreign language (EFL) context and primarily focused on EFL teachers and students as the population and sample, respectively. Collaboration was regarded as joint work in which various stakeholders, including language teachers, content teachers, other school staff, and researchers, tried to promote the ELT process. This joint initiative was seen in different forms, such as coaching, co-teaching, and team teaching. At the end of the content analysis made via MaxQda (2022) software, the review concluded that collaboration can influence the nature and scope of ELT in a wide range of positive ways, including extending perspectives, reaching more knowledge, functioning as a social and interactive mediator, and getting support to devise, practice, and revise language-related processes. However, lack of administrative support and preparation, time and material limits, and unwillingness to participate were identified as the major ELT collaboration problems. Finally, the review

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included further implications, especially focusing on the growing impact of technology on collaborative ELT practices to foster future research.

Keywords: Collaboration, ELT, Systematic review, professional development, teacher collaboration, English language

Öz

İngilizce dil öğretiminde (ELT) son zamanlarda öne çıkan konulardan biri, dil öğretim sürecini kolaylaştırmak için diğer paydaşlarla iş birliği yapmaktır. Bu kapsamda bu sistematik derlem, ELT alanında iş birliği konusuna odaklanan en son ulusal ve uluslararası araştırmaları ortaya çıkarmaya çalışmıştır. Bu konudaki toplam 40 çalışma, araştırma deseni, ortam ve evren, örneklem grubu, iş birliği türü, veri toplama araçları, bulgular ve çıkarımlar açısından incelenmiştir. Çalışmaların 26'sı nitel, sekizi nicel ve altısı karma çalışmalardır. Araştırmaların çoğunluğu yabancı dil olarak İngilizce (EFL) bağlamında yapılmış ve sırasıyla evren ve örneklem olarak EFL öğretmenleri ve öğrencilerine odaklanmıştır. İş birliği, dil öğretmenleri, içerik öğretmenleri, diğer okul personeli ve araştırmacılar da dahil olmak üzere çeşitli paydaşların dil öğretim sürecini teşvik etmeye çalıştığı ortak çalışma olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu ortak girişim, çalışmalarda koçluk, birlikte öğretim ve takım öğretimi gibi farklı şekillerde görülmüştür. MaxQda (2022) yazılımı aracılığıyla yapılan içerik analizi sonucunda iş birliğinin, perspektifleri genişletmek, daha fazla bilgiye ulaşmak, sosyal ve etkileşimli bir arabulucu olarak işlev görmek ve dille ilgili süreçleri tasarlamak, uygulamak ve gözden geçirmek için destek almak gibi çok çeşitli olumlu açılardan İngilizce dil öğretim sürecinin doğasını ve kapsamını etkileyebileceği sonucuna varılmıştır. Bununla birlikte, idari destek ve hazırlık eksikliği, zaman ve maddi sınırlamalar ve iş birliğine katılım konusundaki isteksizlik, İngilizce dil öğretiminde iş birliğinin başlıca sorunları olarak belirlenmiştir. Son olarak bu derlem çalışması, sonraki çalışmaları desteklemek amacıyla özellikle teknolojinin iş birliğine dayalı dil öğretim süreçlerine olan etkisini de içeren çıkarımlara yer vermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş birliği, İngilizce dil öğretimi, sistematik derleme, mesleki gelişim, öğretmen iş birliği, İngilizce

1. Introduction

Since learning, teaching, and working in a collaborative environment offer alternative answers to practical problems and pave the path for better academic results, collaboration has

caught greater attention from educational research (Shoffner & Watcher Morris, 2010). Especially for teaching, this environment functions as a social and collaborative setting where “joint work” appears as a clear indicator for professional development inside learning communities (Weedle, 2022, p.12). Teachers’ incorporation into this “collaborative community of practice” also boosts their traits including the self, reflectivity, and collective thinking (Asaoka et al., 2020, p.3805). Besides these personal and professional gains, participation in collaborative actions causes teachers to extend their mindfulness, deepen their knowledge, and share their viewpoints with other teachers (Wu & Yu, 2017, p.99). Further, since it is one of the current global skills that each member of the educational community should have, collaboration now is realized beyond geographical borders thanks to technology and strengthens intercultural awareness (Garcia-Martinez et al. (2022). Hence, it plays a pivotal role in the construction and acceleration of mutual and communal relations in educational contexts.

Recent studies have reached a consensus on the positive impacts of collaborative actions in teaching contexts. To illustrate, Vangrieken and her colleagues (2015) conducted a review study focusing on the studies of collaboration and found that collaboration has several pros for educational contexts. Student-based (higher academic accomplishments), teacher-based (raised professional and individual advancements), and school-based aspects (a more productive and tranquil working culture) were considered positive sides of teacher collaboration. Far more importantly, the study shed light on two major concerns of the issue of collaboration, namely its multi-terminological and challenging nature. First, “learning team,” “professional community,” “learning community,” and “friend group” were revealed as interchangeably used terms to describe the collaboration between teachers (p.26). One might argue that this diversity not only shows the different descriptive perspectives towards the nature of collaboration but also signals the practical discrepancies occurring as a result of this diversity. Moreover, conflicts and tensions, workload, and organizational problems were revealed in the process of collaboration, which requires trying to construct a well-organized format to reach collaborative goals. Given that the study also shows how different interactional and hierarchical positions affect the scope of collaboration in educational contexts, teacher collaboration seems to be highly influenced by specific individual and contextual factors. Vo and Allen’s (2022) recent review study also supports this view by emphasizing that those factors have the potential to change the attributes of teacher collaboration. Likewise, De Jong et al.’s review (2022) emphasizes the significance of further research on widening the comprehension of collaboration in different contextual atmospheres and with diverse teacher groups from different cultures.

More specifically, teacher collaboration has gained recent significance in the field of second language teaching. The rising concern of sociocultural, contextual, and interactional aspects of this field has also accelerated the question of how collaboration can enhance language-related abilities (Cogmin, 2013; Fang, 2010; Loewen & Sato, 2018). Supporting this attention, recent studies have demonstrated that collaboration between language and content teachers improved students' both language and content knowledge; and more significantly positively influenced their conversational skills (Giles & Yazan, 2019; Martin-Beltran & Madigan, 2014; Shoffner & Watcher Morris, 2010). Additionally, Torshizi (2018) emphasized that action research-based studies covering researcher-teacher collaboration, which is still a broad area to investigate in classroom-based TESOL research, might offer practical solutions by revealing specific classroom elements. The related literature has also revealed that collaborative language teaching can positively impact teachers' social and relational outcomes (Shoffner & Watcher Morris, 2010). Besides the societal attributes, this collaborative process can also influence linguistic, contextual, and purposeful actions in language classrooms (Park, 2014). Those language-oriented actions may extend from discussing how to encounter students' common language learning needs to building appropriate course materials and teaching currently-designed courses in teams (Trent, 2010). With this in mind, the study assumes that the issue of collaboration, in addition to the recent foci, will also take paramount importance, especially in the field of ELT, as it covers both a multifaceted nature and an extensive scope covering distinctive practical and pedagogical features.

