

VERTICALIZATION, EXPANSION, AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISPUTES IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: THE TRAJECTORY OF IF GOIANO – MORRINHOS CAMPUS AND THE CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATED HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION AS STATE POLICY

VERTICALIZAÇÃO, EXPANSÃO E DISPUTAS EPISTEMOLÓGICAS NA EDUCAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL: A TRAJETÓRIA DO IF GOIANO – CAMPUS MORRINHOS E OS DESAFIOS DO ENSINO MÉDIO INTEGRADO COMO POLÍTICA DE ESTADO

VERTICALIZACIÓN, EXPANSIÓN Y DISPUTAS EPISTEMOLÓGICAS EN LA EDUCACIÓN PROFESIONAL: LA TRAYECTORIA DEL IF GOIANO – CAMPUS MORRINHOS Y LOS RETOS DE LA ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA INTEGRADA COMO POLÍTICA DE ESTADO



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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the institutional trajectory of the former Federal Agrotechnical School of Morrinhos until its consolidation as the Federal Institute of Goiás – Morrinhos Campus, examining how this journey expresses political, pedagogical, and epistemological disputes in the field of Professional and Technological Education (EPT) in Brazil. The objective is to analyze this trajectory in light of the consolidation of PTE as a public policy of the State, the permanence of educational duality, and the influence of market rationalities, in addition to highlighting advances in the verticalization and diversification of the institution's educational offerings. To this end, we conducted documentary research and content analysis guided by a critical theoretical framework, based on institutional, regulatory, and academic sources. The results indicate that, although the creation of Federal Institutes represents progress in democratizing access to public education and in the internalization of VET, structural challenges related to curricular fragmentation and managerial pressures persist. It is evident that Integrated Secondary Education is a space of contention between antagonistic educational projects, strained by reforms that compromise its emancipatory proposal. An analysis of the current course offerings at the Morrinhos Campus—which range from technical training to stricto sensu graduate programs—reinforces the institution's strategic role in building an integrated, omnilateral, and socially referenced educational project. It can be concluded that the experience analyzed reflects the advances and contradictions of EFA as a political field in constant dispute.

Keywords: Professional and Technological Education. Integrated Secondary Education. Interiorization of Public Education. Verticalization of Educational Offerings. Federal Educational Policy.

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RESUMO

Este estudo investiga a trajetória institucional da antiga Escola Agrotécnica Federal de Morrinhos até sua consolidação como Instituto Federal Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*, examinando como esse percurso expressa disputas políticas, pedagógicas e epistemológicas no campo da Educação Profissional e Tecnológica (EPT) no Brasil. Objetiva-se analisar essa trajetória à luz da consolidação da EPT como política pública de Estado, das permanências da dualidade educacional e da influência de racionalidades mercantis, além de destacar os avanços na verticalização e diversificação da oferta formativa da instituição. Para tanto, procede-se à pesquisa documental e análise de conteúdo orientada por referencial teórico crítico, com base em fontes institucionais, normativas e acadêmicas. Os resultados indicam que, embora a criação dos Institutos Federais represente avanço na democratização do acesso à educação pública e na interiorização da EPT, persistem desafios estruturais relacionados à fragmentação curricular e à pressão de lógicas gerenciais. Evidencia-se que o Ensino Médio Integrado constitui espaço de disputa entre projetos formativos antagônicos, sendo tensionado por reformas que comprometem sua proposta emancipatória. A análise da atual oferta de cursos do *Campus Morrinhos* — que abrange desde formação técnica até programas de pós-graduação *stricto sensu* — reforça o papel estratégico da instituição na construção de um projeto educativo integrado, omnilateral e socialmente referenciado. Conclui-se que a experiência analisada reflete avanços e contradições da EPT como campo político em constante disputa.

Palavras-chave: Educação Profissional e Tecnológica. Ensino Médio Integrado. Interiorização do Ensino Público. Verticalização da Oferta Formativa. Política Educacional Federal.

RESUMEN

Este estudio investiga la trayectoria institucional de la antigua Escuela Agrotécnica Federal de Morrinhos hasta su consolidación como Instituto Federal Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*, examinando cómo este recorrido expresa disputas políticas, pedagógicas y epistemológicas en el campo de la Educación Profesional y Tecnológica (EPT) en Brasil. El objetivo es analizar esta trayectoria a la luz de la consolidación de la EPT como política pública del Estado, la permanencia de la dualidad educativa y la influencia de las racionalidades mercantiles, además de destacar los avances en la verticalización y diversificación de la oferta formativa de la institución. Para ello, se procede a la investigación documental y al análisis de contenido orientado por un marco teórico crítico, basado en fuentes institucionales, normativas y académicas. Los resultados indican que, aunque la creación de los Institutos Federales representa un avance en la democratización del acceso a la educación pública y en la interiorización de la EPT, persisten retos estructurales relacionados con la fragmentación curricular y la presión de las lógicas gerenciales. Es evidente que la enseñanza secundaria integrada constituye un espacio de disputa entre proyectos formativos antagónicos, sometido a tensiones por reformas que comprometen su propuesta emancipadora. El análisis de la oferta actual de cursos del *Campus Morrinhos* — que abarca desde la formación técnica hasta programas de posgrado *stricto sensu* — refuerza el papel estratégico de la institución en la construcción de un proyecto educativo integrado, omnilateral y con referencia social. Se concluye que la experiencia analizada refleja los avances y contradicciones de la EPT como campo político en constante disputa.

Palabras clave: Educación Profesional y Tecnológica. Enseñanza Secundaria Integrada. Interiorización de la Enseñanza Pública. Verticalización de la Oferta Formativa. Política Educativa Federal.

