

Original Article

## Description of the Participation and Actions Carried Out by Speech-Language Therapists in Collaborative Work and Co-Teaching in Chile

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### ABSTRACT

Collaborative work is recognized as an interactive process where various professionals collectively define, discuss, and offer solutions to problems. Within collaborative work, the modality of co-teaching can be found, defined as the process in which two or more individuals share the responsibility for teaching a group or the entire student body of a class. This modality is considered one of the most effective forms of collaborative work, as it enables interdisciplinary teams to make decisions aimed at achieving student success in the classroom. Speech-Language Therapists are integral members of classroom teams. However, their specific functions, the nature of their participation, and the approach of their work within these teams are not documented in detail in Chile. Therefore, the objective of this study is to describe the current participation and actions of speech-language therapists in collaborative work and co-teaching within regular classrooms. To this end, a descriptive quantitative design was employed to study a sample of 135 participants who met the eligibility criteria. A Google questionnaire was used for data collection. The results show that speech-language therapists have a high level of participation in collaborative work, while only half of the sample reported engaging in co-teaching activities. Further research on the actions of speech-language therapists is recommended to systematize the practices that these professionals carry out in the field of education.

### Keywords:

Speech-Language Pathologist; Collaborative Work; Co-teaching

## Descripción de la participación y acciones ejercidas por fonoaudiólogos/os en el trabajo colaborativo y la co-enseñanza en Chile

### RESUMEN

El trabajo colaborativo se conoce como un proceso interactivo donde los diversos profesionales definen, discuten y ofrecen soluciones a problemas de manera compartida. Dentro del trabajo colaborativo, existe la modalidad de co-enseñanza, la que puede definirse como el proceso en el que dos o más personas comparten la responsabilidad de enseñanza de un grupo o de todo el estudiantado de una clase. Esta modalidad es considerada una de las formas de trabajo con mejores resultados. Ello, debido a que permite al equipo interdisciplinario tomar decisiones con el objeto de conseguir el éxito del alumnado en el aula. El profesional de la fonoaudiología es parte de los equipos de aula. Sin embargo, en Chile no se detallan sus funciones, su participación dentro de estos equipos, ni el enfoque de trabajo en el cual se insertan. Es por esto, que el objetivo del presente estudio es describir la participación y acciones fonoaudiológicas actuales en el trabajo colaborativo y la co-enseñanza en el aula común. Para esto se optó por un diseño tipo cuantitativo descriptivo, que permitió estudiar una muestra de 135 participantes que cumplieron los criterios de elegibilidad. Se utilizó un cuestionario de Google para la recopilación de información. Los resultados destacan una alta participación del fonoaudiólogo/en labores de trabajo colaborativo. Sin embargo, solo la mitad de la muestra señaló realizar labores de co-enseñanza. Se sugiere continuar investigando las acciones fonoaudiológicas con el fin de sistematizar el quehacer disciplinar en educación.

### Palabras clave:

Fonoaudiólogo/a; Trabajo Colaborativo; Co-enseñanza

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## INTRODUCTION

Globally, the role of speech-language therapists (SLT) in education includes both individual and group work, as well as classroom-based intervention, which makes them significant actors within collaborative educational teams (Colegio de Fonoaudiólogos de la Provincia de Santa Fe, 2012). For example, the functions of SLTs in Colombia incorporate literacy interventions and their impact on learning (Cuervo, 1999). On their part, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA, 2010) asserts that the roles and responsibilities of SLTs in education encompass working at various stages (from preschool to high school), as well as collaborating in curriculum design and working with other professionals. This enables them to participate in fundamental reflective processes that serve as feedback for their professional practice.

In the context of education in Chile, the role of speech-language therapists is determined by decrees. In the case of special educational needs (SEN), decree 1300/02 poses that SLTs must carry out interventions in individual sessions or groups of up to three students, with a duration of 30 minutes (Decree n° 1300, 2002). Additionally, decree 170 indicates that these professionals conduct assessments, including the application of diverse tests to measure linguistic skills (Decree n° 170, 2009).

Currently, decree 83/2015 regulates criteria and guidelines for curricular adaptations aimed at students with SEN, in preschool and primary education. This allows educational establishments to plan appropriate and quality proposals so that every student can reach the objectives determined by *Ley General de Educación* (General Law of Education), independent of their conditions and circumstances (Decree n° 83, 2015). In this context, the role of speech-language therapists becomes more relevant, due to their profile and contribution to inclusive processes.

