Critical Teacher Education from a Dialogical Perspective: Redesigning New Horizons

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Resumo

This research aims to investigate and contrast traditional and dialogic paradigms of language teacher education. In methodological terms, this investigation follows a qualitative approach (Triviños, 1987), with exploratory objectives (Paiva, 2019) and documentary procedures (Silveira; Sakamoto, 2014). To theoretically support our arguments, we draw on the studies of Bakhtin (1979, 2010, 2014), Oliveira and Foerste (2023), Gatti (2016), Moita Lopes (2013), Miller (2013), Freire and Leffa (2013), Silva *et al*. (2024), Paiva (1997), Kleiman (2001), Pimenta (2010), among others. The results highlighted the need for an approach that goes beyond mere knowledge reproduction, promoting interaction, problematization, and collective knowledge construction. Thus, the alternative critical-dialogic model of teacher education emerges as a path to develop more reflective and engaged teachers, capable of acting in a transformative way within the educational context.

Keywords*:* English teacher education; traditional paradigms; critical-dialogic approach.

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A formação docente crítica sob uma perspectiva dialógica: redesenhando novos horizontes

Abstract

Esta pesquisa visa investigar e contrastar os paradigmas tradicionais e dialógicos da formação docente de professores de línguas. Em termos metodológicos, este estudo é de abordagem qualitativa (Triviños, 1987), de objetivos exploratórios (Paiva, 2019) e de procedimentos documentais (Silveira; Sakamoto, 2014). Para embasar teoricamente os nossos argumentos, recorremos aos estudos de Bakhtin (1979, 2010, 2014), Oliveira e Foerste (2023), Gatti (2016), Moita Lopes (2013), Miller (2013), Freire e Leffa (2013), Silva *et al.* (2024), Paiva (1997), Kleiman (2001), Pimenta (2010), entre outros. Com o resultado, evidenciou-se a necessidade de uma abordagem que vá além da mera reprodução de saberes, promovendo a interação, a problematização e a construção coletiva do conhecimento. Assim, o modelo alternativo crítico-dialógico de formação docente se apresenta como um caminho para a formação de professores mais reflexivos e engajados, capazes de atuar de maneira transformadora no contexto educacional.

Palavras-chave*:* formação de professores de inglês; paradigmas tradicionais; abordagem crítico-dialógica.

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1 A few introductory words

The process of preparing for the teaching profession has long been a subject of (re)consideration by institutions responsible for shaping initial teacher education policies in Brazil. In this context, although the theoretical and methodological aspects emphasized in teacher education programs align with real-world contexts of knowledge sharing, interconnecting theory and future practice with professional training, opportunities for student-teachers to practice the skills developed throughout their theoretical-methodological education are often delayed. In this sense, teacher education extends beyond theoretical content and encompasses more subjective aspects related to teaching practice.

We are constantly framed by paradigms that dictate how we should speak, dress, interact, teach, and learn (Vasconcellos, 2018). These paradigms, in their various nuances, shape who we are, often without providing the opportunity to question or access alternative ways of being and existing in the world. Based on this notion, we live in a new era characterized by new forms of communication, a "technolife" that is hybrid, plural, multifaceted, and unstable (Silva *et al.*, 2024).

When narrowing this scenario to the ever-evolving field of teaching and learning, we often observe an imprinting effect, that is, an unquestionable adherence to the standards imposed upon us. Considering the historical trajectory of teacher education, which for a long time was rooted in traditional and content-based practices, this imprinting phenomenon becomes

evident. In a given chronotope[1], a specific educational approach was acquired, left unchallenged, and subsequently followed as the only possible model of instruction. However, in light of contemporary realities, traditional practices have demonstrated, through concrete data from large-scale assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), that there is a pressing need for innovation, experimentation, and investment in alternative strategies to keep pace with the evolving world.