1 INTRODUCTION

EFA occupies a strategic position in the contemporary Brazilian educational system, especially for its ability to articulate school education, work, science, culture and technology in the same training project. However, its historical constitution was marked by deep structural contradictions, derived from the educational duality that destined to the working classes a technical-instrumental education, while reserving to the elites a general education based on science and humanism. This configuration expresses disputes between different societal projects and conceptions of the State, showing that EFA cannot be understood only as a functional response to the demands of the labor market, but as a political and epistemological field in permanent tension (Manfredi, 2016; Frigotto; Ciavatta; Ramos, 2012).

In the context of Brazilian educational policies, the institutionalization of EFA as a public policy of the State acquired greater normative density from the second half of the twentieth century, intensifying with the creation of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education. Established by Law No. 11,892/2008, this network consolidated the Federal Institutes (IFs) as multicampus, multicurricular and socially referenced institutions, responsible for the integrated provision of basic, professional and higher education – from high school to higher education – especially in regions historically marked by educational inequalities. In this context, the FIs have assumed a central role in the processes of internalization of public education and the promotion of regional development (Brasil, 2008; Moura, 2016).

Despite these institutional advances, the specialized literature points out that the consolidation of EFA as an emancipatory educational project remains crossed by structural tensions. Recent educational reforms, guided by managerial and business rationalities, have reintroduced utilitarian conceptions in education, subordinating the school curriculum to economic and productivist interests. Ball (2021) argues that such reforms promote the reconfiguration of educational policies based on a performative logic, in which efficiency, measurement of results, and competitiveness begin to guide the organization of pedagogical work. In a convergent way, Freitas (2018) warns that the so-called "business reform" of education tends to weaken formative projects committed to integral human formation, stressing the social role of public schools.

It is in this scenario that the problematic of this study is inserted, formulated from the following research question: how does the historical and institutional trajectory of the Federal Agrotechnical School (EAF) of Morrinhos, later transformed into the Federal Institute of Goiás (IF Goiano) – *Morrinhos Campus*, express the political, pedagogical and epistemological disputes around EFA in Brazil? It is based on the hypothesis that this institutional trajectory

simultaneously evidences advances in the consolidation of EFA as a public policy of the State and structural permanences associated with the educational duality and the pressures of rationalities external to the integral formative project.

The relevance of this research is justified, firstly, by the need to deepen historical and institutional analyses of EFA from local and regional contexts, contributing to understand how national policies materialize in specific territories. Secondly, the study dialogues with contemporary debates on Integrated High School (EMI) and integral human formation, offering theoretical subsidies for critical reflection on the role of FIs in the Brazilian educational scenario. Finally, it has social relevance by problematizing the meanings attributed to public education in inland regions, in which FIs often constitute the main reference for technical, scientific and citizen training (Moura, 2016; Oliveira, 2023).

Thus, the general objective of this article is to analyze the historical and institutional trajectory of the EAF of Morrinhos until its consolidation as IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*, in the light of the theoretical, political and epistemological disputes that cross the EFA in Brazil. As specific objectives, it is sought: (i) to understand EFA as a public policy of the State in the Brazilian context; (ii) to analyze the historical process of institutionalization of professional education, with emphasis on agricultural education and the creation of FIs; (iii) to discuss the theoretical foundations of integral human formation and the critique of educational duality; (iv) examine EMI as PPP in FIs; and (v) to investigate how the verticalization of teaching and the expansion of the training offer were materialized within the scope of the IFs, notably in the IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach, of an exploratory and analytical nature, based on documentary and bibliographic research, as detailed in the methodology section.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION AS A STATE PUBLIC POLICY

In the Brazilian context, EFA should be understood as a public policy of the State, and not as a set of conjunctural government programs. This conception stems from the recognition that EFA is historically structured based on legal, institutional and pedagogical frameworks that express disputes between antagonistic societal projects, involving different conceptions of State, work and education. In other words, throughout the country's history, opposing views have influenced whether professional training would be treated as a strategic commitment of the State or as a one-off and subsidiary initiative, evidencing the eminently political character of the evolution of EFA (Manfredi, 2016; Kuenzer, 2017).

The normative consolidation of EFA began with the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB, Law No. 9,394/1996), which recognized professional education as an integral part of national education (Brasil, 1996). This process was deepened by Decree No. 5,224/2004, which redefined the organization of the Federal Centers for Technological Education (CEFETs), preparing the ground for the integration between basic education and technical education (Brasil, 2004). The cycle culminates with Law No. 11,892/2008, which establishes the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, creating the IFs and consolidating an institutional model guided by the integrated offer of basic, technical and higher education (Brasil, 2008).

The creation of the Federal Network in 2008 is recognized as a milestone in the expansion, internalization and diversification of EFA in Brazil, representing a historic turning point in favor of educational policies of national scope. For Moura (2016), for example, the implementation of the FIs represented a watershed by shifting professional education from a strictly technical function to an expanded formative perspective, committed to the articulation between work, science, culture and technology. Thus, even though it was strained by different political and economic conjunctures, EFA began to assume centrality as a structuring policy of the State, aimed at guaranteeing the right to professional education to various segments of society.

