

CO-TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS: COLLABORATIVE PERSPECTIVES BETWEEN GENERAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

DOCÊNCIA COMPARTILHADA NOS ANOS INICIAIS: PERSPECTIVAS COLABORATIVAS ENTRE ENSINO COMUM E LÍNGUA INGLESA

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses co-teaching in the early years of elementary education, emphasizing the collaborative work between classroom teachers and English language teachers. Based on a nonsystematic literature review, the study brings reflections on co-teaching, multicultural curriculum, and collaborative pedagogical practices. Grounded in co-teaching models and critical approaches, it analyzes how shared teaching can contribute to the reconfiguration of school practices. The findings highlight that this approach enhances pedagogical listening, strengthens integrated planning, and promotes more situated educational actions. The impact of co-teaching on teacher education and the organization of pedagogical work is also emphasized, particularly the roles of school leadership and continuing education. The article concludes that co-teaching represents a promising path for education and classroom practices, especially in contexts marked by linguistic and cultural diversity.

Keywords: Co-teaching. Collaborative teaching. Curriculum. Language education.

RESUMO

O artigo discute a docência compartilhada nos anos iniciais do ensino fundamental, com ênfase na atuação conjunta entre professor regente e professor de Língua Inglesa. A partir de uma revisão assistemática da literatura, articulam-se reflexões sobre coensino, currículo multicultural e práticas pedagógicas colaborativas. Fundamentado nos modelos de coensino e nas abordagens críticas, o estudo analisa como a docência compartilhada pode contribuir para a ressignificação das práticas escolares. Evidencia-se que essa abordagem amplia a escuta pedagógica, fortalece o planejamento integrado e promove ações educativas mais situadas. Também se destacam os efeitos da co-docência na formação docente e na organização do trabalho pedagógico, ressaltando-se o papel da gestão escolar e da formação continuada. O texto conclui que a docência compartilhada representa um caminho promissor para a educação e práticas em sala de aula, especialmente em contextos de diversidade linguística e cultural.

Palavras-chave: Docência Compartilhada. Coensino. Currículo. Ensino de Línguas.

1 INTRODUCTION

This article reflects on the experiences and possibilities of co-teaching in the early years of elementary education, based on a partnership between colleagues of English language and pedagogy working as mentors for fourth and fifth grade classes in a private school. Our analysis examines both challenges and potentials of this collaborative model. The goal is to understand how this form of teacher collaboration can contribute to the reconfiguration of everyday school practices, promoting more dialogical, interdisciplinary approaches aligned with the demands of 21st-century education. Furthermore, the study seeks to analyze the effects of co-teaching on pedagogical organization, planning, and assessment practices, as well as on teacher-student relationships.

Based on this reflection, the article is guided by the following central question: How can co-teaching between classroom teachers and English language teachers contribute to the reconfiguration of school practices in the early years? This question frames the study's investigative path by challenging traditional pedagogical models and proposing a reorganization of educational practices grounded in teacher collaboration. Co-teaching, in this sense, is not a mere division of tasks, but a dialogical and formative process in which educators share decisions, knowledge, responsibilities, and learning, enhancing teaching and learning opportunities in daily school life.

According to Villa and Thousand (2000, 2005), co-teaching represents not merely a division of labor but a comprehensive pedagogical approach that fosters dialogue, mutual responsibility, and collective decision-making. The theoretical framework of this study is primarily based on the contributions of Villa and Thousand (2000, 2005), who propose co-teaching models centered on collaboration and inclusion; and of Moreira and Candau (2003, 2008), whose reflections on curriculum, diversity, and pedagogical practices are essential to thinking about teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. Additional contributions come from authors who explore teacher education, additional language teaching, and innovative school practices, such as Capellini and Gonçalves (2004), Vilaronga and Mendes (2014), and Lemos (2014), among others. This article is structured as follows: after the introduction, the methodological path is presented; next, the theoretical foundation is discussed; then, a critical analysis of co-teaching experiences is developed; and finally, the conclusions highlight the main contributions and implications of the study.