In this regard, studies from the past few decades, grounded in the historical, theoretical, and methodological perspectives of Applied Linguistics (henceforth AL), have contributed significantly to the field of language teacher education (Moita Lopes, 2013; Miller, 2013; Freire; Leffa, 2013). What was once limited to the mere transmission of theoretical-methodological content is now being reconsidered through the lens of the social, dialogic (Bakhtin, 1979; 2010; 2014), ideological, and political dimensions of language and teacher education. We should therefore envision teacher education as an approach that acknowledges the other, recognizing them as a sociocultural and historical agent. A teacher education framework must engage with the hybrid and unstable scenarios of teaching and learning.

From an AL perspective, particularly concerning language education, academic advancements in teacher training have been continuously reinforced through various means. These include curricular components of supervised teaching practices, projects aimed at fostering initial teacher education, academic events, and collections of scholarly works that compile classroom-based research findings. Consequently, we move toward the concept

1 Chronotope, in Bakhtin's circle, is the inseparable relationship between time and space that shapes how events, interactions, subjects, and meanings are constructed within a particular social and historical context.

of dialogic teacher education, one that engages with social, pedagogical, methodological, and innovative dimensions, fostering collaboration while considering both the "self" and the "other" as catalysts in the teaching and learning process. This discussion prompts a reevaluation of how traditional and dialogic paradigms of teacher education operate in real-life contexts.

In light of such considerations, this research, anchored in the principles of AL and the Dialogical Theory of Language (DTL), aims to investigate and contrast the traditional and dialogic paradigms of language teacher education. More specifically, our objectives are: (i) to define the concept of critical-dialogic teacher education; and (ii) to discuss the importance of integrating theoretical-methodological, pedagogical, and linguistic knowledge in English language teacher education for the development of critical and reflective competencies within the school context.

Methodologically, this study adopts a qualitative approach (Triviños, 1987), with exploratory objectives (Paiva, 2019) and documentary procedures (Silveira; Sakamoto, 2014). According to Triviños (1982), qualitative research is systematic and complex, as it does not follow a linear conception of knowledge but rather a perspective that challenges a positivist view of research. Furthermore, in line with the author's perspective, qualitative research aligns with: (i) subjectivist-interpretative approaches, which focus on the researcher's perceptions of a given phenomenon; and (ii) critical-participatory approaches with a historical-structural vision, which explore reflective and intuitive methodologies to gain an in-depth understanding of the research object. In summary, studies of this nature aim to "comprehend and analyze reality" (Triviños, 1987, p. 117) from

the perspective of the researcher's critical subjectivity. Regarding bibliographic procedures, as highlighted by Cervo and Bervian (1996), these involve explaining a specific research object based on reading, synthesizing, and categorizing previously published information. Thus, bibliographic research aims to systematize relevant information to deepen understanding of a given topic and provide a theoretical foundation for further investigations.

To substantiate our theoretical framework, we draw upon the works of Bakhtin (1979; 2010; 2014) Oliveira and Foerste (2023), Gatti (2016), Moita Lopes (2013), Miller (2013), Freire and Leffa (2013), Silva *et al.* (2024), Paiva (1997), Johnson and Freeman (2001), Rodrigues and Alcoforado (2023), Kleiman (2001), Pimenta (2010), among others.

2 Theoretical framework

In the following sections, we compile the technical-scientific literature concerning the traditional and dialogic paradigms of teacher education. To this end, we will reflect on: (i) public policies related to teacher education, (ii) the underlying paradigms within this theoretical field, and (iii) gaps in the training of language teachers. This discussion will then lead to a definition of what constitutes a critical-dialogic teacher education.

2.1 Paradigmatic aspects of teacher education: some theoretical reflections

Our lives are shaped by paradigms that continuously dictate how we should interact, speak, dress, and live. In their essence, paradigms deal with the standardization and repetition of unquestionable procedures; once followed (or socially imposed), they become the only way to perceive the world. According to França (2020, p. 78, our translation[2]), paradigms function as "the instruments of a given era, of a given society, that allow us [...] to think in a particular way, following certain logical assumptions". Furthermore, the author emphasizes that by adhering to paradigms, we are thinking "through a specific formula." Thus, paradigms operate as epistemological structures that guide how we interact with the world.