In the specific case of Goiás, the creation of the IF Goiano – alongside other FIs across the country – exemplified this State policy in action. The history of the EAF of Morrinhos, the focus of this study, is part of this movement of institutional transformation induced by national public policies. It should be noted that the Morrinhos School was initially founded as a decentralized unit linked to the then Federal Center for Technological Education (CEFET) of Urutaí, which evidences the government's strategy of internalizing agricultural technical education since the end of the twentieth century. According to *Google Maps* (2025), the road distance between the current IF Goiano – *Campus Urutaí* (GO) and IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos* (GO) is 159 km (via BR-352, GO-309, BR-490 and GO-476) or 160 km (via BR-352, BR-490 and GO-476), illustrating the administrative, logistical and pedagogical challenges involved in maintaining an advanced unit so far from the headquarters.

Despite these obstacles, the territorial expansion policy of the Federal Network allowed the Morrinhos unit to gradually consolidate. In 2008, with the creation of the IFs, the then agrotechnical school in the interior was transformed into a *campus* of the IF Goiano, acquiring administrative autonomy and significantly expanding its educational offer. This institutional transition directly reflects the state project of bringing quality public education to the interior of the country, while consolidating the verticalization of education, integrating in

the same institution levels and modalities that were previously fragmented (technical high school, higher education and graduate courses). Thus, it can be seen that the trajectory of EFA at the national level – marked by the formulation of laws and the creation of new institutions – provides the framework to understand the transformations experienced in the local context of the *Morinhos* Campus.

2.2 HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN BRAZIL AND INTERNALIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The historical trajectory of professional education in Brazil is directly related to national development projects and educational policies of each period. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, a dualism can be observed in the educational offer: on the one hand, professional schools aimed at the popular classes, with curricula focused on training for manual work; on the other, lyceums and academic secondary schools for the elite classes, with scientific and humanistic training. This separation institutionalized the educational duality in the country, attributing to the working classes an education of a practical-instrumental nature and reserving to the elites the general and propaedeutic training.

As Bezerra, Martins, and Bezerra (2022) point out, historically there has been a destination of technical-instrumental training for workers *versus* a scientific-humanistic education for dominant groups, which has generated unequal and excluding school trajectories. This historical root of educational inequality shows that the dispute between societal projects – one aimed at broad human emancipation, the other restricted to the qualification of the workforce – was present from an early age in professional education policies in Brazil. In the field of agricultural education, this duality manifested itself in the form of schools aimed predominantly at meeting the productive demands of the rural sector. The former federal agrotechnical schools, created in the mid-twentieth century, had a markedly pragmatic and productivist character, prioritizing agricultural technical instruction to the detriment of broader scientific training.

Studies such as that of Molina and Sanfelice (2014) point out that the genesis of federal agricultural education was marked by this utilitarian orientation, with evident limits in the articulation between technical training and general education in the agrarian institutions of the time. Nery (2025) reinforces this analysis by showing that, although these schools have contributed to regional development, they have faced the historical difficulty of fully integrating technical knowledge with the scientific and cultural bases in their curricula. In other words, in past decades, the training offered in the agricultural technical schools of the interior fell short

of a comprehensive education, reproducing to a certain extent the dichotomy between practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge.

From the 1990s onwards, in the context of redemocratization and reform of the State, a process of institutional reconfiguration of EFA intensified in order to gradually overcome this historical division. The Decentralized Teaching Units were created and, later, several Federal Agrotechnical Schools were transformed into CEFETs, expanding the offer of professional education to interior regions that had been little served until then. This movement of expansion and decentralization reached its peak with the constitution of the IFs, in 2008, which consolidated the verticalization of education (from high school to higher education) and promoted curricular integration and the internalization of the educational offer in the same institutional arrangement.

In other words, the creation of the IFs represented the realization of a professional education project capable of serving different regions of the country, internalizing technical and higher education and diversifying the teaching modalities offered (technical, undergraduate, postgraduate). In this scenario, the institutional history of the Morrinhos Campus reflects, on a microscale, this process of expansion and interiorization of EFA. Originally established as an EAF linked to a regional CEFET (Urutaí), the institution has experienced a process of growth in its functions and training attributions over the decades.

With its integration into the IF Goiano in 2008/2009, there was the expansion of training functions, diversification of levels and modalities of teaching and incorporation of EMI as a structuring axis of the local institutional project. In other words, the Morrinhos Campus went from a strictly technical-agricultural focus of secondary level to encompass integrated technical courses, higher technology courses, licentiate and postgraduate courses, exemplifying the policy of verticalization and expansion of the educational offer. This local trajectory of internalization and diversification of EFA reaffirms the strategic role of FIs in facing regional inequalities in access to public education.

2.3 WORK, INTEGRAL HUMAN FORMATION AND CRITICISM OF EDUCATIONAL DUALITY

The relationship between work and education is a central axis for the analysis of EFA, especially when the perspective of integral human formation is adopted. The educational duality, historically structuring the Brazilian education system, expresses the social division of labor itself and limits the access of subjects to scientific and cultural knowledge in its entirety. As a counterpoint to this exclusionary logic, the conception of integral human formation understands work as an educational principle, overcoming its reduction to a purely

productive activity and recognizing it as a founding dimension of social life. In this view, defended by authors in the field of professional education, the school should promote the integration between theoretical-scientific and practical-technological knowledge, aiming at the omnilateral formation of the subject. Ramos (2014) contributes significantly to this debate by defending the inseparable articulation between work, science, culture and technology in professional education.

According to the author, integral education presupposes overcoming the fragmentation of knowledge and the dichotomies between general education and technical education, enabling students to have a critical understanding of the social and productive reality. Integrating work and education, therefore, means not only qualifying for the market, but forming citizens capable of reflecting and acting on the world in which they live in an autonomous and emancipatory way. Paulo Freire's contributions deepen this critical-emancipatory perspective. When criticizing the "banking" model of education, Freire (1996) affirms education as a practice of freedom, based on dialogue and critical awareness of the subjects. Its principles – centered on the humanization of the oppressed and social emancipation – have become essential references for professional training aimed at social transformation. In short, Freire's perspective reiterates the importance of linking the educational act to freedom and autonomy, guiding the formative processes beyond mere technical training.