In light of the above-mentioned points, two key interpretations related to teacher collaboration surface. First, teacher collaboration is one of the educational research's major and current concerns; however, as the earlier study established a consensus, more research is necessary to fully understand collaboration's multidimensional and particular elements of the social and contextual characteristics of each community. The revision of the collaboration, especially in the area of ELT (English Language Teaching), is the second premise, which serves as the fundamental motivation for the justification of this review research. By utilizing the strength of intra- and inter-collaboration, teachers may address any possible challenges that may arise while teaching and learning English and improve the effectiveness of ELT. On the other hand, according to the author's best knowledge, there is no specific review covering how the nature and scope of teacher collaboration in ELT research have been shaped in light of recent educational perspectives. With this in mind, the present study aimed to review the most recent research on how collaboration works in ELT settings to achieve two main goals: to bring

awareness again to the importance of collaborative actions in English language learning and to encourage further research by revealing the current trend in this area.

1.1. Research questions

The goal of this systematic review is to examine the topic of collaboration in ELT research by locating the studies carried out during the previous five years. The main motivation behind this goal is to show the power and significance of collaboration in teaching and learning English inside and outside the classroom context, which is expected to be the basis for further research in terms of its nature and scope in the field. At this point, the study attempted to answer the research questions listed below.

- a) What are the main concerns of collaboration in ELT regarding the years 2018-2022?
- b) What are the methodological aspects (research design, sample, and data collection and analysis tools) in the research articles focused on ELT teacher collaboration and published between the years of 2018 and 2022?
- c) What are the general findings and implications of those studies?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

The study has a systematic review design. The rationale of a systematic review stems from its “replicable, scientific, and transparent” process, which reveals prior works on a given study topic clearly and methodically (Bryman, 2012, p.102). This sort of review allows researchers to reduce the danger of bias and maximize the probability of delivering a broad overview of the literature to interested researchers since it has a defined design, from establishing themes and questions to assessing and analyzing relevant studies. In this study, the researcher tried to adhere to the highest norms of transparency and systematicity of methodical reviews by explicitly describing each stage of the review procedure. As a result, the successive steps revealed in Figure 1 were considered to shape the systematic procedure.

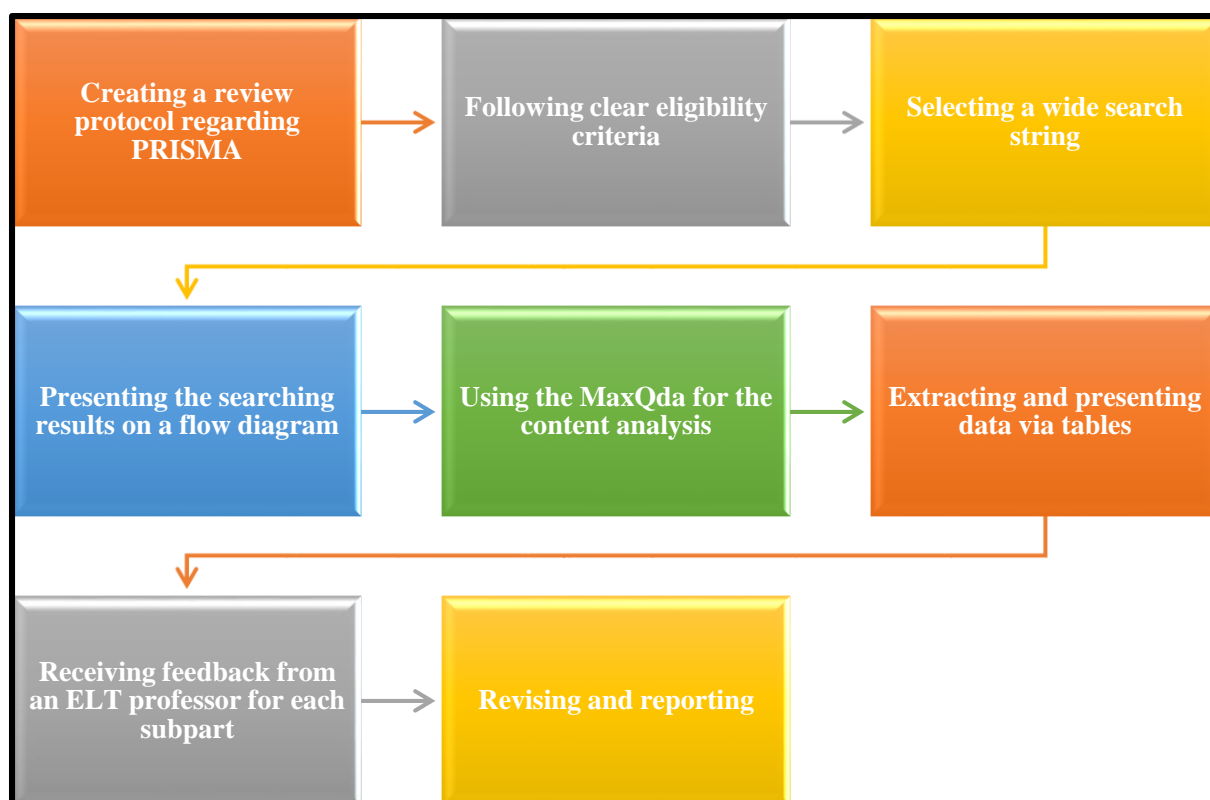


Figure 1: The steps of the systematic procedure

3. Data Collection and Analysis

Before gathering data by searching research papers via three databases, the researcher received feedback from the ELT professor to set certain qualifying criteria. Moreover, he looked at prior review studies to clarify the steps and lay the groundwork for discussions. After the search, the collected data were analyzed using the content analysis technique, which was used to analyze documents or texts in a systematic and replicable manner in terms of categories (Bryman, 2012, p. 209). The MaxQda (2022) software program was used to define theme-related data and find out more accurate classifications through deep screen reading. To raise reliability and validity, the data collection procedure and findings were presented and discussed in light of the previous review studies. Finally, to make sure of the themes' accuracy, feedback was taken from both the ELT professor and two colleagues of the researcher.

3.1. Eligibility criteria

The first eligibility requirement for the study was to concentrate on searching the studies of the recent five years, namely the years between 2018 and 2022 since it intended to analyze current research connected to teacher cooperation in the field of ELT. The second criterion was related to study quality; the study attempted to discover research publications that were indexed

in three famous databases, namely Web of Science (WOS), Education and Research Information Center (ERIC), and Scopus. The book covers and chapters, reviews, conference articles, and unpublished research (Master's and Doctoral Thesis studies) were not included in this review. Because research in the field of ELT was given priority, the review only covered studies related to the English language. The last inclusive criterion was about the province of open access to research articles in the databases.