Due to the exclusionary nature of some paradigms (traditional paradigm), we must move towards new ways of seeing, interacting, and generating knowledge/science. Accordingly, Vasconcellos (2018) argues that it is necessary to rethink a new paradigm for Science, one that considers transdisciplinarity, hybrid contexts, and the articulation of essential knowledge within a given chronotope. Vasconcellos (2018, p. 10) stresses the need to "question the assumptions of science" in order to keep up with the evolving world. In this sense, the author defines paradigms as "rules and regulations" (Vasconcellos, 2018, p. 30), shaped by each individual's experiences. Essentially, we are driven by paradigms that shape our discourses and actions.

2 "Os instrumentos de uma determinada época, de uma determinada sociedade, que nos permitem [...] pensar de uma maneira particular, seguindo determinados pressupostos lógicos".

In the context of teacher education, the notion of paradigms significantly influences how teachers are expected to act in the classroom. Elements such as language conception, teacher education perspectives, curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and public policies are all shaped by paradigms. Thus, if we are exposed to traditional paradigms of education and teaching, we tend to follow them unquestioningly, treating them as a rigid standard. However, when we adopt more eclectic, transdisciplinary, and socio-contextual paradigms (complex/critical-dialogic paradigm), we align ourselves more closely with the reality of an increasingly complex, unstable, and intersubjective world (Vasconcellos, 2018).

In light of this, discussing public policies that guide teacher education, Oliveira and Foerste (2023, p. 7) reaffirm that,

> The struggle for valuing teachers remains on the Brazilian educational agenda, stemming from a broader issue rooted in the economic, political, and social conditions of an unequal, exclusionary, and unjust society, marked by capitalist relations of production, which have impacted professional qualification over the past years (Oliveira; Foerste, 2023, p. 7, our translation[3]).

Thus, these underlying issues in teacher education become problems that must be analyzed and reflected upon during initial teacher training so that future professionals are sensitized and can engage in the struggle for improvements in teacher education, the labor field, and education in general. It is important to highlight that, in light of the Brazilian Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (Law 9394/1996), significant improvements

3 "Reafirma que a luta pela valorização do professor segue na pauta educacional brasileira, que parte de uma problemática mais ampla proveniente das condições econômicas, políticas e sociais de uma sociedade desigual, excludente e injusta, marcada pelas relações capitalistas de produção, que vêm repercutindo na qualificação profissional, ao longo dos últimos anos".

in this area have been made. Oliveira and Foerste (2023, p. 7, our translation[4]) emphasize that "the political and social problems of teacher training structures, their content, and didactics lead to the search for answers regarding the initial training of teachers." This search for answers, as mentioned by the authors, considers the diversity of scenarios found in Brazilian schools.

Oliveira and Foerste (2023, p. 7), when presenting a historical overview of teacher education, highlight that,

> The landscape of teacher education in Brazil is marked by ruptures, turnover, and discontinuity in the implementation of public policies for initial and continuing teacher education. This has resulted in many gaps between legislation and reality, as there is not enough time allocated for discussion, implementation, and impact assessment of teacher training courses before new guidelines are proposed (our translation[5]).

The (in)constant (re)evaluation of policies guiding teacher education presents a challenge, with gaps that fail to align with the guidelines and the realities in which they must be implemented. This is a complex and demanding task that requires stringent policies concerning undergraduate curricula and the practical contexts in which these policies must operate.

Due to the multiplicity of training and work scenarios, which are influenced by economic, political, and social factors, there is no unified set of ideas or principles regarding teacher education processes. What should (or should not) be prioritized in teacher education? What is (or is not) essential? How can the diversity of individuals, contexts, and pedagogical approaches

4 "Os problemas de caráter político e social das estruturas formativas de professores, seus conteúdos e didáticas, que levam à busca de respostas com relação à formação inicial dos professores".