METHOD

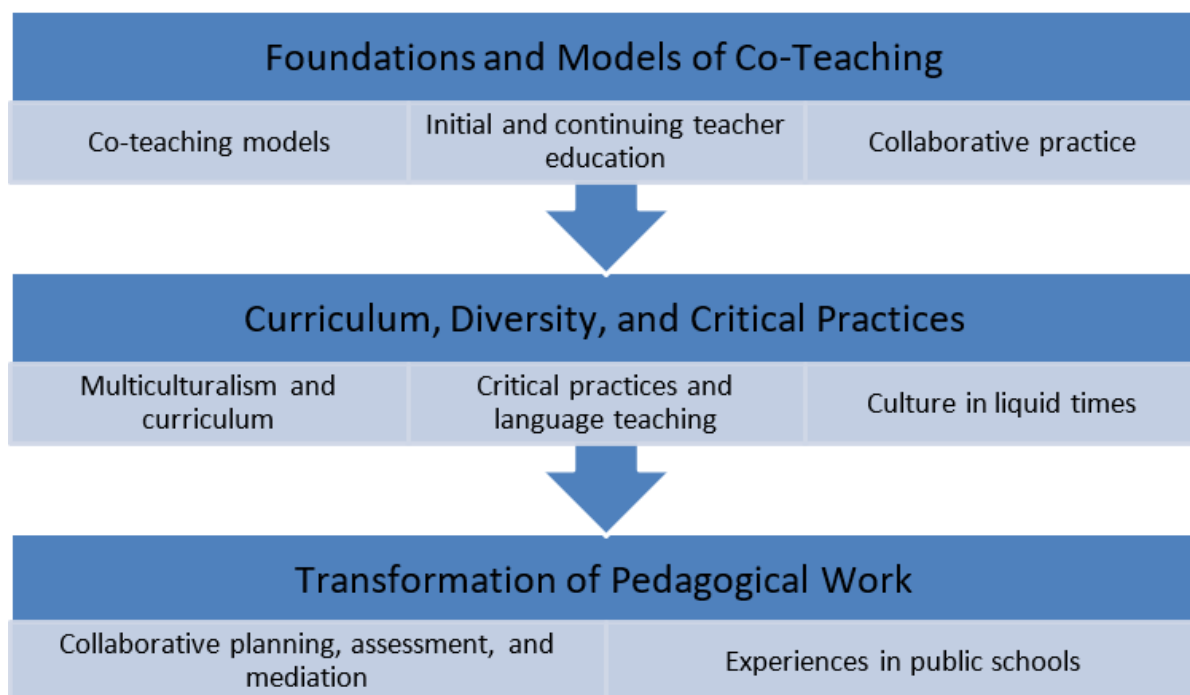
Our methodological approach is qualitative and exploratory, based on a nonsystematic literature review that allowed us to select texts addressing co-teaching experiences, teacher education, and collaborative practices, particularly those that resonate with the experiences of our mentoring (Ildebrand *et al.*, 2024) teams in a private school context. This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory, and reflective approach, grounded in a nonsystematic literature review (Gil, 2008). This methodological choice is justified by the aim to understand the multiple dimensions of co-teaching in the early years of elementary education, without the rigidity of systematic protocols that could restrict the interpretative scope of the analysis. The nonsystematic review allows greater flexibility in selecting and articulating texts, prioritizing thematic relevance and conceptual depth. The focus lies on academic works addressing co-teaching experiences, teacher education, collaborative practices, and English language instruction in diverse school contexts. The texts were selected based on their contribution to the debate on integration between classroom teachers and specialists, especially those emphasizing collective work and dialogue between areas of knowledge. The exploratory nature of the research is linked to the effort to identify trends, gaps, and possibilities for pedagogical action in the field of collaborative teaching, not with the intention of exhausting the topic, but of contributing to its deepening and to the proposal of more integrated and inclusive educational practices.