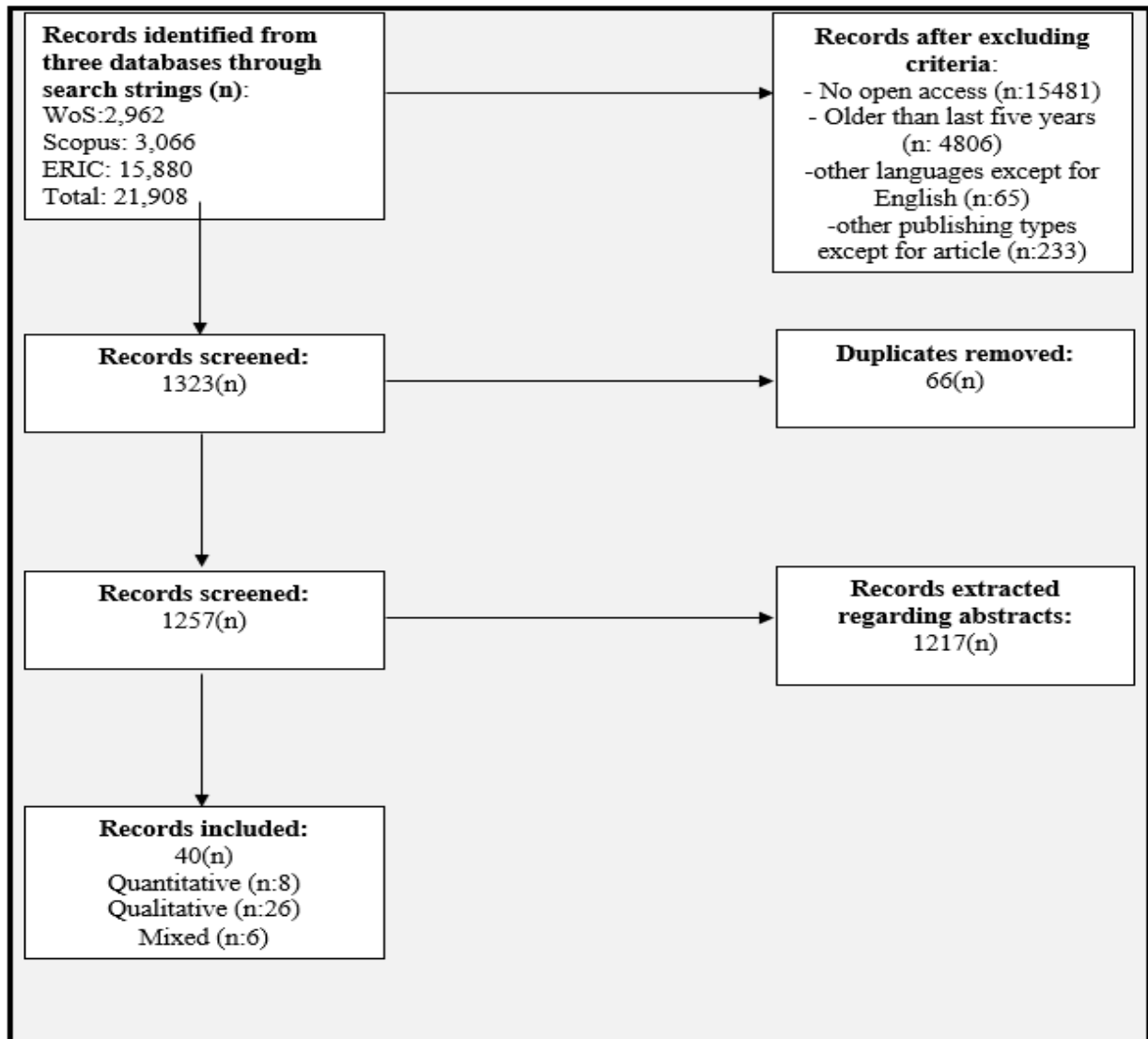


Figure 2: Flowchart diagram of the database search adapted from PRISMA guidelines

The search string consisted of 14 word combinations covering “teacher collaboration” OR “teacher collaboration in ELT research” OR “teacher groups” OR “teacher teams” OR “lecturer teams” OR “cooperation teachers” OR “cooperation lecturers” OR “EFL teacher collaboration” OR “teacher collaboration in professional development” OR “English teacher

communication” OR “co-teaching” OR “teacher-student collaboration” OR “teacher-teacher collaboration” and OR “researcher-teacher collaboration.” At the end of the “title” search string and other selection criteria, 40 research articles were involved in this study. There were 26 qualitative studies, eight quantitative studies, and six mixed-method studies in the articles. Figure 2 on the previous page shows the steps of how the last digit was reached. During this process, PRISMA guidelines were taken into consideration to minimize the risk of bias and maximize eligibility (Harris et al., 2019).

3.2. Data extraction

The data gathered from the selected studies presented in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 in the Appendix part were categorized according to the study methodology. In addition, the author's name and year of publication, research design, context and population, sample, data collection instruments, collaboration type focused on the studies, key findings, and implications for future research were revealed in these tables to improve clarity and comprehension.

4. Results

4.1. Research Design

There were 26 qualitative, eight quantitative, and six mixed-method studies concentrating on teacher cooperation in ELT research among the 40 research papers included. Because of the nature of their research, quantitative studies attempted to investigate the impact of cooperation on students' academic outcomes (Boland et al., 2019; Ramankulov et al., 2019; Yan, 2019; Yeganehpour & Zarfsaz, 2019) and teachers' personal and professional lives (Tarwiyah et al., 2018; Wexler et al., 2019). Two of them (Göktürk-Salam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Tuttle et al., 2021) also used the quantitative format to reveal teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward collaboration. On the other hand, qualitative studies mostly aimed to investigate teachers' and students' experiences of collaboration, and specifically to understand interactive roles (Greer & Leyland, 2018; King, 2018) and actions (Bauler et al., 2019; Giles & Yazan, 2021; Wu et al., 2021), and see the school- and context-based collaborative discrepancies (Alvarez, 2020; Nguyen & Ng, 2018; Villavicencio et al., 2021). As a joint concern, the mixed-method studies sought to examine and explore the nature of collaboration (De Jong et al., 2019; Zadorozhna et al., 2020), reveal beliefs and attitudes toward it (Chaovanapricha & Chaturongakul, 2020; Naylor & Gibbs, 2018), and show positive and problematic aspects of it (Chaovanapricha & Chaturongakul, 2020; Farahian & Parhamnia, 2021).