5 "O panorama da formação docente no Brasil está marcado por rupturas, rotatividade e descontinuidade na implementação de políticas públicas de formação inicial e continuada de professores que traz muitas lacunas entre a legislação e a realidade, uma vez que não são considerados tempo suficiente para discussão, implementação e avaliação de impactos nos cursos de formação de professores para que sejam propostas novas diretrizes".

be considered? These and other questions directly impact teacher education. According to Gatti (2014) and Oliveira and Foerste (2023, p. 14, our translation[6]), the classical concept of teacher education is associated with the traditional model of initial training, in which "theory is dissociated from experiences and knowledge acquired through work experience". Within this traditional paradigm, teacher education is fragmented, based on the assumption that the world is static and measurable, adhering to a single philosophy or principle.

In the Traditional Paradigm of Teacher Education, theoretical training is prioritized over practical experience, meaning that practical training is introduced at a later stage. This implies that teacher education students, particularly those in undergraduate programs, are "bombarded" with theoretical and methodological content, often in unrealistic or decontextualized scenarios. Only at a later stage do they engage in real-world, situated teaching experiences. According to Freire and Leffa (2013), when teacher education is confined to a traditional framework, pedagogical practices remain content-focused and teacher-centered, which significantly limits the learning process. The prioritization of theory over practice leads to a situation where little to no attention is given to students' experiences and personal backgrounds. In this limited perspective, students are often perceived as blank slates, with their lived experiences disregarded. Figure 1 illustrates this concept further.

6 "A teoria dissociada de experiências e conhecimentos adquiridos pela experiência de trabalho".

Figure 1- Core Aspects of Traditional Teacher Education



Source: Designed by the authors (2025).

The adjectives presented in Figure 1 reinforce the notion of a paradigm that does not allow space for subjectivities and the complexities of the concrete world. According to Bakhtin (2010), the concrete world is the one that exists in the reality of social life, in the interaction between real subjects who are historically and culturally situated. It contrasts with an abstract view of language and discourse, emphasizing that every utterance emerges from a specific context, within a particular chronotope, and is always oriented toward another. These aspects cannot be disregarded in teacher education, as it is, at its core, a political and social struggle.

Bakhtin (2010) highlights that in the concrete world, language is not a closed system of rules but a living practice, permeated by values, intentions, and dialogical relations. This means that the meaning of utterances is not solely found in the structure of the language but in the way they are used in real communicative situations. Thus, a teacher education model

rooted in traditional paradigms and based on a reductionist perspective of language fails to engage with the concrete world.

Given the traditional paradigm of teacher education, it is necessary to reconsider the structure and dynamics of teacher training programs (Oliveira; Foerste, 2023). However, this represents a significant challenge for public policies that guide the legislative and institutional principles of teacher education. In this context, Gatti (2021, p. 4, our translation[7]) points out that there are "difficulties in reaching a minimal consensus on a formative perspective for teachers in basic education, as well as questions about the real value given by higher education institutions to undergraduate programs." Thus, reducing teacher education to a single paradigm would mean limiting possibilities and contexts; it would mean ignoring the instability and complexity of the world, as well as the intersubjective, socio-historical, and cultural construction of subjects. In light of such considerations, in the next section, we rely our reflection on a critical and dialogic teacher education.

2.2 Critical-dialogic teacher education: a concrete world through a Bakhtinian lens

Teacher education, when anchored in a critical-dialogic perspective, requires an understanding of pedagogical practice as a social and interactional phenomenon. Through conflicting events in teaching practice, teachers mobilize pedagogical, methodological, and social knowledge to better guide the learning

7 "Dificuldades de consenso mínimo em torno de uma perspectiva formativa para professores da educação básica e questões sobre o real valor dado pelos agentes da educação superior a um curso de graduação".

process. Given the limitations of the traditional paradigm of teacher education, Freire and Leffa (2013, p. 4, our translation[8]) argue that,

> the emergence of a complex paradigm, which prioritizes non-linearity and the non-fragmentation of knowledge, makes us aware of the need to coexist with uncertainty, unpredictability, and instability. It places us before the tensions and contradictions of the systems in which and with which we live, naturally leading us to a revision of definitions and concepts, in search of more adequate responses to the dynamics and specificities of the context and moment.