The difference between the role of SLTs in education in Chile and internationally lies in the configuration and extent of the functions assigned to them. At an international level, they participate in collaborative teams comprehensively and are part of key aspects of the educational process. In Chile, on the other hand, functions seem to be limited and defined by specific decrees, which suggests that their responsibilities are framed within a narrower, procedure-based structure (Torres et al., 2015).

On the other hand, School Integration Programs (PIE for their acronym in Spanish, *Programas de Integración Escolar*), which exist in Chile, represent an inclusive strategy within the education system. The purpose of PIE is to provide complementary support to students with SEN in regular classroom settings. Technical

guidelines for PIE highlight the need for the teams within these programs, comprised of teachers, specialists, and multidisciplinary team professionals (speech therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, and special education teachers), to be involved in the development of strategies to support the whole classroom and not solely students belonging to the program. Collaborative work and, within it, co-teaching, are highlighted in this context. A collaborative teaching approach enables the implementation of actions in and out of the classroom, combining the competencies of every professional in the team (MINEDUC, 2013).

Collaborative work in education is based on an interactive learning model that motivates participants to work together to establish specific goals, which in turn require teamwork efforts and skills (Bruna et al., 2022). This type of work demands communication skills as well as symmetrical and reciprocal relationships, and a willingness to share tasks (Echazarreta et al., 2009).

There are three major conceptual categories linked to collaborative work among education professionals: (1) A consultation model, in which an advisor provides mentoring and a hierarchy is created; (2) a training model, born from the dissatisfaction generated by the consultation model, where both advisor and consultant receive equal support, with one of them acting as a mentor that guides the less experienced educator; (3) co-teaching, also called teaming model (Austin, 2001; Cardona, 2006), where both professionals are present in the classroom and share the responsibility of planning and implementing the curriculum (Cramer et al., 2010; Murawski, 2008; Villa et al., 2008). This model is a tool for exploring different teaching methods, offering a wider range of opportunities for students since two professionals are in charge of the class and responsible for the lesson, thus promoting content comprehension (Flandez et al., 2019).

Co-teaching happens when two professionals collaboratively plan a lesson and instruct and evaluate a diverse group of students (Murawski, 2008). In this regard, Beamish et al. (2006) propose that co-educators combine their curricular and methodological competencies based on a goal. It should be mentioned that co-teaching is a specific modality of collaborative work and, although they share similarities, they do not possess the same hierarchical structure. Various approaches to co-teaching can be applied over the course of a curricular unit, depending on the needs found in each classroom. Therefore, it is proposed that the most appropriate approach is selected after a team of education professionals analyses and establishes objectives and roles, based

on the needs of the students (Hughes & Murawski, 2001). Arriagada et al. (2021) have compiled different co-teaching taxonomies from publications by Hughes & Murawski (2001) and Villa et al. (2008), highlighting the following:

- One Teach, One Observe, where one teacher leads the class while another member of the team gathers academic, behavioral, and social information from the class or certain students.
- One Teach, One Assist, where one teacher takes on the leading role while another rotates among students, providing individual support, monitoring, gathering information, and handling behavior.
- Parallel Teaching, where members of the team divide the class into two groups and teach them simultaneously.
- Group Rotation Co-Teaching, where members of the team work with different student groups and rotate between them, while one of the groups works without the continuous supervision of a teacher.
- Station Teaching, where the team divides the students and material into stations, working simultaneously. During the class, students rotate between stations, one of which allows them to work independently.
- Alternative Teaching is when one team member works with a small group of students on remedial, preparation, enriching, and assessment activities, while another teacher works with the whole class.
- Complementary Co-Teaching, where one teacher works to enhance or complement the learnings provided by the other team member.
- Team Teaching, where co-educators simultaneously lead the class, alternating the leading and assisting roles (p. 179).

According to Villa et al. (2008), any person who performs a teaching role can participate in co-teaching. Accordingly, speech-language therapists, being part of the education system, share the responsibility to teach, collaborate with other professionals, and apply teaching strategies to reach common goals. However, Arriagada et al. (2021), after examining the perception of professionals in the PIE team about co-teaching practices, including SLTs and coordinators, conclude that the knowledge of this concept is superficial, which hinders its effective implementation in the classroom. The authors propose a follow-up of the co-teaching experiences aimed at evaluating its impact, both on the students' learning process and the performance of every member of the classroom team.