The analysis of the selected texts was guided by the central question posed in the introduction: how can co-teaching between classroom teachers and English language teachers contribute to the reconfiguration of school practices in the early years? The works were examined to identify discourses that either problematize or value co-teaching, highlighting both its potential and the challenges involved in its implementation. The theoretical framework prioritized authors who discuss co-teaching models, multicultural curriculum, inclusive education, and critical perspectives on language teaching. The articulation among these references enables a comprehensive understanding of co-teaching as a transformative pedagogical practice. The outcomes of this theoretical review indicate the need for a reorganization of teaching practices that includes continuing education, co-authorship in planning, and the creation of dialogical spaces within schools. Thus, the findings provide meaningful insights into the feasibility and relevance of collaborative teaching as a strategy for professional development and pedagogical practice in the early years of elementary education.

2.1 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL REVIEW: CO-TEACHING IN SCHOOL WITH THE SUPPORT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

The theoretical review that underpins this article is organized into three interrelated axes that aim to address the central question: *How can co-teaching between classroom teachers and English language teachers contribute to the reconfiguration of school practices in the early years?* The first axis examines co-teaching models and the foundations of shared teaching, considering both the structural aspects of collaborative teaching practices and the contributions of initial and continuing teacher education to its implementation. The second axis focuses on the relationships between curriculum, cultural diversity, and critical pedagogical practices, viewing co-teaching as a powerful strategy for addressing educational inequalities and valuing plural forms of knowledge. Finally, the third axis discusses the transformations that co-teaching can foster in everyday school life, especially regarding pedagogical organization, assessment, and planning, based on concrete experiences documented in Brazilian research. These three axes are aligned with the objectives of reflecting on co-teaching practices and analyzing their effects on building a more dialogical, integrated school environment that is responsive to the multiple voices within it. The following Flowchart 1 illustrates the details of this review process based on these three analytical dimensions:

Flowchart 1 – Dimensions of the Theoretical Review



Source: Prepared by the authors (2025)

Flowchart 1 illustrates the theoretical paths that structure the review presented in this article, connecting the analytical axes to the central research question. This theoretical journey (Gil, 2008) made it possible to understand co-teaching models and teacher education for collaborative practice (Villa; Thousand, 2000, 2005; Capellini; Gonçalves, 2004; Mendez, 2010; Ferreira da Silva; Fontebasso, 2013; Barbosa *et al.*, 2024), as well as the possibilities and limitations of collaborative practices in different school contexts. It also highlighted how initial and continuing teacher education influence the implementation of co-teaching. Furthermore, the discussion was broadened by integrating curricular and cultural dimensions that permeate shared pedagogical practices. Based on the contributions of Moreira and Candau (2003, 2008), Canen (2002), and Bauman (2013), collaborative teaching was understood as a tool for addressing educational inequalities and valuing multicultural knowledge, proposing a broader and more situated curriculum. In this sense, authors such as Soares (2025), Schulz and Xypas (2024), Lemos (2014), and Ildebrand (2022) contribute critical perspectives on school practices, additional language teaching, and collaborative textual production. These perspectives are then connected to the transformation of school practices, highlighting co-teaching potentials to reorganize planning, assessment, and pedagogical mediation. Additionally, the analyses by Souza and Schander (2024), Traversini et al. (2012), and Serrano

(2005) offer specific conceptions of such changes. In this way, the flowchart visualizes the analytical path adopted, reinforcing the article's commitment to constructing a critical and purposeful perspective on co-teaching in the early years, in line with the study's objectives.

2.1.1 Co-Teaching Models and Teacher Education for Shared Teaching

According to Villa and Thousand (2000, 2005), co-teaching is a pedagogical approach centered on systematic collaboration between two or more education professionals. These authors propose different co-teaching models - such as team teaching, parallel teaching, sequential teaching, supportive teaching, and complementary teaching - each with its own purpose and level of integration. Although these models can be applied in various school contexts, choosing one should consider students' needs and the teachers' professional profiles. In this sense, co-teaching is not merely a teaching strategy but a proposal that breaks with the traditional one-teacher classroom structure. Therefore, even though having two teachers in the same class may lead to management conflicts or overlapping responsibilities, the benefits of joint action outweigh the initial challenges. As teachers share planning, mediation, and assessment, they promote a more democratic, responsive practice aligned with the demands of inclusive education.