In the complex paradigm of teacher education, we find a more comprehensive way of understanding reality, an epistemological framework grounded in complexity, instability, and intersubjectivity. Contrary to the traditional view, the complex paradigm requires us to move beyond a fragmented understanding of knowledge, advocating for a more autonomous and critical teacher education. According to Freire and Leffa (2013), the complex paradigm of teacher education embraces process and incompleteness, emphasizing that (trans)formation occurs through meaningful and practical experiences.

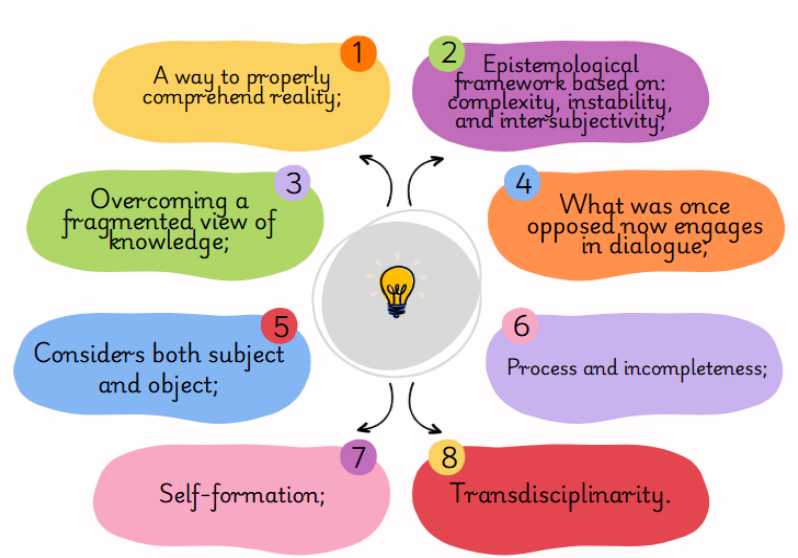
In light of the above, it is necessary to rethink teacher education within these educational ecosystems. Thus, Critical-Dialogic Teacher Education (hereafter, CDTE) emerges as a continuous and reflective process in which educators, immersed in pedagogical practices, appropriate not only theoretical knowledge but also experiential insights, integrating them into a

8 "A emergência de um paradigma complexo, que prioriza a não linearidade e a não fragmentação do conhecimento, que nos conscientiza sobre a necessidade de convivência com a incerteza, imprevisibilidade e instabilidade e que nos coloca diante das tensões e contradições dos sistemas em que é com os quais vivemos, naturalmente nos conduz a uma revisão de definições e conceitos, buscando respostas mais adequadas às dinâmicas e especificidades do contexto e momento".

critical analysis of educational dynamics. This dialogic approach to teacher education is grounded in the Dialogic Theory of Language (Bakhtin, 2010), wherein the subject is constituted through interactions and dialogue with others. This implies a teaching praxis that transcends the mere transmission of content and is oriented toward the co-construction of meaning, adapting to diverse realities.

Consider Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 - A Critical-Dialogic Model for Teacher Education



Source: Designed by the authors (2025).

Based on Figure 2 above, there is a clear concern with understanding reality through the alteritarian dialogue between subject, space, and time, that is, chronotopy (Bakhtin, 2014). In this sense, through a process of incompleteness, self-formation, and instability, Critical-Dialogic Teacher Education

(CDTE) presupposes a constant problematization of the realities surrounding the educator, whether in the school ecosystem or within broader social structures, recognizing the multiple voices that shape the educational process. Thus, pedagogical action becomes a field of tensions and possibilities, where educators are challenged to rethink their practices, even questioning power structures that may shape the teaching-learning process within a given context.

Dialogic approaches recognize the central role of otherness in teacher education, which implies an active and (self-)critical stance in response to the unstable realities that emerge from dialogic and intersubjective relationships. The subject, therefore, is not seen in isolation but as part of a network of meanings that unfolds through continuous exchanges of knowledge, fostering a transformative praxis, one committed to the (trans)formation of both educators and learners (Silva, 2024; Bakhtin, 2010). According to Bakhtin (2010, p. 287), "I cannot manage without the other, I cannot become myself without the other; I must find myself in another to find another in me". As such, we, as socially, historically, and culturally constructed subjects, must assume ethical responsibility for the other and act accordingly.