Regarding the participation of the SLT in collaborative work and co-teaching, Dinamarca-Aravena (2022) asserts that multidisciplinary team professionals act as facilitators that promote family participation in school. Chacón et al. (2009) propose that speech-language therapists participate in planning, prevention, and promoting actions oriented at pedagogical support under collaborative models. This is aimed at achieving communication wellbeing that favors the whole community. Additionally, Aguilera et al. (2022) mention that the functions assigned to SLTs include planning language-related activities with the teacher, besides supporting teachers in linguistic activities transversal to all subjects. In this respect, León (2015) notes that including SLTs within the teaching staff boosts the learning process of the students throughout different stages, promoting academic skills that are reflected in later years.

The Chilean Ministry of Education states that collaborative work corresponds to the various aids provided to students by the multidisciplinary team, whether in the classroom or outside of it. This is centered around the work done by the teaching team, among them regular education and special education teachers, for the learning and participation of the student community (MINEDUC, 2010). The Ministry also delivers guidelines for student support professions, including speech-language therapy (MINEDUC, 2019), which describe certain aspects of the role of SLTs, considering collaboration with teachers and the teaching team. However, similar to decrees, the guidelines do not detail their role in collaborative work.

The literature shows that, although there is information about the functions performed by SLTs in special education, based on the aforementioned decrees and other national and international articles, there are no detailed guidelines or clarity concerning their participation in the classroom. This is because collaborative work and co-teaching are relatively new for the profession in Chile. Consequently, the objective of this study is to describe the participation and actions of speech-language therapists in this context, aiming at profiling and validating their participation in educational settings.

## METHOD

A quantitative and descriptive design was chosen, using convenience sampling. This was based on the access the researcher had to participants (Otzen & Manterola, 2017).

## Participants

Speech-language therapists who had worked or were working in the municipal, subsidized-private, or private education system at the preschool, primary, and middle school levels were included. Professionals working in special language schools and special education schools were excluded. The subjects were invited through emails and social networks (Facebook and Instagram). The sample was made up of 135 speech therapists from different parts of the country.

## Instrument

A self-reported questionnaire was developed using Google Forms. The questions were prepared based on the objectives of the study by the research team, who included closed dichotomous, multiple choice, mixed, and mandatory questions. Initially, 27 questions were written and distributed into two sections; the first, related to "work characteristics", collected data such as the length of professional practice, region of work, type of establishment, levels of education where they practice, type of disorder they treat, weekly contracted hours, number of students they support, type of support provided in the therapy room, and duration of their sessions. The second, related to "speech-language therapy actions in collaborative work and co-teaching", covered aspects related to their participation in both tasks, professionals they have worked with, means they use to carry out collaborative work, how often they do this type of work, and how many hours they dedicate to this monthly. In addition, participants were asked to describe their experience in collaborative work and what role they play in team meetings. In relation to co-teaching, they were asked how many hours per week they dedicate to it, what type of co-teaching they have developed and to rate their experience.

The questionnaire was submitted to expert judgment for content validation. For this, seven expert judges collaborated, all of whom met the following eligibility criteria: a) having a degree in speech therapy or special education, b) a Master's degree in language and/or education, and c) a minimum of five years of experience in educational establishments. Each of them independently analyzed the questionnaire according to two specific indicators: "clarity" and "relevance" (Escobar-Pérez & Cuervo-Martínez, 2008). The experts made comments and suggestions, mainly related to the wording, and proposed the incorporation of two questions. Based on their observations and contributions, the instrument was modified and improved for its application. It was subsequently sent again to the expert judges, who approved the 29 questions. This resulted in an instrument entitled "Role of the Speech

Therapist in the educational field, functions in collaborative work and co-teaching", which was used for gathering information.

## Ethical Considerations

This research was certified by the Bioethics Committee at Universidad del Bío-Bío, which guarantees compliance with the bioethical norms required by the institution to carry out this type of research.

All the participants (including the experts who participated in the validation process by content in the instrument) signed an informed consent form in digital format that explained the objectives, procedures, voluntary and unpaid nature of their participation, guaranteeing the confidentiality of the opinions (Law N° 19.628. *Sobre protección de la vida privada*. Ministerio Secretaría General de la Presidencia, 1999), and complying with the established ethical standards (Law N° 20.120. *Sobre la investigación científica en el ser humano, su genoma, y prohíbe la clonación humana*, 2006).

