

# ONE MIND IN TWO BODIES – CO-TEACHING POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE UNIVERSITY



The research **problem** is based on the notion that co-teaching is practiced in the universities but there is no clear theoretical frame or common understanding of co-teaching and its possibilities (1,3).

**Research question:** which are co-teaching possibilities and challenges in students' and academics' conceptions?

**Research data** is collected via four focus group interviews with students and academics. Critical discourse analyze is used as the research method.

## CO-TEACHING...

...is defined as two or more people sharing responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom. It involves the distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instruction, and evaluation for a classroom of students (2,4).

## CO-TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Supporting the learning process and teaching activities** - *balanced teaching process; sharing resources (time, energy, knowledge, responsibility); objective feedback and evaluation; a varied learning method; creativity in the learning and teaching process; developing critical thinking and reflection, highlighting different perspectives and developing their relationship skills.*
- **Supporting the learner** - *individual attention and contact with the learners; collegial relations with learners; tolerance and acceptance skills; collaborative teaching with the learner, change in learner-teacher relationship.*
- **Supporting the professional development of the academics** - *sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences; inspiration and learning from a colleague; Increasing competence and expertise; exiting the comfort zone, improving teaching practices; learning from the experience of the learner and the co-teacher; a reflection opportunity that allows you to study your teaching and map and develop your teaching skills; teaching and supporting early-stage teaching staff.*
- **Supporting the development of insitution (university)** - *reducing hierarchical boundaries, including with management; closer collegial interaction across the university; improvement of organizational cooperation; possibility of international cooperation.*

## CO-TEACHING CHALLENGES

- **Challenges in teaching process** - *planning, coordinating and evaluating the learning process; seeing the whole or the so-called big picture*
- **Challenges of cooperation** - *establishing and maintaining a relationship between the parties; communication between the parties, cooperation skills; resource optimization (avoidance of over or double training) collision of values; Intercultural differences and overcoming them; paradigmatic differences and overcoming them.*
- **Challenges on institutional level** - *sharing of resources (time, wages, study information system); organizational issues; leveling different positions (lecturer-professor) in the situation of co-teaching.*

## THE RESULTS

**Academics** see co-teaching as a positive teaching practice that helps to share resources, eliminate hierarchical relationships, and improve the institution's internal climate, improve the knowledge of the subjects involved in the field, as well as didactic knowledge, and offer students varied and meaningful learning.

**Co-teaching is an enriching teaching practice in the university for both students and academics. Challenging yet full of possibilities, co-teaching is offering many opportunities and it strengthens collaborative work culture.**

## CO-TEACHING METHAPHORS



### MARRIAGE

Team members select each other voluntarily and commit to working closely over time.



### GRANDPARENTS

Time, peaceful, opportunities, fairness, many resources, empathy, availability, warm and caring relationship, experienced, 100% committed, enjoying the process.



### BEEHIVE

Cooperation, planned activities, hardworking, purposeful, there are no limits to acting and thinking



### BOARDGAME

Rules, contribution, fairness



### SOLAR SYSTEM

The interactions and functioning of the planets, but everyone is on their own orbit - roles, contribution and responsibility.



### THE BAND

Becoming a musician and a teacher is a long-term process that requires patience, dedication, listening skills, (musical) taste, acceptance skills, harmonious thinking, and collaborative skills.

(1) Eisen, M., & Tisdell, E. J. (2000). Team teaching and learning in adult education. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* (87). San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

(2) Goetz, K. (2000). Perspectives on team teaching. *Egallery*, 1(4). University of Calgary.

(3) Laughlin, K., Nelson, P., & Donaldson, S. (2011). Successfully Applying Team Teaching with Adult Learners. *Journal of Adult Education*, 40 (1).

(4) Morelock, J.R., McGlothlin Lester, M., Klopfer, M.D., Jardon, A.M., Mullins, R.D, Nicholas, E.L., & Alfaydi, A.S. (2017) Power, Perceptions, and Relationships: A Model of Co-Teaching in Higher Education, *College Teaching*, 65(4), 182–191.