4.2. Context and Population

Most of the studies (n: 29) focused on collaboration in EFL settings such as Indonesia, Korea, Spain, Türkiye, and Kazakhstan. Four of these studies were conducted in the Turkish context (Acar & Peker, 2021; Aktekin, 2019; Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Karabuga, 2021). Iran, China, and Korea were the other contexts studied, each with three studies. On the other hand, nine studies had an ESL context, namely the US and the UK. Three of the studies had an international context (Naylor & Gibbs, 2018; Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Barahona & Davin, 2021). The studies' target populations mostly comprised EFL teachers and their students; however, some also included various content teachers and other school professionals, such as school managers and counselors. The other populations were related to international teachers (Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Howlett & Nguyen, 2020; Hsieh et al., 2022) and undergraduate and graduate students (Durley & Ge, 2019; Piyumi Udeshinee et al., 2022; Yan, 2019).

4.3. Sample

Similar to the contextual and populational features, most of the studies included EFL teachers as samples; in addition, ESL teachers, national (Wu et al., 2021) and international teachers of project-based studies (Howlett & Nguyen, 2020), and content teachers (Giles & Yazan, 2020; 2021) also constituted the basis of those samples. On the other hand, the two studies investigated the issue of collaboration between school managers and English teachers (Nguyen & Ng, 2018) and counseling teachers and English teachers (Tuttle et al., 2021).

4.4. Data Collection Tools

The quantitative studies primarily used survey-based tools to collect data, such as surveys (Göktürk-Salam & Dikilitaş, 2020), questionnaires (Ramankulov et al., 2019; Yan, 2019), and scales (Tuttle et al., 2021). Additionally, tests (Boland et al., 2019; Göktürk-Salam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Yan, 2019; Yeganehpour & Zarfsaz, 2020), observations (Tarwiyah et al., 2018; Wexler et al., 2018), optical forms (Ramankulov et al., 2019), rubrics (Boland et al., 2019), and course materials (Tarwiyah et al., 2018) were the other tools for quantitative data collection. When it comes to qualitative studies, more than half of the studies (n: 19) used interviews to collect data. The majority of the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format. Nine of the qualitative studies included field notes as part of their data-gathering procedure. Likewise, video- and audio-recorded classroom and meeting sessions and reflective teacher and student

papers were other common tools used in those studies. Furthermore, some distinctive tools including e-mail reports (Giles & Yazan, 2021), timeline posts (Kent, 2018), and a corpus (Durley & Ge, 2019) were used to obtain qualitative data. The mixed-method studies also utilized similar data collection tools; however different from the common tools, coded logs of an e-collaborative discussion forum were used to collect data related to reflective and collaborative actions and debates in Mohamadi Zenouzagh's study (2022, p.473).

4.5. Type of Collaboration

The review of the included studies has shown that teacher collaboration appeared in several formats including coaching, co-teaching, online collaboration, and team and group collaboration. To put it clearly, three studies (Barahona & Davin, 2021; Boland et al., 2019; Lucero, & Roncancio-Castellanos, 2019) focused on how other teachers' mentoring actions could enhance teachers' professional and pedagogical improvements. Likewise, eight were associated with co-teaching practices that occurred in English language teaching and learning (e.g., Greer & Leyland, 2018; King, 2018; Howlett & Nguyen, 2020). Specifically, Buckingham et al.'s study (2021) dealt with collaboration between university scholars studying second language learning in the Spanish context. On the other hand, the most common collaboration type found was the one between English language teachers and teachers from other contents. Nine of the studies involved a wide range of content like Physics (Ramakulov et al., 2019), special education (Wexler et al., 2018), business (Alhassan et al., 2022), and STEAM teachers (Wu et al., 2021). Furthermore, collaboration in four studies was made with counselors (Tuttle et al., 2021; Villavicencio et al., 2021), school managers (Nguyen & Ng, 2018), and researchers (Piyumi Udesinee et al., 2022). For the nature of collaboration, seven studies (e.g., Aktekin, 2019; Alvarez, 2020) involved group-based teaching while there was team teaching in two studies (Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Wu et al., 2021). In the context of collaboration, with the technology-integrated platforms, collaboration began to evolve into e-format. To illustrate, TESOL-based EVO (Electronic Village Online) platform (Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020), E-twinning (Acar & Peker, 2021), ERT&L (Emergency remote teaching and learning) (Hajar & Manan, 2022), online exchange program (Hsieh et al., 2022), Facebook (Kent, 2018) and WeChat (Yan, 2019), iPad (Naylor & Gibbs, 2018), and e-collaborative forum (Mohamadi Zenouzagh (2022) served to obtain instantaneous interaction and collaboration among member teachers and students as well.

4.6. Key Findings

Several notable findings emerged from the selected research demonstrating the different effects of cooperation on student success, teacher professional and personal development, social and cultural concerns, and digital literacy. Collaboration in the area of ELT enabled students to raise their academic English achievement (Boland et al., 2019; Yan, 2019; Yeganehpour & Zarfsaz, 2020). As a social and interactive mediator (Aktekin, 2019; Mohamadi Zenouzagh, 2022), it provided teachers, both English, and other content, with gaining reciprocal understandings (Greer & Leyland, 2018), enhancing their negotiation (Giles & Yazan, 2020), and discovering their social discourse (King, 2018). Aside from the internal social effects, collaboration was viewed as advantageous for developing a global perspective (Ramankulov et al., 2019), improving interactional skills (Alvarez, 2020), and learning about the cultures of other instructors and students (Hsieh et al., 2022). More crucially, the studies agreed on the favorable effects of cooperation on the professional development of English and other content instructors (Barahona & Davin, 2021; Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Howlett & Nguyen, 2020; Tarwiyah et al., 2018) and personal development (Acar & Peker, 2021; Bauler et al., 2019). Besides reinforcing English teachers' self-awareness (Canaran & Mirici, 2020), critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities (Durley & Ge, 2019), collaborating with other teachers via digital platforms also strengthened their digital skills such as effective use of Web 2.0 tools (Hsieh et al., 2022) and synchronous and asynchronous teaching (Wu et al., 2021). However, various problems emerged during the collaborative procedures. Lack of teachers' instructional knowledge (Wang, 2020; Wexler et al., 2018), ineffective planning and unwillingness to participate (Giles & Yazan, 2021), lack of administrative support and mutual interactive communication (Alhassan et al., 2022; Farahian & Parhamnia, 2021), time constraints and differences in terms of content and materials (Chaovanapricha & Chaturongakul, 2020), and digital-based problems (Hajar & Manan, 2022) were reported as the main problems influencing the nature of collaborative actions in ELT-oriented practices.