## RESULTS

The responses of 135 professionals were analyzed. Microsoft Excel 2019 was used for data processing.

Concerning sociodemographic characteristics, 87.4% of the surveyed group were women, 11.8% were men, and one person (0.74%) did not answer. The mean age was 31 years. As for educational level, 34.7% mentioned being trained at the undergraduate level, while 50.37% had completed a postgraduate certificate, and 14.81% had a Master's degree. From the sample, 37.7% had between 1 and 3 years of professional experience, followed by 24.4% between 4 and 6 years, and 22.2% had between 7 and 9 years. A lower proportion (15.5%) had 10 years or more of professional experience. The regions most represented in the questionnaire were Ñuble and Metropolitana, with 16.3% and 14.8%, respectively.

In regards to workplace and role characteristics, 48.8% of the sample worked in municipal or subsidized-private establishments, with 84.4% working at the preschool level and 79.2% in primary school. Additionally, 40% indicated that their contracted hours were between 40 and 44, followed by 28.1% contracted for 30-34 hours, 17.7% 20-21 hours, 11.1% working 10-19 hours, and 2.2% having 9 contracted hours or less. Regarding their role, 91.8% mentioned supporting children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI), expressive or mixed, and 80% worked with communication disorders secondary to Autistic Spectrum

Disorder (ASD). As for the size of their caseload, 22.9% of the professionals supported 61 or more students, followed by 17% working with groups of 21 to 30 children, as well as 31 to 40 children, and 17,7% supporting between 40-50 students. In a smaller proportion, 10.3% of the SLTs mentioned they had 51 to 60 children in their caseload. Concerning support modality and duration, 71.8% worked both with individuals and groups. Additionally, 58.5% noted their sessions had a duration of 30 minutes, 36.3% had 45-minute sessions, and 2.9% supported students for less than 30 minutes, with only 2.2% mentioning their sessions lasted more than 45 minutes (see appendix).

Table 1 characterizes the participation of SLTs in collaborative work. It can be observed that 98.5% of the participants are involved in collaborative work. Regarding the work team, 94.8% mentioned working alongside special education teachers. As for

work events where the professionals participated in collaborative work, 88.1% did so in multidisciplinary team meetings. Additionally, 65.1% worked collaboratively in both the in-person and virtual modalities. Concerning frequency, 57% work collaboratively weekly, and 76,3% dedicate 9 hours or less of their contracted hours to collaborative work. On the other hand, 23.7% dedicates between 10 and 19 hours to this work. This creates a gap between contracted hours and hours effectively dedicated to collaboration. Regarding the type of collaborative work performed, 87.4% mentioned that their role in meetings was to concur on support methodologies with the classroom team, and 66.6% noted that collaborative work meetings were aimed at analyzing cases per class. With regards to their experience, 34% indicated it was very good, and 40% had a good experience with collaborative work.

**Table 1.** Participant distribution according to speech-language therapy practices in collaborative work.

Speech-Language Therapy Practices in Collaborative Work	n=135	%
Collaborative Work		
Yes	133	98.5
No	2	1.48
Professionals with Whom they have Collaborated		
Primary School Teacher	99	73.3
Preschool Teacher	105	77.7
Psychologist	102	75.5
Occupational Therapist	52	38.5
Special Education Teacher	128	94.8
Highschool Teacher	13	9.6
Physiotherapist	28	20.7
Social Worker	37	27.4
Technical Unit Manager or Similar	56	41.4
Has not Performed Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Collaborative Work Meeting Modality*		
Individual	64	47.4
Per Class	90	66.6
Per Cycle	47	34.8
Por Level	39	28.8
Did not Respond	1	0.7
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Approach to Collaborative Work		
In-Person Meetings	26	19.2
Technological Means (Virtual)	19	14.0
Both	88	65.1
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.48
Frequency of Collaborative Work		
Monthly	26	19.2
Biweekly	29	21.4
Weekly	77	57.0
Daily	0	0.0