Although co-teaching originated in contexts of inclusion and special education, it has expanded to various areas of the curriculum, including the teaching of additional languages. According to Ferreira da Silva and Fontebasso (2013), experiences with initial teacher education involving shared teaching contribute significantly to the professional development of future teachers. This happens because, by engaging in co-teaching situations, student-teachers learn to negotiate knowledge, engage in dialogue, and share instructional decisions. This collective construction of knowledge is enhanced when co-teaching is structurally integrated into teacher education curricula. Similarly, Barbosa et al. (2024) observe that when co-teaching is accompanied by critical reflection and supervision, it strengthens partnerships and redefines initial teacher education as a space for collaborative experimentation. Thus, provided there is institutional support and pedagogical intentionality, co-teaching experiences can become powerful and transformative formative practices.

Even though shared teaching is recognized as a step forward in both inclusion policies and teacher education, its implementation in concrete school settings poses challenges. Ambrosim (2024) and Souza And Schander (2024) argue that collaboration among teachers requires reconfigurations in how planning, assessment, and classroom management are conducted, which implies not only a technical shift but also a cultural one. Such transformations only occur when those involved acknowledge the value of collaborative work and are willing to overcome individual and institutional resistance. As Mendez (2010) points out,

obstacles include limited time for joint planning, insufficient continuing education on co-teaching, and the lack of dialogic spaces among professionals. However, when these challenges are addressed through dialogical and collaborative processes, the possibilities for pedagogical innovation and the strengthening of inclusive practices are expanded. Therefore, in spite of the existing barriers, investing in collaborative practices proves to be both a viable and necessary path toward the enhancement of teaching quality.

According to Capellini and Gonçalves (2004), teacher education for inclusion requires practices that develop collaborative competencies and ethical principles of professional coexistence. This means that co-teaching should not be understood merely as an operational strategy, but rather as a pedagogical approach grounded in values such as dialogue, listening, and shared responsibility. As long as this perspective is incorporated into both initial and continuing teacher education, educators will be better equipped to work in diverse contexts and to deal with the complexities of contemporary classrooms. Serrano (2005) reinforces this view by emphasizing that building an inclusive school necessarily involves reformulating teaching practices and creating institutional mechanisms that foster collaborative work. In this sense, co-teaching acquires a permanent formative character, as it fosters ongoing peer learning and adaptation to the singularities of school subjects, contributing to the strengthening of a more democratic educational culture.

As diversity is recognized as a constitutive element of the school environment, it becomes urgent to envision pedagogical practices that overcome curricular fragmentation and promote dialogue among different areas of knowledge. Moreira and Candau (2003, 2008) argue that teaching must be redefined through a multicultural lens - one capable of recognizing the various voices, cultures, and experiences present in the school context. In alignment with this view, Canen (2002) states that multicultural education cannot be reduced to a celebration of differences; rather, it must be understood as an ethical and political project that permeates both curriculum and teaching practices. Even though schools are often situated within contexts of profound inequality, co-teaching appears as a concrete possibility to confront such contradictions through collective work that values pluralism. Therefore, by integrating diverse fields of knowledge and professionals from varied backgrounds, co-teaching enhances the creation of pedagogical spaces that are more responsive to diversity and more attuned to the demands of contemporary society.

In a time marked by the fluidity of social relations and the instability of institutions, as noted by Bauman (2013), schools face the ongoing challenge of reinventing themselves to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. Within this scenario, co-teaching emerges as a powerful response, as it enables the construction of a pedagogical environment that is more flexible, collaborative, and responsive to present-day demands. Although not all school contexts are fully prepared to implement this approach, it is

undeniable that co-teaching offers promising avenues for educational innovation. When educators share responsibilities, practices, and knowledge, they not only develop teaching strategies but also build bonds of trust and foster new horizons for change. As the complexity of contemporary educational processes becomes increasingly evident, it is clear that co-teaching is more than a technique - it represents an ethical and political stance on teacher education and professional practice.

