

Title: Collaborate to Innovate: Co-Teaching in English-Medium, Interdisciplinary Courses
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Introduction

The increasing internationalisation of higher education has accelerated the spread of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and interdisciplinary course design (Agnew & Neghina, 2021; OECD, 2023). However, how these strategies interact to foster pedagogical innovation remains underexplored. The study underpinning this paper investigate the potential of co-teaching—particularly in interdisciplinary EMI contexts—as a tool to enhance personalised support, improve assessment practices, and develop 21st-century skills.

Grounded in research on co-teaching (Ferguson & Wilson, 2011; Bacharach et al., 2008) and interdisciplinary education (Boix & Dawes, 2007; Repko et al., 2020), the theoretical framework positions collaborative teaching as a means to bridge disciplinary silos and mitigate the linguistic challenges posed by EMI (Dafouz, 2021; McKinley & Rose, 2022). Co-teaching, understood as the joint planning, delivery and assessment of instruction by two or more educators, can counteract potential drawbacks of EMI, such as possible language – content gaps and uneven language support (Hu & Lei, 2014).

Method

Our research employed a mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected through an ad-hoc validated questionnaire administered to 222 undergraduate students from a Spanish university, complemented by qualitative insights from open-ended survey responses. Students were grouped by degree programme, English proficiency, and exposure to interdisciplinary or same-discipline co-teaching.

Results

Results revealed that students overall perceived co-teaching positively, particularly valuing its contributions to personalised attention and fairer assessment practices. These perceptions were consistent across English proficiency levels, although Education students and those participating in interdisciplinary courses reported a slightly more favourable view. Challenges included some confusion about role division and assessment standards when disciplinary integration was not sufficiently scaffolded.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study supports the notion that structured co-teaching partnerships, especially across disciplines, can amplify the benefits of EMI, enhance student engagement, and foster critical thinking. However, success hinges on careful coordination between instructors and explicit communication of interdisciplinary goals. Future initiatives should focus on faculty development for interdisciplinary co-teaching and on strategies to support students in navigating complex learning environments.