Does not Answer	1	0.7
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Number Of Monthly Hours Assigned by Contract to Collaborative Work		
9 or less	103	76.3
10 – 19 hr	19	14.0
20 – 29 hr	4	2.9
30 – 39 hr	1	0.7
40 and more	0	0.0
Does not Answer	6	4.4
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Number of Hours Effectively Dedicated to Collaborative Work		
1 – 9	88	65.1
10 – 19 hr	32	23.7
20 – 29 hr	5	3.7
30 – 39 hr	1	0.7
40 and more	1	0.74
Does not Answer	6	4.4
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Perception of their Collaborative Work Experience		
Very Good	46	34.0
Good	54	40.0
Fair	30	22.2
Bad	3	2.2
Very Bad	0	0.0
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Function of the Speech-Language Therapist in Collaborative Work Meetings *		
Agreeing on support methodologies with the classroom team	118	87.4
Preparing material for co-teaching	62	45.9
Case analysis	105	77.7
Workshops or talks	82	60.7
Curriculum adaptation support	79	58.5
Other	0	0.0
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4
Setting where the SLP Participates in Collaborative Work*		
General teacher assembly	107	79.2
Cycle assembly	68	50.3
Day of Reflection	98	72.5
Parent-teacher meetings	76	56.3
Workshops or talks for parents led by the SLT	102	75.5
Workshops or talks for teachers led by the SLT	86	63.7
Multidisciplinary team meeting	119	88.1
I have not participated in any of these activities	2	1.4
Does not Perform Collaborative Work	2	1.4

\*These data reflect what is mentioned by the SLTs who answered the survey.

Table 2 shows the participants' experiences with co-teaching. The main results reveal that only 54% of the sample has participated in co-teaching; of these, 44.4% dedicates 9 or fewer hours to co-teaching in regular classrooms. Regarding the type of co-teaching, 37.0% indicated Team Teaching. As for the experience, 50%

mentioned having a good experience with this pedagogical strategy.

## DISCUSSION

This study describes the participation and actions of speech-language therapists in collaborative work and co-teaching in the classroom in Chile. Based on the information gathered from the survey it is established that, in general, SLTs participate in collaborative work and that their experience is good. In addition, most of the participants indicate that they work with special education teachers and psychologists. This aligns with what current regulations in Chile propose, which is that both the diagnostic assessment and intervention on SEN must be carried out by multidisciplinary teams (Decree n° 170, 2009, p. 170). The above can be considered positive since it has been documented that collaboration between actors interested in the education of the student community improves inclusion and academic success (Asher & Nichols, 2016; Selanikyo et al., 2017). Furthermore, this has been supported by research showing that collaborative work positively impacts the academic outcomes of students, particularly reflected in better acquisition of skills in different settings and higher participation in the classroom (Aparicio & Sepúlveda, 2019).

Regarding work settings, the results show that SLTs collaborate in multidisciplinary team meetings, general parent meetings, workshops for parents, days of reflection, workshops for teachers,

and cycle meetings, adjusting to what is established by decree 363/1994 (Decree n° 363, 1994). These tasks, mentioned in the decree, are also supported by the educational rules for cohabitation of each establishment, indicating that “teachers and education assistants may associate freely and form or integrate groups with like-minded persons, with the purpose of working collectively” (MINEDUC, 2018).

Concerning work modality, the people surveyed declare that they meet with the team to make decisions and that meetings are held both in person and virtually. Collaborative work is done weekly and the hours dedicated to it by SLTs are less than 9 per month. This is in line with decree 170/2009, which states that hours allocated to multidisciplinary team professionals (speech-language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, special education teachers) in establishments with a full-time school day should be a minimum of 10 chronological hours and that, of those hours, each professional should support students in the classroom and collaborate with teachers for at least 8 pedagogical hours (MINEDUC, 2013). This represents another positive aspect, as the ability to work in a team during corresponding hours makes it possible to address educational needs collaboratively, thus promoting the achievement of proposed objectives (Rojas, 2019).

**Table 2.** Participant distribution according to the role of speech-language therapists in co-teaching.

Speech-Language Therapy Practices in Co-Teaching	n =135	%
Co-Teaching		
Yes	73	54.0
No	62	45.9
Hours Dedicated to Co-Teaching in the Classroom.		
1 - 9	60	44.4
10 – 19 hr	6	4.4
20 – 29 hr	2	1.4
30 – 39 hr	0	0.0
40 and more	0	0.0
No Answer	5	3.7
I haven't participated in co-teaching	62	45.9
Type of Co-Teaching*		
One Teach, One Observe	22	16.3
One Teach, One Assist	36	26.6
Parallel Groups	16	11.8
Rotation between Groups	18	13.3
Station Teaching	32	23.7
Alternative	7	5.1
Complementary	34	25.1
Team Teaching	50	37.0
I haven't participated in co-teaching	62	45.9
Description of the Co-Teaching Experience (n=73)		

Very Good	28	38.3
Good	37	50.6
Fair	8	10.9
Bad	0	0.0

\*This information reflects what was mentioned by the SLTs who answered the survey.