4.7. Implications

The foremost implication was the incorporation of collaboration into EFL and ESL teacher and student education. By doing so, as the studies agreed, teaching and learning English could be more efficient and richer in terms of practical and pedagogical aspects (Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Giles & Yazan, 2021; Yeganehpour & Zarfsaz, 2020). In addition, most of the studies foresaw that technological tools could support both language learning and teaching and

collaboration with others around the world (Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020; Hsieh et al., 2022). Another implication was that collaboration between teachers and researchers could fill in the gap between theory and practice in ELT research (Barahona & Davin, 2021; Lucero, & Roncancio-Castellanos, 2019). Furthermore, CA-designed further studies could help researchers discover the secrets of interactional aspects of teacher collaboration (Greer & Leyland, 2018; Lee, 2021). Last, school administrators could reinforce teacher collaboration in light of leadership and mentoring (Nguyen & Ng, 2018; Farahian & Parhamnia, 2021).

5. Discussion

The primary goal of this systematic review was to present current studies concentrating on collaboration in EFL and ESL contexts to develop implications for future research. With this in mind, it analyzed 40 research studies that were conducted over the last five years. The study reached some significant points that can be seen as lightning points for further studies.

First, in recent years, cooperation has grown in importance in the field of ELT, particularly in EFL settings such as Korea, Iran, and Turkey. One major motive behind this rising attention may stem from the challenging nature of EFL. Given that learning English in foreign contexts where natural exposure is limited requires a lot of effort and time, collaborating with teachers, students, researchers, school staff, and parents may provide support and insight for EFL learning and teaching. Another possible reason may be the rising popularity of sociocultural views in SLA research (Compernelle & Williams, 2013) as they mainly regard language learning and teaching as a social and interactive process (Aimin, 2013). Scaffolding and ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development)-oriented practices stress and support the critical significance of collaborative language teaching and learning and even collaborative teacher professional development (Newman & Latifi, 2021). At this point, collaborative actions might generate interactional and mediational aspects of ELT contexts (Poehner & Leontjev, 2022). This study also found that there was consensus on the positive impact of collaborative teaching and learning, specifically in EFL and ESL contexts.

The second point is about the two-sided influence of collaboration, specifically the good and bad elements highlighted by the studies analyzed. The above-mentioned aspects highlighted that collaboration as a social phenomenon could be incorporated into ELT contexts to promote not only students' language learning but also English teachers' personal and professional development. However, this does not always imply that collaborating with others is always ideal; ranging from time management and reluctance to a lack of school support and

planning, a variety of difficulties may hinder teachers' cooperation. One may argue that collaboration is also connected to contextual factors; that is, where and with whom it occurs may influence its quality and duration. In this regard, the review results are in the same position as Weedle's review (2022), which highlighted both the lack of investigation of contextual aspects of collaboration and the insufficient social support. Although current research including this study clearly shows that cooperation may benefit English instructors and students in a variety of ways, there is still a significant need for collective support from school administrators, governments, and policymakers (Weedle, 2022). Vo and Allen's review (2022) also revealed that teachers' psychological positions could be highly impacted by the school administration's support. From this viewpoint, most of the problematic issues, specifically time, planning, and interactional soft climate, might be solved with contextual regulations made by social administrative agents.

The usage of technical tools such as social networking sites and educational platforms is another important aspect impacting the type of collaboration. Consistent with Garcia-Martinez et al.'s review (2020) focusing on ICT-based networking for teacher collaboration, this review concluded that most of the recent studies of ELT collaboration integrated a digital tool to sustain collaboration. Similarly, Godwin-Jones' argumentative paper on the place of technology in language learning pointed out that the future of language learning and teaching will be more on CALL-based technologies covering VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality) (2021). Considering the high importance of digital literacy as one of the major skills of the 21st century, integrating digital tools into ELT and being engaged with them to promote professional development seems quite logical. However, as Hajar and Manan (2022) stressed, incorporating into the digital educational world requires capacities of knowledge and device.

Besides technology-integrated practices, further research specifically focusing on teacher-researcher collaboration in ELT research is still of urgent importance. Given the multifunctional and multifaceted nature and scope of collaboration, teamwork between ELT researchers and teachers will fill the gap between theoretical and practical issues (Barahona & Davin, 2021; Lucero & Roncancio-Castellanos, 2019). Regarding De Jong et al.'s study (2022) concluding that the original terminology related to collaboration is not consistent with real practices, this togetherness might function as a valuable way of comprehending, analyzing, and reshaping pedagogical and professional practices of real social contexts. Likewise, Torshizi (2018) and Tian and Shepard-Grey (2020) suggested that teacher-researcher collaboration,

specifically in TESOL contexts, might extend pedagogical understandings of English language learning and teaching.

Finally, this study has several limitations that suggest additional research in the field of ELT cooperation. Besides the limited inclusive criteria covering only research articles published in the last five years and the limited database search, it only focused on teacher and teacher-focused collaboration studies. Further studies may investigate teacher-parent, parent-school, teacher-student, and or student-student collaborations in EFL or ESL contexts. Or, contextual differences may be the main focus for filling the above-mentioned gap.

6. Conclusion

This systematic review study concluded that the issue of collaboration is worth investigating, as the current studies show its high potential to impact students' and teachers' language experiences. Furthermore, technological tools and platforms paved the way for EFL and ESL teachers' extensive practices. Different collaboration types and their impacts reinforced the basic motivation to conduct further research within different contexts. However, the most striking point was related to the two-sided nature of collaboration. All in all, it seems that collaboration in ELT research as a current trend will catch more attention from researchers and teachers, specifically in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and their teaching concerns.

Statement of Funding

This research study did not receive any specific funds from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors.

Appendix A: Summary of Studies Included in Review

This appendix part functions as both supplemental material and data extract summarizing each included study. The studies were presented in the related themes included in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 in the following section. The table relatively was designed in accordance with the three research designs, namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. The themes revealed in the tables were the author's name and year of publication, research design, context and population, sample, data collection instruments, collaboration type focused on the studies, key findings, and implications for future research. The alphabetical order of the studies was considered according to the first letter of the first authors' names.

Appendix A

Table 1. Characteristics of Quantitative Studies

Author	Research Design	Context and Population	Sample	Data Collection Instruments	Type of Collaboration	Key Findings	Implications
Boland et al., 2019	An experimental study	EFL college students	24 female students in two groups attending the course “Academic English”	A t-test for measuring reading and writing skills with a rubric	Collaboration among teachers in the form of co-teaching	Enhancement in experimental group students’ writing scores was revealed.	Co-teaching with its different strategies can be used to support student language outcomes.
Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş, 2020	A survey study	International teachers attending professional development online sessions	27 teachers as the participants in the EVO session	A CoI (Community of Inquiry) survey	Online teacher collaboration for social, cognitive, and teaching concerns	The interrelated nature of CoI sustained interactive and collaborative actions to promote professional development.	Web-based organizations and programs can sustain collaboration and thus professional development for teachers.
Ramankulov et al., 2019	Experimental case study	University students taking CLIL (content language integrated learning) courses	73 Physics students from International Kazakh-Turkish University and South Kazakhstan State University in two groups of experiment and control	Field Optics activities, tests and questionnaires measuring proficiency, and statistical tools	Teacher collaboration, specifically department collaboration between Physics and English	Positive impacts of the interdisciplinary approach were associated with the enrichment of student viewpoints covering globalization.	ICT (information and communication technologies)- and content-oriented practices can be integrated into the language.