Applying these principles to teacher education, it becomes essential to engage in dialogue with our peers to socialize and construct innovative teaching practices. Moreover, critical self-dialogue (the self with the self) plays a crucial role in guiding our professional and personal development. Thus, we must envision a teacher education model centered on otherness.

According to Bakhtin and the Circle (2010), otherness, a foundational principle in their studies, is characterized as the axiological process through which subjects construct themselves in dialogic relationships with others. Bakhtin (2010) and the

Circle emphasize that it is through these relationships and the responsibility of the self toward the other that we are constituted. In summary, recalling Bakhtin's ideas (1979, p. 314-318), "our speech, that is, our utterances [...], are filled with the words of others. (They) introduce their own expressivity, their evaluative tone, which we assimilate, restructure, and modify". Thus, the sensitive relationship between self and other always brings forth existing discourses present in our society.

When discussing the broader challenges in teacher education, Oliveira and Foerste (2023, p. 16, our translation[9]) draw particular attention to the fact that "teacher education policies for both initial and continuing education have rarely been consolidated based on teachers' voices, which often fails to reflect the reality of schools". In short, the institutions responsible for advocating and proposing improvements in teacher education are not listening to one of the key agents in this process: the teachers themselves. By failing to do so, they end up proposing imaginary and decontextualized scenarios that do not align with the realities and diversity of educational settings. The authors further emphasize that "teacher education remains devoid of collectivity, diverging from the paths that the idea of professional socialization could offer in shaping not only the teaching profession but also the school environment" (our translation)[10].

Teachers' voices must be heard; they cannot be silenced. Teacher education must be built upon dialogue, active listening, critical analysis, reflection, and change. In light of these concerns, Paiva (1997) highlights that Foreign Language (FL)

9 "A formação de professores é que as políticas de formação inicial e contínua implementadas pouco têm se consolidado a partir das vozes dos professores, o que por hora, muitas vezes, não contempla a realidade escolar".

10 "A formação docente segue destituída da coletividade, desviando dos caminhos que a ideia de socialização profissional poderia contribuir para novos rumos, não só da profissão docente, como do ambiente escolar".

teachers, particularly English Language teachers, must, above all, possess a solid pedagogical foundation. In support of this perspective, it is essential to recognize that language teacher education should be anchored in three fundamental pillars: (1) proficiency in the target language (FL), (2) knowledge of the theories that underpin the teaching-learning process, and (3) a critical-reflective approach to teaching practice.

It is worth mentioning that initial teacher education programs do not always incorporate, or rather, are not always structured around, the integration of language, practice, and pedagogy. In this regard, Gimenez (2005, p. 4) discusses the challenges and shortcomings in teacher education programs, particularly in initial training, stating that "the prevailing conception of preparing teachers at the initial level is to transmit as much knowledge as possible in the fields of linguistic and literary studies." In short, linguistic and literary aspects are often prioritized at the expense of real, contextualized, and situated pedagogical practice, which can delay the development of pedagogical competencies.

In this duality between prioritizing theory and delaying practice, Johnson and Freeman (2001) highlight the essential role of theoretical knowledge in initial teacher education programs. However, they also reaffirm the need for complementarity between theoretical and practical knowledge, as teaching requires pedagogical, linguistic, and methodological expertise. In response to this issue, Rodrigues and Alcoforado (2023, p. 2) emphasize that "(inter)disciplinary scientific knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and organizational/contextual competencies can form the foundation of teachers' professional identity." Therefore, advocating for a solid, critical, and

reflective initial teacher education is crucial, as the quality of a teacher's professional practice is directly linked to the type of initial training they have received.

Based on these reflections, we revisit Kleiman's (2001, p. 17) arguments, which emphasize that teacher education, anchored in the theoretical-methodological principles of Applied Linguistics, seeks to examine "the natural contexts in which teacher education is conducted [...] evidenced [...] and constructed." From this perspective, it becomes evident that a more nuanced and sensitive approach is needed when considering the (future) work of teachers, as research in this field, is not straightforward but rather multiple, complex, and interdisciplinary, as the author highlights.