The functions of SLTs during collaborative work are primarily centered around agreeing on support methodologies with the classroom team, carrying out case analyses, talks or workshops, and supporting curricular adaptations. The results reveal that the tasks determined by the Ministry of Education are performed, complying with current regulations. Furthermore, these tasks align with Vlcek et al. (2020), who assert that a key aspect is knowledge exchange between team members, to guarantee that support strategies adjust to the needs of the student body. Similarly, this work modality aligns with what speech-language therapists do internationally. For example, a study carried out in Colombia found that the role of SLTs in education involves guiding teachers, establishing strategies to favor the development of communication skills, providing training, and acting as consultants to bolster the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom (Álvarez & Osorno, 2012).

Regarding student support, most of the professionals indicate that they do this both in the classroom and individually. As for co-teaching, only half of the sample mentioned using this methodology, which could be attributed to the lack of specifications in the 2023 PIE guidelines. These suggest using various types of co-teaching but do not detail the functions that professionals must perform. Moreover, it is noteworthy that, although Decree 170/2009 includes SLTs in the classroom team, it does not clearly describe their participation in co-teaching (Decree n° 170, 2009). This lack of clarity may have further negative implications since specifying the actions allocated to each team member directly benefits the educational community (Dieker, 2001; Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). Despite the above, the participants of this study indicated that, when existent, their co-teaching experience is predominantly positive, describing it as “good” and “very good”.

The subjects who participated in co-teaching mentioned that the type most frequently used was team teaching. This is in line with the PIE/2023 guidelines, which describe different types of co-teaching, proposing that the team members organize the classes in a way that allows students to experience the skills of every professional. The choice of co-teaching type coincides with what is used in other countries. For example, a study by Pérez-Gutiérrez et al. (2022), aimed at identifying how co-teaching is carried out

in Asturian centers, determined that the most frequently used modality is Team Teaching, followed by One Teach, One Assist. According to Rodríguez (2014), Team Teaching is the most suitable approach as it allows the co-teachers to alternate between different roles such as leading, assisting, observing, complementing, and offering alternative learning. The above is supported by Zigmond & Magiera (2001), who propose that, of all the strategies, Team Teaching entails authentic teamwork. In this regard, Villa et al. (2008) mention that independent of the type of co-teaching, the participants should aim for equal participation when alternating between teacher and co-teacher roles, and each one of them must acknowledge the skills and experience of the other.

As for the hours allocated to co-teaching, a considerable part of the sample dedicates between 1 and 9 hours to this modality. This is consistent with decree 170/2009, which states that all professionals (multidisciplinary team and teachers) should allocate 3 hours of individual support for students with SEN, at least 8 pedagogical hours per week in the regular classroom in establishments with full-time school day, and 6 hours when there is not a full-time school day. Despite the above, the decree does not determine the number of hours granted to each professional. Ferguson (1991) (cited in Torres & Montaña, 2015), asserts that the regulation of classroom access is one of the main obstacles to implementing co-teaching, also hindering the articulation between speech therapy objectives and national curriculum.

It should be noted that the results of this study make it possible to value and make visible the participation and multiple actions of speech-language therapists in education that contribute to students achieving their academic goals. However, the following questions emerge: Does professional training prepare SLTs to participate in co-teaching? What training do universities currently offer on pedagogy, teaching approaches, and curriculum design? What is the perception of the rest of the classroom team about the participation of speech therapists? These questions serve as guidelines for future research on this topic, which will aim at gathering additional information to systematize the work of this profession in education. This is to contribute to the development of technical guidelines that provide criteria and strategies and



describe procedures and processes, ensuring the quality of processes, in collaboration with the educational community.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the results, it can be concluded that speech-language therapists participate in collaborative work and co-teaching activities in the educational establishments where they work. Their participation is centered around providing support and guidance to teachers, students, and families in various contexts. In particular, SLTs are part of a multidisciplinary team, offering diverse support methodologies from their expertise, analyzing cases, and delivering talks or workshops. The main objective of collaborative work is to improve or enhance linguistic and communicative skills, adapting to each student's development, whether typical or atypical, in order to boost their performance during their learning process. These findings reflect an alignment between the responses given by the professionals and the requirements established by the Ministry of Education and its various standards.