Given the multiple dimensions that co-teaching encompasses - from its theoretical foundations to the challenges of its practical implementation - it becomes essential to broaden the discussion beyond the organization of teaching work. Considering that education is shaped by cultural, social, and political factors, it is necessary to understand how collaborative practices connect with a curriculum that acknowledges and values diversity. After all, although co-teaching represents a powerful strategy for pedagogical reorganization, its effectiveness also depends on the intentionality with which knowledge is selected, mediated, and reinterpreted in the classroom. In this regard, the next section explores the intersections between curriculum, cultural diversity, and critical pedagogical practices, drawing on theoretical frameworks that highlight the importance of an education committed to plurality.

2.1.2 Curriculum, Cultural Diversity, and Critical Practices

In our context, despite the distinct challenges of a private school environment, embracing a multicultural and integrated curriculum has proven pivotal in addressing educational inequalities and valuing diverse forms of knowledge. The discussion on co-teaching cannot overlook a critical reflection on the curriculum and its relationship with the diversity present in schools. As Moreira and Candau (2003) state, the curriculum is a social construct, permeated by power relations, cultural values, and political choices. Although many curricular proposals present themselves as neutral, they often exclude knowledge, languages, and experiences that fall outside hegemonic standards. In this sense, viewing co-teaching as a practice committed to inclusion requires recognizing the school as a space of symbolic dispute, where the curriculum must open itself to multiple voices. Collaboration between classroom teachers and English language teachers can serve as a turning point in this trajectory, as it enables the expansion of learning horizons through the integration of different perspectives, languages, and cultures, contributing to a curriculum that reflects the complexity of the contemporary world.

When cultural diversity is taken as a structuring element of pedagogical practice, it fosters the redefinition of both content and teaching methods. Moreira and Candau (2008) argue that multiculturalism should be understood not merely as a celebration of differences, but as an ethical and political stance toward inequality. This means that recognizing diversity must be accompanied by actions aimed at

equity and curricular justice. In this context, co-teaching emerges as a possibility for reconfiguring teaching practices in ways that are more responsive to students' trajectories. Canen (2002), in discussing multicultural education, emphasizes that cultural plurality should not be treated as a "cross-cutting theme," but must permeate planning, assessment, and school management. When co-teaching is guided by this critical perspective, it becomes more than just a functional organization of teaching - it becomes a form of resistance against schooling models that silence difference and reproduce inequality.

Although the theory of multicultural curriculum has advanced, its implementation in school practices faces significant challenges. One of these lies in the difficulty of breaking away from a fragmented disciplinary logic that separates knowledge areas and isolates teaching roles. In this sense, co-teaching presents itself as a strategy to promote dialogue among knowledge domains, as long as there is intentionality and openness from the educators involved. The presence of English language teachers in the early years, for instance, can contribute to expanding students' linguistic and cultural repertoires - provided their role is not confined to isolated moments in the school routine (Dove; Honigsfeld; Goldman, 2025; Cowell, 2024). As Lemos (2014) points out, additional language instruction in the early years should be integrated into the school's pedagogical project, in articulation with content from other areas. Such integration becomes possible only when the teachers involved collectively construct meaning for their pedagogical work, establishing connections between linguistic knowledge and the cultural and social knowledge that circulates within the school.

In the field of language teaching, particularly English as an international language, a critical approach is essential for questioning the power relations and cultural discourses that permeate school practices. Soares (2025), Schulz and Xypas (2024) argues that teaching English critically means recognizing that the language is neither neutral nor universal, but rather carries historical and ideological markings that should be discussed in the classroom. When English teachers work in partnership with classroom teachers, conditions are created for these discussions to take place in a more contextualized, integrated, and meaningful way. Although not all schools have the resources to fully implement such partnerships, co-teaching experiences can enhance students' critical awareness of languages, cultures, and identities. In this scenario, shared teaching strengthens a pedagogical perspective that goes beyond mere grammatical instruction, proposing a situated, dialogical, and socially grounded learning experience.