In this sense, drawing on the notion that teaching is praxis (Pimenta, 2010), we are directed toward the core essence of the teaching profession, which is deeply embedded in teaching-learning processes. In this regard, Pimenta (2010, p. 83, our translation) asserts that this work, situated within the school environment, is systematic and scientific, stating that "the technical-practical knowledge of how to ensure that learning takes place as a result of the teaching activity"[11] guides us toward praxis, the unity between theoretical and practical activity. Similarly, Marx (1986) defines praxis as human actions that engage with the transformation of nature and society, emphasizing its theoretical-practical unity. These conceptions of praxis align with Freire's (1996, p. 25) perspective, where the concept is defined as "a creative and transformative action upon reality".

This linguistic knowledge, as defined by Kleiman (2001),

11 "Os conhecimentos técnico-práticos sobre como assegurar que a aprendizagem ocorra como resultado da atividade de ensino".

is considered a subjective particularity of the teacher's expertise, requiring the student-teacher to develop a broad linguistic education. The author further emphasizes that linguistic education includes not only the conception of language but also theoretical-methodological approaches, which directly impact learning processes, the production of teaching materials, and continuous teacher education. In this sense, it plays a pivotal role in shaping and modifying curricula that prioritize initial teacher education programs in language studies (Kleiman, 2001).

Further exploring this topic, we can observe an intrinsic connection between Kleiman's (2001) insights and research conducted within the field of the Ethnography of Communication (Gumperz; Hymes, 1972), particularly in relation to the need for competent speakers of the target language, a concept tied to Communicative Competence. When revisiting these theoretical foundations in the context of (trans)forming teacher education, it is essential to highlight that, in addition to broad linguistic training associated with teaching practice, student-teachers must develop literacies inherent to their future professional environments.

In this regard, we refer to teacher-specific literacies as the ability to (re)plan, develop, and (re)evaluate the materialities of being a teacher. In this way, we constrast, during the next section, the two teacher education paradigm.

3 Contrasting teacher education paradigms: the traditional and the critical-dialogic approach

Teacher education, as a scientific field of study (Miller, 2013; Freire; Leffa, 2013), is in a continuous process of (trans)

formation. As such, depending on the influence of various theoretical-methodological perspectives, it shapes, updates, and re-signifies pedagogical practices, guiding both teacher preparation and their conceptions of teaching, learning, and language. Thus, the teacher education process is not neutral; rather, it reflects values, ideologies, and perspectives that directly influence teaching practices and knowledge construction in the classroom, which, in many cases, remains highly unstable.

As previously discussed, among the main paradigms shaping teacher education, two stand out: the traditional model, which emphasizes the hierarchical and linear transmission of knowledge, and the critical-dialogic approach, which views teaching as an interactive, social, and chronotopically situated process. Therefore, Table 1 below presents a comparative overview of these paradigms, highlighting key differences, including their conception of language, epistemological foundations, teacher-student relationship, methodological focus, assessment practices, and mobilization of knowledge.

Table 1 - Teacher Education Paradigms: The Traditional and the Critical-Dialogic Approaches

Aspect:	Traditional Teacher Education:	Critical-Dialectical Teacher Education:
Conception of Language	Grammar rules system and fixed structures	Understood as an interactive and social process
Conception of Teaching	Transmission of ready-made knowledge	Collective construction of knowledge
Role of the Teacher	Central figure, holder of knowledge	Mediator of dialogue and knowledge construction

Role of the Student	Passive recipient of knowledge	Active subject, co-author of the learning process
Teacher-Student Relationship	Hierarchical, distant	Dialogical, collaborative
Methodological Approach	Theoretical exposition, memorization	Interactive practices, problematization
Relationship with Knowledge	Scientific knowledge disconnected from reality	Scientific knowledge in dialogue with experiences and contexts
Use of Teaching Materials	Rigid, standardized contents	Open, dynamic, dialogical materials
Assessment of Learning	Focus on content reproduction (exams, tests)	Processual, reflective, and formative assessment
Perspective on Teaching Practice	Technical, centered on the application of methods and rules	Reflective, based on the problematization of practice
Objective of Teacher Education	Training teachers as reproducers of knowledge	Training critical teachers who transform reality
Relationship with Chronotype	Linear and fixed, disregarding the historicity of subjects and discourses	Dynamic and relational, valuing interaction and the construction of meanings in time and space

Source: Designed by the authors (2025).

