Communication is an interdependent, collaborative activity taking place between participants with a shared goal and featuring a speaker's process of expression and a listener's empathetic understanding and process of "negotiation of meaning" (Tomasello, et. al, 2005, P12). To communicate effectively with people outside the culture of English education, teachers need a range of collaborative experiences, as well as the negotiation skills inherent to teacher autonomy. Many teachers report, however, that a variety of factors prevents them from collaborating and sharing with their colleagues (Collins and Nakamura, 2007). Without an understanding of teacher autonomy, designing classes which, in turn, promote learner autonomy becomes a distinct challenge.

To assist teachers in understanding and reaping the benefits of collaborative relationships, a year-long, in-service Teacher Development in English (TDE) program organized by the presenters for high school English teachers has promotes participation which is both autonomous and collaborative. In the 2008 program, participants formed target subject research teams at their own schools to discuss planning and materials creation, share and teach the materials in their classes, and to reflect on their practices, both in meetings and in an online journal. Additionally, participants utilized a CALL networking system, by drawing on a perspective of CALL as a mediating instrument (Engeström, 1987; Suzuki & Collins, 2006, 2008).
The presenters will first outline the rationale and organization of the collaboration component of the TDE Program, including how CALL is utilized. Then, two recent case studies will be offered, reflecting a range of collaborative team endeavor. In the first, a collaboration was formed which supported the TDE participant in advancing her teaching practices. The second team, however, was unable to achieve the same level of collaboration. While keeping in mind that each participant's working and teaching situation is highly unique, With this case study comparison the presenters will evaluate the TDE program with the key questions, including: What are the challenges inherent in collaborative planning, teaching, and reflection? What are the advantages and disadvantages of superimposing "contrived collegiality" onto traditionally independent teachers? And finally, what impact does teacher collegiality have on both departmental dynamics and learner outcomes?

References