Language, by its nature, mediates meaning and social practices. Therefore, collaborative practices such as joint text production - as discussed by Ildebrand (2022) - prove to be powerful pedagogical tools when embedded in co-teaching contexts. The author shows that when teachers collaborate in writing activities, students expand their skills in authorship, argumentation, and critical reading. Moreover, having

two teachers in the classroom facilitates more individualized monitoring of students' writing processes and allows for the recognition of each learner's unique development. Even though this kind of practice requires detailed planning and strong coordination between teachers, its outcomes are significant in forming more critical and participatory learners. In this sense, co-teaching not only strengthens linguistic processes but also contributes to the development of student autonomy and discursive awareness, especially in contexts marked by various forms of exclusion.

Teaching English in the early years, as Rabello (2018) and Lemos (2014) observe, is a field marked by both tensions and possibilities. On one hand, there is the challenge of teaching an additional language in a context historically dominated by a strong focus on mother tongue literacy; on the other, there is the opportunity to promote multicultural experiences from early childhood. When English instruction is carried out in isolation, there is a risk of reinforcing a fragmented and decontextualized approach to language learning. However, when this work is done collaboratively and in dialogue with the classroom teacher, it allows for a more integrated approach - one capable of articulating language, culture, and citizenship. Although this proposal requires institutional restructuring and changes in teacher education, it offers viable pathways to building a school that embraces the multiple languages that constitute human experience. Therefore, co-teaching in language education should be understood as both a curricular strategy and a policy of inclusion.

In light of the conceptions discussed thus far, it is worth emphasizing that to consider co-teaching through the lens of cultural diversity and critical practices is to recognize that the school is, by nature, a space of encounters, negotiations, and conflicts. By integrating different forms of knowledge and professional trajectories, co-teaching breaks away from the logic of homogenization and opens up possibilities for constructing a more plural and situated curriculum. This demands from teachers not only technical competencies, but above all, a willingness to engage in dialogue, sensitivity to listen to the other, and a commitment to social justice. Although the challenges are many, the experiences analyzed here highlight the transformative potential of collaborative practice - especially when guided by ethical and political principles. In this context, the next step is to understand how these co-teaching practices affect the everyday life of the school, particularly in terms of pedagogical organization, assessment practices, and the relationships established among educational subjects.

Given the strong connections among curriculum, cultural diversity, and critical teaching, it is now essential to deepen the analysis of co-teaching's concrete impacts on school life. After all, for shared teaching to produce real effects on pedagogical practices, it must intervene in planning processes, mediation strategies, and evaluative approaches. The following section, therefore, focuses on examining

these dimensions, exploring how co-teaching can reconfigure pedagogical work in basic education, particularly in the early years.

2.1.3 Co-Teaching and the Transformation of Pedagogical Work

Co-teaching has increasingly established itself as a practice capable of bringing about significant reconfigurations in everyday school life, especially when supported by pedagogical intentionality and institutional backing. As evidenced by Souza and Schander (2024), the integration of collaborative practices in the early years not only reshapes planning processes but also transforms how teachers relate to knowledge and to students. By sharing responsibilities, teachers construct a work dynamic based on listening, shared responsibility, and horizontality - challenging the traditional model of instruction centered on a single educator. This dynamic implies a shift in school culture, in which authority is shared and pedagogical decisions are made collectively. Although this transition requires time and dialogue, its effects are visible in the expansion of learning opportunities and in the recognition of students' individualities.

The practice of co-teaching also directly affects pedagogical planning processes, as it demands continuous coordination between the teachers involved. According to Traversini et al. (2012), collaborative lesson planning entails jointly defining objectives, content, methodological strategies, and assessment tools. This shared development strengthens the pedagogical coherence of teaching and enables a diversification of approaches, making instruction more inclusive and contextually grounded. When planning is carried out dialogically, it becomes more responsive to students' needs and more aligned with the social and cultural demands of the school community. Furthermore, the ongoing exchange between teachers fosters mutual professional development by promoting the circulation of knowledge and the critical reflection of classroom practices.