Tarwiyah et al., 2018	Comparative study	EFL teachers in Indonesia	Six high school EFL teachers attending the coaching system used to train them to apply student-centered practices	Observations, course plans and their reviewed formats, and focus-group interviews	Collaboration in the form of coaching	Before- and after scores of coachee teachers' practices of planning and implementing student-based practices showed that the coaching program improved their pedagogical and professional development.	The coaching process can feed teaching pedagogy and student academic outcomes.
Tuttle et al., 2021	A survey study	School counselors and ESOL (English as a Second or Other Languages) teachers in K-12 settings	28 ESOL teachers and 54 school counselors from the American context	A semantic differential scale	Collaboration between teachers and school counselors	The study found a high level of collaboration, positive attitudes toward collaboration, and geographical and district-based differences in attitudes.	Collaboration among different educational positions can feed the quality of education.
Wexler et al., 2018	Observation-based study	ELA (English language arts) classroom teachers of middle schools in different states of America	16 pair ELA teachers who teach English to SWD (students' individualized reading education) specifically through literary works	Recorded classroom observations from different four school contexts in the form of ELA co-teaching	Collaboration in the form of co-teaching between content-area and special education teachers	Co-teaching process between the two groups of teachers was seen as beneficial but lack of required instruction for students a variety of strategies for working together, and of interaction between special education teachers and students.	More effective and well-planned practices for reading in the collaborative context are highly recommended. Further, experimental studies for co-teaching can enhance a more comprehension of the impact of co-teaching in ELA classes.

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Yan, 2019	Pre-test and post-test design	Undergraduate students taking English courses	88 undergraduate students from the Department of Human Geography and Planning at Leshan Normal University, China	Pre-test and post-test questionnaires	Mostly student-student and partly student-teacher collaboration via the WeChat platform	Interaction in and between-group students while engaging with English writing increased, and the platform enhanced efficiency in the design and practices of the course and improved in writing English.	The use of technology-integrated and mobile-assisted practices for English language learning and teaching can be beneficial.
Yeganehpour & Zarfsaz, 2020	A quasi-experimental study	EFL Iranian students of higher education	41 Iranian students taking English courses at a language institution	Oxford Quick Replacement Test and Pre-test and post-test designed TOEFL writing exams	Collaboration among teachers in the form of co-teaching	The treatment group's writing performance improved.	Integration of co-teaching practices into EFL learning and teacher training programs is highly recommended.

Table 2. Characteristics of Qualitative Studies

Author	Research Design	Context and Population	Sample	Data Collection Instruments	Type of Collaboration	Key Findings	Implications
Acar & Peker, 2021	Case study	Turkish teachers	15 teachers from various branches in the city of Türkiye	A semi-structured interview	Collaboration among teachers in a project-based study group	E-twinning project-based practices enhanced collaboration, self-confidence, interaction, and productivity among the teachers. These practices also reinforced foreign language learning.	ICT- and technology-integrated platforms like E-twinning can support teachers' professional and personal development.

Aktekin, 2019	Case study	Turkish EFL teachers	A group of six EFL teachers and the researcher taking the role of coach	Interviews, participant diaries, and the researcher's field notes	Teacher collaboration through Critical Friend Group (CFG)	CFG took the role of a social mediator feeding reflective and debating nature, which supported dialogic and collaborative aspects of teacher meetings.	CFG-like communal contexts can deeply reveal the nature and scope of EFL teaching and learning with a collaborative perspective.
Alhassan et al.,2022	Case study	Teachers in EMI (English-medium instruction) contexts	10 business subject teachers in the Department of Master of Business Administration (MBA) in a Sudanese state university	Semi-structured interviews	Collaboration between content and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teachers	The study found that even if it was crucial and desired, the collaboration between the two groups was at a low level, generally due to a lack of administrative support, mutual interactive communication, and content teachers' excessive expectations.	Building a collaborative, coordinative, and interactive nature for EAP and Content teachers' collaboration will fertilize the EMI nature. Plus, a well-integrated EMI curriculum is of a pivotal role in English teaching and learning.
Álvarez, 2020	An exploratory collective case study	In-service EFL teachers in Colombia	Three Colombian in-service EFL teachers at a language center	Semi-structured interviews before and after study group conduction, and reflective logs	Teacher collaboration in the form of the study group	The study group improved the teachers' ICC (intercultural communicative competence) together with their cross-cultural awareness. Sharing teaching experiences in a collaborative nature extended their viewpoint of the place of culture in language learning.	Study groups can function as a key for enhancing professional and personal development in the field of ELT.

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Barahona & Davin, 2021	Case study	EFL Pre-service teachers from two different contexts, namely Chile and the US	20 Pre-service teachers taking foreign language teaching programs in Chile and 5 Graduate teachers taking hybrid certificate program courses in the US, and researchers in the role of program implementer	Course materials (assignments, rubrics, and teaching materials), teachers' reflective papers, video-based applications, and oral and written communication between teachers and the researchers	Teacher collaboration in the form of pair coaching within the practice-based approach	The practice-based cycle for reflective and collaborative practices widened the whole participants' engagement with language, which improved their perspectives. Plus, the reflective nature helped both the teachers and the researcher teachers to question their implications critically.	The integration of a practice-based framework into the curriculum of the Department of EFL teacher education can be beneficial for filling the gap between theory and practice.
Bauler et al., 2019	Case study	K-12 School content and ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers in the US	Two teachers (third and fourth authors), one content teacher, and one ESOL teacher from a suburban elementary school context in New York where Spanish students have the majority	Multiple interviews, classroom video recordings, the researchers' field, and observation notes	Collaboration between ESOL and content teachers in the form of co-teaching	A higher sensitivity to child and professional development appeared during the collaboration. Combining the experiences and practical concerns constructed a valuable model for the students. Likewise, this collaborative context fertilized the nature of the discussion, conversation, and information sharing.	Co-teaching can enhance students' English language learning by providing teachers with a wide range of collaborative activities.
Buckingham et al., 2021	Case study	University teachers of second language learning contexts in Spain	A group of seven professors (including the researchers of this study) having the experience of co-teaching at a private university in Madrid, Spain	Teacher diaries and interviews	Collaboration among university academics in the form of co-teaching	Information transfers, reflective practices, close interactions among the participants, diversity in practices, and learning in a comparative format were found to be the positive outcomes of co-teaching in a bilingual teaching context. The content richness revealed in this process was also displayed.	Students' perspectives toward co-teaching need investigating. Co-teaching processes can become a good tool for improving teacher educators' pedagogical and personal aspects.