Given the above, it is clear that teacher education is not a homogeneous process, but rather one that is shaped by distinct epistemological conceptions that directly impact pedagogical practice. As pointed out, the differences between traditional and critical-dialogical paradigms of teacher education are not restricted to the conceptual level but are manifested in the ways in which teaching, learning, and pedagogical relationships are actually organized.

From a traditional perspective, for example, the conception of language as a system tends to materialize in practices centered on the explanation of grammatical rules, the presentation of preselected content, and the performance of exercises aimed at memorizing and reproducing knowledge. In this scenario, the teacher occupies a central position, directing activities and controlling learning processes, while students predominantly assume a receptive role. In contrast, a critical-dialogical perspective can be materialized through practices that draw on students' experiences and contexts, promote the problematization of real-life situations, foster the negotiation of meanings, and understand knowledge as a collective construction. This involves, for example, the use of open and contextualized teaching materials, collaborative activities, problem-posing discussions, projects, and situations in which students can interpret, question, take positions, and formulate responses to socially relevant issues.

Likewise, assessment is no longer restricted to verifying the reproduction of content but becomes part of the students' formative process, taking into account reflection, participation, authorship, and knowledge construction. Thus, the paradigms presented in Table 1 are not merely different theoretical conceptions; rather, they guide distinct ways of concretely organizing the classroom, teaching materials, interactions, activities, and assessment processes.

4 Final remarks

In this regard, it is worth (in)concluding by elucidating the words of Freire (1991, p. 58, our translation), where he

states, “no one becomes a teacher on a certain Tuesday at 4 p.m. […] No one is born a teacher or marked to be a teacher. We form ourselves as educators permanently, in practice, and in reflection upon practice”[12]. These wise and reflective thoughts by Freire guide us toward processes of (re)discovery of being and becoming a teacher. Therefore, the processes of (re/de) construction and teacher education, as Freire (1991) points out, do not happen on predetermined days and times, they are not linear movements, nor are they final. Teacher education occurs in practice, in reflection upon practice; the process of this education is what matters most, which is why we must have and promote solid, critical, and reflective education.

Teacher education, according to Moita Lopes (1995, p. 114, our translation), should be seen “[...] not only as a learning activity situated in limited and precise times and spaces, but also as the vital action of self-construction [...]”[13]. In other words, it must and needs to be a broad education, requiring a (re/de) construction of being and becoming a teacher. Thus, a teacher education grounded in meaningful, reflective, autonomous practices that question the reality in which they are situated is advocated.

The contrast between the traditional and critical-dialogical paradigms highlights the need for an approach that goes beyond mere knowledge reproduction, promoting interaction, problematization, and collective knowledge construction. By recognizing the historicity and complexity of teaching, the alternative critical-dialogical model emerges as a pathway for the development of more reflective and engaged teachers, capable

12 “Ninguém começa a ser professor numa certa terça-feira às 4 horas da tarde […]. Ninguém nasce professor ou marcado para ser professor. A gente se forma como educador permanentemente, na prática, e na reflexão sobre a prática”.

13 “[...] não apenas como uma atividade de aprendizagem situada em tempos e espaços limitados e precisos, mas também como a ação vital de autoconstrução [...]”.

of acting in a transformative way within the educational context. Thus, understanding these differences not only broadens the view of formative processes but also allows for the reconsideration of practices that promote a more dialogical and meaningful education. In conclusion, it is important to highlight that one paradigm does not invalidate the other. They complement each other as they are used critically and ethically.

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