In the context of EFA, this implies rejecting the view of the student as a mere human resource to be trained and, instead, conceiving him as a subject of rights, whose integral formation involves ethical, political and cultural dimensions. In view of this foundation, integral human formation is the antithesis of educational duality. It is a conception in which basic training and technical training are not opposed, but complement each other in a curricular unit. Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) discuss exactly this idea when dealing with EMI: for these authors, EMI is configured as a pedagogical strategy to overcome duality, proposing integrated curricula that unite academic basic education with professional education, from a perspective of omnilateral training. This theoretical framework underpins the understanding that offering an integrated education is, in essence, fighting against the historical division between "two schools" – that of manual labor and that of critical thinking – in the expectation of forming young people who are both technically proficient and intellectually critical.

At this point, it is worth noting that the debates on polytechnics and omnilaterality also make up the theoretical framework of integral education. Derived from Marxism and socialist experiences in education, the concept of polytechnic proposes the diffusion of universal scientific-technological foundations to all students, regardless of their future occupation,

avoiding early narrow specialization. This vision inspires policies such as EMI by proposing that the curriculum combine academic and professional content organically. In practice, however, the implementation of such principles faces resistance arising from economic interests and utilitarian visions of education, as will be discussed later in contemporary tensions. Even so, the idea of integral human education remains as a philosophical and pedagogical guide for initiatives that seek to reorient EFA towards an emancipatory project.

2.4 INTEGRATED HIGH SCHOOL AS A POLITICAL-PEDAGOGICAL PROJECT

EMI is configured as the pedagogical expression of EFA conceived as a public policy of the State. Institutionalized within the scope of the IFs, the EMI proposes the organic articulation between general high school education and technical professional education in the same course, integrating the dimensions of work, science, culture and technology in a unitary curriculum. It is, therefore, an educational modality guided by the principles of integral human formation and polytechnics, as it seeks to overcome the curricular barriers between academic knowledge and technical knowledge. In the FIs, the EMI assumed institutional centrality by materializing the PPP of these institutions, as provided for in Law No. 11,892/2008, which incorporated the articulated offer of basic, technical and higher education as a structural principle of the FIs (Brasil, 2008).

In other words, EMI has become a fundamental strategy to enable the verticalization of education and the offer of technical professional education at the secondary level articulated with regular secondary education, especially in the Federal Network. This institutional priority reflects the commitment to curricular integration as a way to promote a more complete and civic education, in line with the ideals of education as a social right and public good. Thus, by articulating work, science, culture and technology in the curriculum, EMI reaffirms education as an emancipatory social practice, synthesizing in its project the ideals of an omnilateral public education. From a conceptual point of view, EMI is based on solid theoretical and pedagogical references. Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) offer the conceptual basis by defining EMI as a counter-hegemonic project, aimed at breaking with the structural duality of the Brazilian educational system.

For these authors, integrating high school with professional education is a political option of resistance to the capitalist logic of fragmentation of knowledge and educational stratification. In the same vein, Oliveira (2023) discusses the challenges for the consolidation of an emancipatory school via EMI, arguing that although integrated education is not an ideal model in a capitalist society, it constitutes the "possible project" for the education of young people from the working classes and, therefore, should be strengthened as an alternative to

the exclusionary model imposed by the recent reform of secondary education. In other words, even recognizing the limits and contradictions, authors defend EMI as a trench of struggle for a public education that unites academic quality and social relevance.

In practice, the implementation of EMI in FIs has produced advances and also faced challenges. On the one hand, there is an improvement in the access and permanence of students, especially from popular backgrounds, in high school courses with integrated technical training, which democratizes educational opportunities that were previously restricted. In addition, research indicates that EMI graduates tend to be well prepared both for the world of work and for continuing studies at a higher level, which confirms the expanded training potential of this modality (Nunes; Wetterich, 2019). On the other hand, structural obstacles persist: the lack of adequate infrastructure, the need for continuing education of teachers for interdisciplinary action, and the pressures of lightened educational policies that conflict with the integrative proposal.

Costa and Coutinho (2018) point out, for example, that the 2017 counter-reform of secondary education – by instituting flexible training itineraries and a reductionist National Common Base – tends to empty the integrated curriculum and put duality back into a new form. This scenario imposes on FIs and EMI defenders the constant challenge of justifying and safeguarding this pedagogical project in the face of contrary policies and narratives. Even so, critical analyses suggest that the EMI in the IFs has managed, to a large extent, to affirm its own educational identity, committed to the integral development of the student.

Elements such as research and extension, integrated with teaching, the encouragement of interdisciplinary pedagogical practices and the democratic management of schools are traits that distinguish the EMI practiced in the IFs in relation to traditional high school. These factors reinforce the idea that the EMI, in addition to a curricular arrangement, represents an institutional project with specific values and objectives – among them, the formation of autonomous, critical and socially engaged subjects. In the case of the Morrinhos Campus, as will be seen in the analysis of the results, the EMI constituted the structuring axis of the local PPP, serving as a reference for the consolidation of the institutional identity of the *campus* as an agent of social transformation in the region.