In the realm of assessment, co-teaching makes significant contributions by breaking away from individualistic and authoritarian evaluation logics. In co-teaching contexts, assessment tends to become a more dialogical and formative process in which teachers collaboratively define criteria, examine students' learning paths, and jointly adjust instructional strategies. This approach emphasizes continuous monitoring and constructive feedback, contributing to the development of a more democratic assessment culture. Although challenges remain - such as reconciling differing perspectives and sharing responsibilities - shared assessment represents a step forward in making the educational process fairer and more meaningful. As shown in experiences documented by Serrano (2005), this type of evaluation

holds greater potential for fostering learning because it considers students' contexts, trajectories, and strategies for overcoming challenges.

Pedagogical mediation is also transformed through co-teaching, as having two teachers in the classroom allows for greater attention to students' individual needs. When there is complementarity between the teachers, it becomes possible to organize differentiated activities, adapt materials, and provide closer support to students. This is especially relevant in the early years of schooling, when children require more individualized interventions and consistent emotional support. In such cases, co-teaching functions as a mechanism for inclusion and care. According to Capellini and Gonçalves (2004), the presence of two professionals enables not only the accommodation of students' specific needs but also the development of stronger bonds, based on trust, affection, and the appreciation of differences. This closer relationship with students enhances the effectiveness of pedagogical interventions and fosters a more welcoming and democratic school environment.

Continuing teacher education emerges as a key factor for the success of co-teaching. It is not enough to place two professionals in the same classroom; it is necessary to create conditions for both to develop relational, ethical, and didactic competencies aimed at collaboration. As pointed out by Mendez (2010), Ambrosim (2024), Souza and Schander (2024), the development of collaborative practices depends on training processes that critically examine teaching work, encourage active listening, and promote interprofessional dialogue. Without specific training and collective spaces for reflection, there is a risk that co-teaching will become a mechanical division of tasks, lacking formative intentionality. For this reason, school networks and administrators play a vital role in developing policies that support ongoing professional development and institutionalize co-teaching as a pedagogical strategy.

Co-teaching also contributes to the formation of professional learning communities, in which teachers recognize themselves as co-constructors of each other's knowledge and development. In such environments, the exchange of experiences, the discussion of dilemmas, and the collaborative construction of solutions become everyday practices. According to Ferreira da Silva and Fontebasso (2013), engaging in co-teaching-based formative processes strengthens teachers' professional autonomy and ethical commitment to transforming schools. When these bonds are established, teachers move beyond isolated work and begin to form networks of support, learning, and resistance in the face of everyday school challenges. Even though not all schools are prepared to fully adopt this model, its gradual implementation - accompanied by training and reflection - can represent a significant step forward in the quality of education offered in the early years.

The theoretical contributions discussed throughout the article converge toward an understanding of co-teaching as a transformative practice, situated between pedagogical action and a political commitment to inclusion and diversity. The collaborative dynamics observed in our mentoring teams underscore the potential of co-teaching to reshape everyday school practices, fostering shared responsibility, dialogue, and a more democratic approach to pedagogical organization (Ildebrand *et al.*, 2024). Villa and Thousand (2000, 2005) provide conceptual foundations for different co-teaching models, demonstrating that collaborative practice is not merely a technique but a teaching philosophy. Alongside them, authors such as Moreira and Candau (2003, 2008) and Canen (2002) expand the discussion by incorporating multiculturalism and curricular justice as essential elements for rethinking curriculum in plural contexts. These frameworks support the notion that co-teaching, beyond being a functional organization, constitutes a political-pedagogical device that challenges and reconfigures school structures. Lemos (2014), Soares (2025), Schulz and Xypas (2024) in turn, highlight the potential of collaboration between classroom and language teachers in building critical and culturally situated language practices, while Ildebrand (2022) emphasizes the role of co-authorship and collaborative production in students' discursive development.

