Comparison of Team-Teaching Studies from the Methodological and Analytical Aspects

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Abstract

This study attempts to formulate an appropriate research methodology and means of analysis in the area of team-teaching at Japanese junior high schools. Specifically, it focuses on the roles and responsibilities of the Japanese Teacher of English (JTE) and an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) and draws upon research conducted by means of interview and observation in a junior high school in Nagano Prefecture.

In order to find a suitable methodological framework to discover how the JTE and ALT work with each other, six recent studies are critically compared according to the four criteria of (1) focus, (2) methods, (3) recorded data and (4) subject. The studies chosen were conducted between 1992 and 2002: Sturman (1992), Smith (1994), Scholefield (1996), Tajino and Tajino (2000), Miyazato (2001) and Gorsuch (2002). This researcher’s own methodology of observing two team-teaching lessons and interviewing both teachers and students is then outlined alongside these studies and critically evaluated.

Once this means to collecting data is ascertained, the analytical framework is examined. For this purpose, two significant studies using classroom observation, by Smith (1994) Martin-Jones and Saxena (1996), are contrasted with my own “I R F” discourse analytic approach based on Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

The conclusions drawn from this comparative study are, firstly, that it is, from a methodological perspective, important to include the various “voices” of all
team-teaching classroom participants in a combination of observed practice and interview. As seen in this researcher’s study, these multi-perspectives are essential in creating a rich texture of collected data about team-teaching. Secondly, in terms of how this data is analysed, it is concluded that a structured microanalysis of the classroom discourse by means of turn-taking “I R F” codes can reveal patterns in the interaction between teachers and students unseen in other forms of analysis.

As the original objectives of my study were to identify specific problems in team-teaching between the JTEs, ALT and their students, this study shows how appropriate methodological and analytical frameworks can be formulated by comparison with previous work conducted in the field.

References