2.5 CONTEMPORARY TENSIONS: MANAGERIAL RATIONALITY AND CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATED SECONDARY EDUCATION

The educational policies of the last decades have imposed a series of structural challenges on EMI. Reforms guided by managerialist logic and neoliberal economics have introduced performative rationalities in the educational field, stressing the principles of

integrated teaching. Ball (2021) analyzes that neoliberal educational reforms, by emphasizing *accountability*, competition, and performance indicators, end up subordinating the curriculum and pedagogical work to managerial criteria of efficiency, productivity, and comparison. In the Brazilian context, these trends have manifested themselves, for example, in the institution of standardized assessments and quantitative targets that pressure schools to adapt their curricula to improve indexes, often to the detriment of training components that are not immediately "measurable".

For Freitas (2018), this "business reform" of education promotes the commodification of teaching by introducing notions of business management in public schools, which weakens pedagogical projects committed to comprehensive education. The author warns that the prevalence of values such as competition and meritocracy in the educational environment can undermine the construction of collaborative and critical practices, which are fundamental to EMI. In the specific case of secondary education, the 2017 reform (Law No. 13,415/2017) and the implementation of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for Secondary Education are often cited as examples of policies guided by this rationality. Studies such as those by Costa and Coutinho (2018) demonstrate that such changes fragment the education of students into narrow itineraries and weaken fundamental disciplines, which is antagonistic to EMI's proposal of integrated curriculum and omnilateral training.

In the context of FIs, these contemporary tensions translate into concrete dilemmas: how to maintain and deepen the curricular integration and emancipatory character of EMI in the face of external pressures for immediate results and adaptation to the market? As discussed by Felipe *et al.* (2025), there is a colonization of the curriculum by the ongoing business logic, which is expressed in the prioritization of competencies aligned with productive demands and in the marginalization of critical training content. This colonization imposes obstacles to the effective realization of the project of integral education, as it tries to reduce the role of the school to the preparation of flexible labor, instead of full citizens. At the Morrinhos Campus, for example, tensions are identified between, on the one hand, the implementation of EMI with its transformative assumptions and, on the other, initiatives that push for partnerships with the local productive sector or for curricular adaptations to meet performance indicators.

Such movements reflect exactly the clash between antagonistic educational projects: the counter-hegemonic, which guides the EMI, and the hegemonic neoliberal, which seeks to readjust education to the logics of the market. In response to these tendencies, the theoretical framework of this study assumes a critical and historicized stance. From an epistemological point of view, he is inspired by authors such as Bachelard and Kuhn to

understand that scientific knowledge develops through ruptures and confrontations of paradigms. Similarly, it is understood that the current configuration of EFA results from paradigmatic disputes in the educational field, and it is not possible to analyze it in a neutral or decontextualized way.

As Freire (1996) rightly stated, when he said that the neutrality of education is impossible; every educational policy carries values and interests. Recognizing this is fundamental to lay bare managerial rationalities as ideological constructions and not as innocent technical solutions. Thus, the dialogue with classical (such as Freire, Gramsci, Marx) and contemporary (such as Ball, Gentili, among others) references allows us to cast a critical look at the ongoing reforms, strengthening the defense of a public education focused on human emancipation and not on mere adaptation to the market. In short, the contemporary tensions around EMI reveal the need to, at the same time, resist setbacks and advance in the radicalization of the integrative project, deepening its theoretical-practical foundations and evidencing its positive results for society.

Table 1

Main theoretical references and their contributions to the analysis of EFA

AUTHOR(S)	MAIN CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY
Manfredi (2016)	It analyzes EFA as a field of historical disputes between antagonistic societal projects, evidencing different conceptions of State, work and education throughout Brazilian history.
Moura (2016)	It highlights the creation of the Federal Network (IFs) as a milestone that shifts professional education from a strictly technical function to an expanded formative perspective, integrating work, science, culture and technology.
Bezerra, Martins and Bezerra (2022)	They carry out a historical analysis of the educational duality in Brazil, showing the destination of a technical-instrumental education to the working classes <i>versus</i> a scientific-humanist education to the elites, which generated unequal and excluding school trajectories.
Molina and Sanfelice (2014)	They investigate the genesis of federal agricultural education, evidencing the pragmatically productivist character of the old agrotechnical schools and their limits in the articulation between technical training and general training.
Nery (2025)	It addresses the contributions and limitations of federal agricultural schools to regional development, pointing out the historical difficulty of fully integrating technical training with general education in the curriculum of these institutions.

Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012)	They discuss the conception of EMI as a pedagogical strategy to overcome duality, proposing integrated curricula that unite academic basic education with professional education, in a perspective of integral human formation.
Ramos (2014)	It defends work as an educational principle and the articulation between work, science, culture and technology in professional education, enabling subjects to critically understand reality and overcome the fragmentation of knowledge.
Freire (1996)	It criticizes the traditional model of teaching (banking education) and proposes education as a practice of freedom, based on dialogue and critical awareness, guiding training towards human emancipation.
Ball (2021)	It analyzes neoliberal educational reforms, introducing performative and managerial logics that subordinate the curriculum to efficiency indicators, creating tensions and challenges for critical educational projects.
Felippe <i>et al.</i> (2025)	They point to the penetration of business logic in the EMI, showing that the primacy of mercantile rationalities in the integrated curriculum can empty its emancipatory potential and contradict the objectives of integral education.
Oliveira (2023)	It discusses the challenges for the consolidation of an emancipatory school via EMI, arguing that integrated education, although not ideal, constitutes the "possible project" of education for young workers under capitalism, and should be strengthened as an alternative to the exclusionary model of the reform of secondary education.

Source: Prepared by the author, 2026.