The contributions of Capellini and Gonçalves (2004), Mendez (2010), Ferreira da Silva and Fontebasso (2013), and Barbosa *et al.* (2024) emphasize that co-teaching must be grounded in formative processes that value dialogue, listening, and joint planning. When teachers are trained to work in partnership - and when institutional support is in place - the school becomes a space for transformation. Experiences documented by Souza and Schander (2024), Traversini *et al.* (2012), and Serrano (2005) demonstrate how co-teaching can effectively change school culture, promoting equity in access to knowledge and expanding learning opportunities. Although challenges remain - such as the need to reorganize time, space, and power relations - the body of theoretical and empirical evidence analyzed here points to the potential of collaborative teaching as a catalyst for deep and sustainable pedagogical change.

Based on the reflections developed regarding the foundations of co-teaching, the curricular dimensions, and the challenges posed by cultural diversity in today's schools, it becomes evident that co-teaching constitutes both a didactic strategy and a pedagogical-political stance in the face of the complexities of early years education. Despite institutional, training, and structural limitations, the studies reviewed indicate that joint action between classroom and English language teachers has the potential to transform school practices - making them more integrated, dialogical, and responsive to students' individualities.

Grounded in these elements, the next section presents the final considerations of this article, returning to the guiding question, synthesizing the main findings, and indicating possible implications for teacher education and the organization of pedagogical work in co-teaching contexts.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the central question that guided this study, it was possible to identify - through the literature reviewed - that co-teaching represents a powerful mechanism for transforming pedagogical work. The theoretical review indicated that the co-teaching models proposed by Villa and Thousand (2000, 2005), combined with the multicultural curriculum conceptions of Moreira and Candau (2003, 2008) and the critical pedagogical practices of authors such as Canen (2002), Soares (2025), Schulz and Xypas (2024), and Lemos (2014), provide a solid foundation for constructing situated and meaningful educational practices. When developed with intentionality and institutional support, shared teaching practices allow for the reorganization of pedagogical mediation, the expansion of curricular horizons, and the inclusion of multiple voices present within the school environment.

From a practical teaching perspective, the discussions point to the need to invest in collaborative pedagogical approaches involving joint planning, dialogical assessment, and integrated mediation. In a situated and specific manner, the coordinated work between classroom teachers and English language teachers expands learning opportunities and enables the recognition of students' diverse knowledge. For these practices to be effective, active school leadership is essential to create conditions for collective work, ensure professional development opportunities, and promote a culture of collaboration. Furthermore, continuing education emerges as a key element in strengthening co-teaching, as it equips professionals with relational, critical, and interdisciplinary competencies that are essential for teaching in diverse and challenging contexts.

Notwithstanding the contributions presented, this study has certain limitations. As a nonsystematic review, the selection of sources was primarily based on theoretical relevance and direct alignment with the study's objectives, which may have excluded other relevant experiences from different educational contexts. Additionally, the focus on the early years of elementary education and English language instruction limits the scope of the analysis to this specific segment. As future perspectives, empirical studies are suggested to investigate the implementation of co-teaching in various school realities, as well as research exploring teacher education programs that emphasize co-teaching. Such investigations

may contribute to advancing the debate and shaping public policies aimed at pedagogical innovation and curricular justice.

In conclusion, our collaborative study indicates that co-teaching is not only a promising pedagogical strategy but also a transformative approach to reconfiguring educational practices. The collective efforts of mentoring teams and continued professional development are essential to build a more inclusive, dialogical, and responsive educational environment (Ildebrand *et al.*, 2024).

Thus, this article reaffirms the importance of co-teaching as a strategic pathway toward building a more equitable, plural, and responsive education system that meets contemporary demands. By articulating theory and practice, curriculum and diversity, planning and reflection, co-teaching enables schools to reinvent themselves as spaces of collaborative learning and civic formation. Especially in the early years - when the foundations of the educational process are established - the presence of two professionals working in partnership provides a valuable opportunity to broaden pedagogical perspectives, embrace differences, and promote more meaningful teaching experiences. It is hoped that this article will contribute to strengthening the dialogue on co-teaching and inspire new practices aimed at building a quality, inclusive public school system.

We'd like to invite fellow educators and educational leaders to join this conversation, contributing to a collective effort to reimagine and transform our teaching practices through collaborative approaches.

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