Canaran & Mirici, 2020	Case study	Turkish EFL in-service teachers	Three EFL female teachers working at a foundation university in Türkiye	Semi-structured interviews and archival records (lesson reports, reflective papers, and the teachers' research report	Collaboration among teachers in the form of team-teaching	The team-teaching model reinforced the teachers' self-awareness and efficacy, their collective actions for problems to EFL teaching and learning in the classroom context, and their personal and professional development.	The model can support EFL teachers' reflective, critical, and collaborative skills and their CPD (continuous professional development).
Durley & Ge, 2019	Case study	Teachers experiencing an Open-ended PD (professional development) program	Six elementary teachers (Five Caucasian and one Hispanic) who teach different subjects to ESL learners in a school district in a state in the US	Video-recorded teacher meetings, interviews, and PD artifacts	Teacher group collaboration within the social and collective discourse-based context	Open-ended PD supported the teachers' critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Further, their awareness of ESL teaching and the learning process is gradually raised through reflective actions.	Exploration and use of social discourse-based Open-ended PD practices can come up with more effective teaching and learning.
Giles & Yazan, 2020	Case study	ESL and content teachers	One ESL teacher and one language arts teacher both of whom work in a middle school in the U.S.	Audio-recorded interviews, video-recorded collaborative sessions for lesson planning, reflective journals, lesson plans, and field notes	Collaboration between ESL and content teachers	Collaboration for the literary course increased negotiations, widened teachers' reciprocal understandings, and reinforced their mutual sharing of experience, knowledge, and teaching and learning strategies.	Stakeholders should consider the integration of collaborative models into ESL learning and the teaching process to promote professional teacher development.
Giles & Yazan, 2021	Case study	ESL and content teachers	One ESL teacher and one science teacher in a middle school in the U.S.	Three audio-recorded interviews, two video-recorded collaborative planning sessions, two reflective journals, e-mail responses, and field notes	Collaboration between ESL and content teachers	The collaboration did not occur at the desired level due to a lack of time, planning, and of willingness to share the roles during the practices.	Collaborative classroom nature can sustain ESL teaching and learning even though it may reveal some difficulties for the members.

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Greer &Leyland, 2018	Case study	EFL teachers with different language backgrounds	Five non-Japanese Assistant Language Teachers and nine Japanese teachers from primary and middle schools	A corpus of seven video-recorded lesson-planning sessions extracted from a total of 65 recordings	Collaboration among EFL teachers with different language backgrounds	CA-based (Conversation Analysis) analysis of the recognitional formulations, specifically for understanding the name of the activity revealed that discussion collaborations could extend mutual understandings and reshape EFL planning and implementation sessions.	CA- oriented collaborative contexts can ease the exploration of distinctive aspects of the interaction between teachers.
Hajar & Manan, 2022	Qualitative	EFL students and teachers involved in ERT&L (Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning	38 fifth-grade EFL students and six English teachers from four state schools in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Semi-structured interviews	Student-teacher and student-student collaboration	ERT&L-based EFL learning reinforced the students' reflective notions and reshaped the interactions via technological tools, however, collaboration was not at the desired level among teachers, students, and parents as well.	Designing language learning contexts, online or face-to-face, should consider the participant features, more collaboration, and more interactional practices.
Han, 2021	Case study	EFL teachers	Two Korean EFL teachers who collaboratively used their PI (professional identity) in solving pedagogical problems	Narrative tools including diaries, memos and summaries, and semi-structured interviews	Teacher collaboration	Building the PI was reshaped by negotiating and interactive aspects revealed in the collaborative nature. In the group collaboration, meaning and opinion-sharing were revealed.	Spontaneous collaboration and interaction are great tools for teacher education programs.
Howlett & Nguyen, 2020	Autoethnography	International graduate teaching assistants (IGTA)	Two IGTA's co-teaching a compulsory course to undergraduate students in a U.S. state university	Reflective notes and reflective journals	Teacher collaboration in the form of co-teaching	Co-teaching was found beneficial for professional development, constructing joint responsibilities, and ongoing and reflective discussions that extended and reshaped the viewpoints.	Co-teaching can serve non-native English-speaking faculties to build international links in the form of a cross-cultural context.

Hsieh et al., 2022	Multiple case study	ELF (English as a lingua franca) students and teachers attending cross-cultural exchange projects	One English teacher with experience in EMI- and content-integrated teaching and his 35 students attending the EMI-Cross-cultural Online Exchange Program in Taiwan	Researchers' notes and observations, project artefacts, reflective student journals, and protocol-based interviews	Teacher-student and student-student collaboration	The virtual exchange nature gave the participants the chance to collaboratively share views and cultural aspects with other students, further, their agency showed valuable changes like being more open to using English. The teacher also facilitated them in using Web 2.0 tools in a collaborative format.	Virtual-enhanced exchange programs can feed student agencies and teacher agencies as well. At this point, CALL-assisted practices can reinforce ELF learning.
Karabuga, 2021	Qualitative	Preparatory school EFL teachers	Five prep school EFL teachers experiencing Lesson Study (LS) groups in the Turkish context	Semi-structured pre- and post-interviews, teacher reflective journals, and the researcher's field notes	Teacher collaboration in the form of Lesson Study	The LS format was seen as a tool for collaboration opening the door to social and professional improvement. Plus, the participants found it as contributing to the quality of EFL teaching and learning as well. Peer and group reflective practices were seen as critical.	The LS practices can be effective when compared with the traditional conference- or seminar-based professional and personal development, especially in EFL contexts.
Kent, 2018	Qualitative	EFL teachers in the Korean context	A Facebook group with a total of 3,197 member teachers and 7 administrators	Timeline posts revealed in the Facebook group	Teacher collaboration via social networking sites	The group involved various types of sharing from social to research-based concerns, which extended the teachers' engagement and information sharing in terms of professional and personal improvement.	The role of Social Networking Services like Facebook in EFL teaching and learning needs more attention.
King, 2018	CA (Conversation Analysis)-based design	EFL teachers	Two co-teachers and their 24 graduate students in a US university	Video-recorded class sessions	Teacher collaboration in the form of co-teaching	Joint initiation and feedback aspects in the collaborative classroom discourse appeared in different IRF (initiation response feedback) sequences.	The collaborative nature of discourse can reveal various interactional aspects in EFL contexts.
Lee, 2021	CA (Conversation Analysis)-based case design	EFL teachers in South Korea	Two teacher pairs (one Korean and one English teacher for each pair) working at the same private elementary school in Gyeonggi, South Korea	Video-recorded and corpus-designed extracts	Teacher collaboration in the form of co-teaching	Different versions of using directive language were revealed during the co-teaching procedure in the form of asymmetry of taking roles in paired interaction.	Collaborative teaching can open door to gaining a critical perspective for EFL teachers. CA-based practice can be used for this purpose.