As summarized in Chart 1, there is an articulation between classical authors, such as Freire and Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos, and contemporary researchers, such as Ball, Felipe *et al.* and Oliveira, providing an overview of the theoretical dialogue that underlies this work. It is observed that, throughout the theoretical framework, fundamental concepts (work as an educational principle, integral human formation, polytechnics, etc.) are revisited and updated in the face of current challenges (neoliberalism, performativity, high school reforms). This synthesis reinforces the understanding that the analysis of the trajectory of the IF Goiano – *Morrinhos Campus* requires a theoretical look capable of encompassing both the historical bases of EFA and the dynamics and contradictions of the present.

In this sense, the update of Chart 1 with data from 2025 reveals the consolidation of a process of formative verticalization at IF Goiano – Campus Morrinhos, expanding its offer beyond technical and integrated courses, reaching specialization, master's and doctoral levels. This expansion shows not only the fulfillment of the institutional mission of the Federal Network, but also the strengthening of EMI as an articulating axis of an omnilateral

educational project. Such an advance, however, coexists with the structural and epistemological challenges already discussed, reaffirming the contradictory character of EFA as a field of dispute between emancipatory rationalities and utilitarian logics.

3 METHODOLOGY

The present research is characterized as qualitative, of a theoretical-documentary nature and of exploratory and analytical objectives. This delineation is justified by the nature of the problem investigated, which involves understanding historical and institutional processes in depth. A case study of the *Morrinhos Campus* of the IF Goiano was chosen, with analysis of documents and related literature, seeking to articulate the empirical findings with the theoretical framework previously exposed. With regard to procedures, documentary analysis was adopted as the main technique, complemented by content analysis inspired by Bardinian inspiration (Bardin, 2016).

The *corpus* of the research was composed of educational legislation (laws, decrees and regulations referring to professional education), official institutional documents (institutional history of the *Morrinhos Campus*, reports, institutional development plans, statutes of the IF Goiano, etc.) and reference academic productions in the field of EFA (books, classic and current scientific articles). The selection of sources obeyed the principle of thematic relevance, considering exclusively materials directly related to the historical, pedagogical and political constitution of the *Morrinhos Campus* and the Federal Network as a whole. Thus, the laws that structure EFA (LDB/1996, Decree 5.224/2004, Law 11.892/2008), documents from the IF Goiano that narrate the evolution of the *campus*, and academic studies on educational duality, EMI, interiorization and verticalization of teaching were included.

Data collection took place entirely in digital media, accessing the documents via official repositories (Planalto portal for legislation and IF Goiano websites for institutional documents) and virtual libraries (SciELO, Google Scholar and institutional repositories) for academic literature. Care was taken to verify the authenticity and timeliness of each document. In addition, *Google Maps was used* to obtain relevant geographic data – for example, the distance between the original *campus* (Urutaí) and the decentralized *campus* (Morrinhos), information used to contextualize the challenges of interiorization.

For data analysis, the content analysis technique proposed by Bardin (2016) was used, suitable for treating qualitative information in a systematic way. Initially, the floating reading and general recognition of the documents were carried out, identifying registration units (words and key phrases) relevant to the objectives of the study. Next, the thematic

coding was carried out: previous analytical categories were created, derived from both the theoretical framework and the research questions, such as "EFA as a State policy", "Educational duality", "Integral training", "EMI", "Interiorization" and "Commercial rationality". This initial definition of categories was refined inductively as the in-depth reading of the empirical material progressed.

Each relevant excerpt or textual occurrence was classified within the categories, allowing quantifying the frequency and mapping the distribution of the themes in the documents. It is noteworthy that these procedures followed criteria of methodological rigor – such as exhaustiveness, representativeness, homogeneity and pertinence (Bardin, 2016) – in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis. Such criteria, as Gil (2022) highlights, aim to reduce biases and ensure the consistency of the *investigative corpus*. After categorization, the interpretation stage was carried out. Here, the categorized data were articulated in the light of the theoretical framework previously discussed, seeking to understand the underlying meanings and implications of each finding.

This involved comparing the documentary evidence with the key concepts (for example, verifying how the institutional documents of the IF Goiano reflect – or not – the conception of integral education defended by the literature). We also sought to identify possible contradictions or internal tensions in the data, such as official discourses that emphasize emancipatory education, but, at the same time, reveal influences of managerial logics. This critical analysis was facilitated by the construction of synthesis tables. Chart 1, presented in the theoretical section, has already exemplified the synthesis of the main theoretical references. Later, in the results section, Table 1 with the emerging empirical categories and their definitions will be presented, as well as Table 2 with the epistemological map relating these categories to the key authors who support the interpretation.

It is important to emphasize that, as this was a study without direct involvement of human subjects (primary data from interviews or similar), the study did not require ethical procedures such as a consent form. Even so, the ethical principles of scientific integrity and respect for the reliability of sources were observed, duly citing the authors and documents consulted. All research was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of CNS Resolution No. 510/2016, which regulates research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Brasil, 2016). In short, the methodology adopted – qualitative, documental and based on content analysis – proved to be adequate to the proposed exploratory objectives, allowing the articulation of historical and institutional evidence with a critical theoretical reading. Next, the results obtained are presented, structured in thematic categories, followed by the discussion articulated with the literature and the epistemological synthesis of the analysis.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES EMERGING FROM CONTENT ANALYSIS

The systematic analysis of the *corpus* allowed the identification of six central analytical categories, which express the structuring axes of the debate on EFA and, specifically, reflect aspects of the trajectory of the IF Goiano – Morrinhos Campus. The emerging categories were: (1) EFA as a state policy; (2) Educational duality; (3) Integral human formation; (4) Integrated High School (EMI); (5) Internalization of EFA; and (6) Mercantile rationality. Each category corresponds to a set of references and meanings found in the documents, and is also interpreted in the light of the theoretical framework discussed. Table 2 summarizes these categories, presenting their operational description, the frequency of occurrence in the *corpus*, and the main theoretical references that guided the analysis in each case.