Regarding co-teaching, SLTs are significantly involved in this methodology. This is although the approaches and contributions of these professionals in education are not clearly described in ministerial guidelines. The above encourages the formal incorporation of SLTs into ministerial documents, to increase their participation in the co-teaching process. Speech-language therapists play a relevant role in language acquisition and development, a transversal and essential skill that allows students to progress in their learning within the national curriculum. Therefore, establishing clear guidelines about the actions and functions of this profession in the classroom team is crucial. Moreover, the lack of specific information regarding the above could mean that the decisions on participation and working hours allocation for SLTs are left at the discretion of each educational establishment. This situation could directly impact the optimization of the learning process for students.

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## APPENDIX

Distribution of participants according to sociodemographic characteristics.

Sociodemographic Characteristics	n = 135	%
Age (Years)		
Mean: 31 (min 25, max 49)		
Sex		
Female	118	87.41
Male	16	11.85
Did not Respond	1	0.74
Educational Level		
Undergraduate	46	34.07
Postgraduate Certificate	52	38.52
Master's Degree	20	14.81
Doctorate	1	0.74
Postgraduate Diploma	16	11.85
Length of Work Experience (Range)		
1-3 years 11 months	51	37.78
4-6 years 11 months	33	24.44
7-9 years 11 months	30	22.22
10 years or more	21	15.56
Region of Chile		
Arica y Parinacota	1	0.74
Tarapacá	0	0.00
Antofagasta	3	2.22
Atacama	0	0.00
Coquimbo	6	4.44
Valparaíso	18	13.33
Metropolitana de Santiago	20	14.81
Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins	8	5.93
Maule	12	8.89
Bío-Bío	18	13.33
Ñuble	22	16.30
La Araucanía	6	4.44
Los Lagos	6	4.44
Los Ríos	12	8.89
Aysén Del Gral. Carlos Ibáñez del Campo	1	0.74
Magallanes y Antártica Chilena	2	1.48
Type of School		
Municipal	66	48.9
Subsidized-Private	66	48.9
Private	3	2.2
School Level*		
Preschool	114	84.4
Primary School (1st to 4th grade)	107	79.2
Middle School ( 5th to 8th grade)	65	48.1
High School	28	20.7
Type of Disorder Seen *		
Specific Language Impairment (Expressive or Mixed)	124	91.8
Language Impairment Secondary to Intellectual Disability	103	76.3
Communication Disorder Secondary to Autistic Spectrum Disorder	108	80.0
Communication Disorder Secondary to Neurological Pathology	43	31.8

Speech Sound Disorder (Phonetic or Phonologic/Mixed)	94	69.6
Speech Disorders	8	5.9
Hearing Impairment	4	2.96
Motor Disorders	3	2.22
SpLD	3	2.22
Voice Disorders	1	0.74
Swallowing Disorders	1	0.74
Dyslexia	1	0.74
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	1	0.74
Communication Disorder Secondary to Multiple Disabilities	1	0.74
Multiple Challenges	1	0.74
Classroom-Based Workshops	1	0.74
Contracted Hours		
40 - 44 hrs	54	40.0
30 - 39 hrs	38	28.1
20 - 29 hrs	24	17.7
10 - 19 hrs	15	11.1
9 or less	3	2.2
Did not Respond	1	0.7
Number of Students Seen at the Establishment Independent of the Program to Which They Belong		
10 - 20 students	20	14.8
21 - 30 students	23	17.0
31 - 40 students	23	17.0
41 - 50 students	24	17.7
51 - 60 students	14	10.3
61 and more	31	22.9
Type of Intervention		
Individual	22	16.3
Group	16	11.8
Both	97	71.8
Mean Duration of Therapy Sessions		
Under 30 minutes	4	2.9
30 minutes	79	58.5
45 minutes	49	36.3
Over 45 minutes	3	2.2

\*These data correspond to the frequency of school levels and disorders mentioned by the speech-language therapists.