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Lucero, & Roncancio-Castellanos, 2019	Narration	EFL pre-service teachers experiencing the practicum	34 pre-service EFL teachers studying at a private university in Colombia	Teacher journals and group talks	Teacher collaboration in the form of mentoring	The interaction co-constructed between mentors and their mentees was regarded as a beneficial tool for professional development.	The collaborative nature of the practicum needs to be considered to fill the gap relations between practice and theory.
Nguyen & Ng, 2018	Grounded theory-based qualitative	School leaders and teachers in Singapore	24 teachers and school leaders from four primary schools in Singapore	Interviews and school visits conducted by the first researcher and three volunteer educators from the Department of English	Collaboration between teachers from different subjects and school leaders	The collaborative context reinforced their integration of English and music into Math teaching. In this process, the leaders contributed their professional and personal improvements in terms of “sharing”, “improving”, and “spreading” the practices.	School leadership in collaboration and cooperation with teachers can enhance academic outcomes and teacher professional development, especially within a larger sampled EFL context.
Piyumi Udeshinee et al., 2022	Design-based qualitative	University teachers and undergraduate students	Four university teachers and eight undergraduate students attending an English certificate course from a university in Sri Lanka and	Audio-recorded conversations, teachers’ reflective papers, and interviews	Teacher (researcher)-student collaboration	The joint construction and implementation of a regulatory scale in a CALL-based context facilitated the students’ language learning, especially for anxiety. Plus, it gave the researcher teachers the chance to design- and practice-based research for current teaching concerns.	Collaborative actions and practices in CALL-like contexts can contribute to the improvement and understanding of social aspects of language learning and teaching.

Villavicencio et al., 2021	Ethnographic case study	Immigrant students and teachers in international network schools in the US	EL (English learners) immigrant students, teachers, and counselors from two different school types, namely national and international	Focus group interviews, classroom and meeting observations, field notes, and curriculum and school documents	Teacher collaboration in different school contexts	The level and quality of collaboration showed differences in terms of school type and climate. In addition, the need for leader teachers in constructing a collaborative nature was stressed. Collaboration was higher in the international school contrary to the national one due to having immigrant students' needs.	Contexts including immigrant EL students need further research in terms of teacher, school, and society collaborations. Collaborative actions can also be a key to EL teachers' professional development.
Wang, 2020	Qualitative	Chinese EFL learners	Six EFL Chinese students experiencing group activities	Semi-structured interviews	Student-student collaboration in the form of friendship groups	The study revealed that the group activities positively influenced the students' language and emotional learning in a collaborative nature. However, lack of effective teacher instructions, demotivation to integrate into cultural dialogues, and problems of group design was stated as the negative aspects of this collaboration.	Regarding the cultural and contextual concerns, further studies and practices are suggested to benefit from the power of Collaborative Learning, especially in EFL contexts.
Wu et al., 2021	Case study	STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Language Arts, and Mathematics) team teachers in the US	Eight 8 th -grade teachers (2 males and 6 females) participating in a STEAM team teaching group in New York	Field observation and recorded informal interviews	STEAM-based teacher collaboration in the form of co-teaching	The transdisciplinary nature of the team worked but not in all teaching times due to a lack of practical information, but it enabled a time and place flexibility to work together both in the form of synchronous and asynchronous formats.	STEM- and STEAM-based teaching practices will be a major focal point for curriculum designs, professional development, and co-teaching practices.

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Table 3. Characteristics of Mixed-method Studies

Author	Research Design	Context and Population	Sample	Data Instruments	Type of Collaboration	Key findings	Implications
Chaovanapricha& Chaturongakul, 2020	Mixed-methods	ESP (English for specific purposes) university teachers and students studying Business English in Bangkok	Three English teachers of Business English and three subject teachers of ESP, and their students	Classroom observations and group interviews, and student questionnaire	Teacher collaboration regarding the interdisciplinary format	The collaboration enabled the teachers to mutually learn, produce, and get reflective feedback while time, content, and material-related differences were seen as the limitations of this collaboration.	The collaboration between content and subject teachers can help teachers and their students to improve their ESP skills and extend their professional experiences.
De Jong et al., 2019	Multiple case study	Teachers working at vocational secondary schools in the Netherlands	20 teachers within five groups from different school disciplines	Questionnaires and interviews	Teacher collaboration regarding the interdisciplinary format	Collaboration was affected by contextual, student- and teacher-related, and cultural aspects where it was used.	Opportunities to ease the practical concerns of collaboration are the responsibility of all stakeholders.
Farahian & Parhamnia, 2021	Mixed-method	EFL Iranian pre-service teachers	11 EFL teachers (nine females and two males) who attended an MA program	A reflective scale and semi-structured interviews	Teacher collaboration through reflection	Reflective practices conducted with peer and collaborative sessions were regarded as beneficial for information and experience sharing, and professional training. However, inadequate external support for discussion and collaboration sessions, workload, competitive teaching contexts, and negative beliefs about collaboration were among the most significant barriers.	Reflective activities for teacher collaboration in EFL contexts, specifically in graduate education will enhance and sustain teacher professional development.

Mohamadi Zenouzagh, 2022	Mixed-method	EFL Iranian Teachers	Six groups of five Iranian teachers (eight males and twenty-two females) and three supervisor assistant professors from the EFL department	Teacher questionnaire, E- collaborative discussion forum (ECDF), educational videos, and non- participant observation	Teacher collaboration via e-platforms	The ECDF platform functioned as a social mediator regulating collaborative and interactional actions by providing the teachers with a flexible and comfortable context for freely expressing experiences and ideas.	ICT-integrated practices can help EFL teachers improve their psychological, social, and professional skills, however, further research should consider possible external factors influencing the nature of interaction and online collaboration.
Naylor & Gibbs, 2018	Mixed-method	Pre-service teachers Science and English teachers using technology- integrated practices	24 Science and 13 English pre-service teachers studying in a UK university and collaborating with a Norwegian College for an international project	Survey and semi- structured interviews	Collaboration between Science and English teachers, and between teachers and students	Pre-service teachers had positive attitudes toward the use of technology for collaborative teaching and learning. The collaborative process enhanced knowledge and experience sharing for both teachers and students. Further, the use of the iPad to build e-books revealed more autonomy.	Mobile-assisted language learning and teaching can become a beneficial tool for the professional and pedagogical development of teachers.
Zadorozhna et al. (2020)	Pre-service EFL teachers in Ukraine	EFL Pre-service teachers	60 student teachers taking the course on ELT methodology	Student reflective papers, focus group discussions, and a survey	Collaboration between teachers in the form of co-teaching	Both student and teacher professional outcomes were positively influenced by co-teaching.	Integration of co- teaching practices into EFL teacher education can sustain efficiency in language learning and teaching.

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