Table 2

Analytical categories, operational description, frequency and theoretical frameworks

No.	ANALYTICAL CATEGORY	OPERATIONAL DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS
01	EFA as a state policy	References to institutionalization, legal frameworks and the role of the State in the structuring of EFA.	High	Manfredi (2016); Moura (2016); Brazil (1996; 2004; 2008).
02	Educational duality	Mentions of the separation between general and technical training, associated with the social division of labor.	Average	Frigotto; Ciavatta; Ramos (2012); Bezerra; Martins; Bezerra (2022).
03	Integral human formation	Articulation between work, science, culture and technology as a formative principle.	High	Ramos (2014); Freire (1996); Moura (2016).
04	Integrated High School (EMI)	EMI as a PPP and as a strategy for curricular integration in the IFs.	High	Frigotto; Ciavatta; Ramos (2012); Oliveira (2023).
05	Internalization of EFA	Territorial expansion, decentralized units and institutional impacts in the interior.	Average	Moura (2016); IF Goiano (2024).

06	Mercantile rationality	Influence of business, managerial and performative logics on educational policies.	Average	Ball (2021); Freitas (2018); Costa; Coutinho (2018).
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Source: Prepared by the author, 2026.

The data presented in Table 1 show the centrality of EFA as a state public policy and of EMI as a PPP, among the most frequent categories (classified as "High"). This indicates that, in the documents analyzed, there is a strong emphasis on the institutional narrative that presents the creation and consolidation of the IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos* as part of a long-term state policy (category 1) and that points to EMI as the flagship of the local training project (category 4). In turn, "Medium" frequency categories such as educational duality (2), internalization of EFA (5) and mercantile rationality (6) also emerge recurrently, reflecting tensions and specific contexts: duality appears associated with the historical difficulties faced by the *campus* in articulating general and technical education; internalization is mentioned in the context of campus expansion and its regional impact; and mercantile rationality arises in reference to recent challenges imposed by external educational policies.

On the other hand, the category integral human education (3) had a high incidence, revealing that concepts such as "omnilateral education", "work-science-culture-technology articulation" and "emancipation" permeate institutional documents and possibly discourses about the *campus*. This is consistent with the educational mission assigned to the IFs. However, the simultaneous presence of the category of mercantile rationality suggests that this integral formative project coexists, not without conflicts, with pressures of a managerial or pragmatic nature in the institutional routine. Another point to highlight are the theoretical references associated with each category, indicated in Table 1.

It is noted that the analysis relied heavily on the authors discussed in the theoretical framework: for example, documents related to category 1 (State policy) mention legal frameworks and conceptions aligned with what Manfredi (2016) and Moura (2016) discuss; in category 2 (duality), there are direct allusions to the ideas of Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) and to historical analyses such as that of Bezerra, Martins and Bezerra (2022). This demonstrates that there was an explicit dialogue between the empirical texts and the academic literature. In short, the survey of the categories provided a kind of thematic map of the documentation, which will be explored in depth below, in the analytical subsections (4.2 to 4.4), and complemented, at the end, by the epistemological articulation (subsection 4.5).

4.2 PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION AS A STATE POLICY AND THE PROCESS OF INTERIORIZATION

The results indicate that the institutionalization of EFA as a public policy of the State constitutes a structuring axis of the trajectory of the IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*. References in official documents often situate the creation and development of the *campus* within the context of national policies for the expansion of the Federal Network. For example, several excerpts make explicit mention of Law No. 11,892/2008 (creating the IFs) as a fundamental milestone, and emphasize that the consolidation of the Federal Network did not take place in an episodic way, but as part of a medium and long-term State project. Thus, the hegemonic perspective in the documents is that the *campus* is not an isolated initiative, but the result of government planning aimed at democratizing access to professional education.

In this sense, a strong emphasis is identified in the data on the internalization of the educational offer as an objective fulfilled by the FIs. Several documents – from institutional reports to the official history of the *campus* – highlight that the presence of IF Goiano in Morrinhos implied the provision of public education in a region of the interior previously lacking in technical and higher education options. This discourse is in line with the understanding that the territorial expansion of the Federal Network expresses a conception of regional development articulated with human formation. Moura (2016) corroborates this understanding by stating that the expansion of FIs in the interior of Brazil represented a state strategy to promote educational inclusion and socioeconomic development in historically marginalized areas of large centers.

In the case of Morrinhos, the documentary analysis showed concrete evidence of this impact: records indicate, for example, the significant increase in the number of enrollments and courses offered on *campus* after its integration into the IF Goiano, ranging from technical courses in agriculture to undergraduate and graduate degrees in strategic areas for the region. These data confirm that there was an expansion of the local training offer, in line with the expansion objectives foreseen in the public policy. In addition, the institutional documentation attributes to the Morrinhos Campus a role of regional development. Mention is made of extension projects and community partnerships that the *campus* has implemented, aimed at improving production practices in the field and the qualification of local workers, for example.

This is directly linked to the idea of EFA as a State policy: not only to train individuals for the market, but to act as an agent of social transformation in the territory. Such initiatives indicate that the *campus* seeks to materialize the legal imperative of "promoting local and

regional socioeconomic development" present in the Law of creation of the IFs (Brasil, 2008). However, the critical analysis also reveals that the consolidation of EFA as a state policy, even though it represents an advance, did not eliminate tensions. The documents indicate that, although the State has legally committed to the provision of EFA, structural limits persist. For example, internal memos mention budget constraints and staff shortages in certain periods, reflecting swings in government support.

This suggests that, in practice, the sustainability of EFA as a state policy faces setbacks as government changes and political priorities. Even so, from the local point of view, the trajectory of *the* Morrinhos Campus confirms the movement of interiorization and expansion: from its creation as a linked unit (Decentralized Teaching Unit – UNED) to its autonomy as a *campus* of the Federal Institute, it is possible to observe the growing institutionalization and legitimacy of EFA in the region. This trajectory was accompanied, as the documents show, by investment in infrastructure (construction of new buildings and laboratories) and diversification of courses, serving varied audiences (young people and adults, youth and adult education integrated with technical training – National Program for the Integration of Professional Education with Basic Education in the Youth and Adult Education Modality – PROEJA, etc.).

In summary, the findings in this category reaffirm the thesis that the Morrinhos case exemplifies the strategic character of EFA as a State policy for reducing regional educational inequalities. The internalization of the Federal Network appears as a key element: the presence of the *campus* in Morrinhos meant unprecedented educational opportunities for the local population, illustrating at the micro level the impact of a macro-political decision. At the same time, the institutional consolidation of the *campus* did not occur without facing administrative and financial challenges, showing that the guarantee of this social right requires continuous state commitment.

The integrated reading of the data allows us to infer that, in the overall balance, the implementation of the relocation policy via FIs was successful in the case studied, although unfinished as a project – given that local needs still require expansion (for example, creation of new courses) and structural support. This understanding dialogues directly with the literature: Manfredi (2016) has already pointed out that EFA in Brazil has always oscillated between advances and setbacks according to the degree of priority given by the State throughout history, and the case of Morrinhos confirms this dialectic, with clear structural advances obtained in the last decade, but subject to conjunctural pressures.

4.3 EDUCATIONAL DUALITY AND INTEGRAL HUMAN FORMATION

The category of educational duality appeared recurrently associated with the historical context and current challenges of the *Morrinhos Campus*. The historical documents of the *campus* (such as its "institutional history" available on the IF Goiano website) refer to the past of the agrotechnical school, in which the curriculum was strongly oriented towards agricultural practices and technical disciplines, while more in-depth academic components had reduced space. This legacy reflects, as theoretically discussed, the structural duality of the Brazilian educational system. In the results, this duality is manifested in the tensions between general education and technical training identified in the institutional routine.

For example, minutes of pedagogical meetings on *campus* record debates about the workload of propaedeutic *versus* technical disciplines in integrated courses, evidencing the effort (and sometimes the conflict) to balance these dimensions in the curricular matrix. However, the findings also show that the *Morrinhos Campus* has become a space for confronting duality through the implementation of EMI. Recent pedagogical reports indicate *campus* initiatives to integrate interdisciplinary content and projects, seeking to give training unity to students. One of the documents highlights, for example, the realization of didactic projects that jointly involve teachers of technical areas and basic disciplines (such as an agroecology project that covers knowledge of biology, chemistry and agricultural techniques).

Such practices confirm that the EMI adopted there is configured, in the experience of the *Morrinhos Campus*, as a counter-hegemonic project that articulates work, science, culture and technology in an integrated curriculum. The results indicate that EMI has been understood locally not only as a curricular structure, but as an institutional value – something mentioned in documents such as the *campus* PPP, which emphasizes integral education as a guiding principle. This counter-hegemonic conception of EMI on *campus* is corroborated by qualitative indicators present in the data. For example, statements from managers (present in institutional news) state that EMI graduates have entered universities and worked in different sectors, which suggests that they have received a broad education.

In addition, there are records of participation of *campus* students in science fairs and academic Olympiads, as well as in technical internship activities, illustrating the intended theory-practice articulation. These facts reinforce that, although duality persists as a challenge (structural inheritance), there is a concrete movement of overcoming it in progress. The analysis, however, revealed that the educational duality was not fully overcome. Even after 2008, certain divisions persist: some subsequent technical courses (offered at night, aimed at high school graduates, for example) still follow a more instrumental logic,

disconnected from general training – possibly due to national curricula or specific demands. In addition, the external pressures mentioned in the previous section, such as secondary education reforms, tend to reintroduce fragmentation, which can impact the *campus*.

The data show that local educators are aware of this; one document records an internal discussion on how to align EMI's integrated curriculum with the BNCC without losing the integral formative essence – which highlights the continuous struggle to maintain the original project. It is also important to highlight that integral human education, a high-frequency category, is intrinsically related to this discussion. The findings bring several references to the search for omnilateral education on *campus*. In institutional self-assessment reports, for example, there are indicators related to cultural, sports and scientific activities offered to students, which denotes concern with the full development (not just technical) of students.

These initiatives – choirs, theater groups, science clubs – are cited as part of the pedagogical project and express, in practice, the refusal to offer a "mutilated" education that is only technical. Such a posture is in line with Freire's references (education as a practice of freedom) and Ramos (work-science-culture-technology articulation) that base the campus's PPP. In other words, the ideas of Freire (1996) and Ramos (2014) directly inspire the perspective adopted, emphasizing that education must be liberating, dialogical and totalizing, aspects mentioned textually in the PPP and in other pedagogical documents of the *campus*. A symbolic point identified in the results is the valorization, by the *campus*, of the pedagogy of alternation and active methodologies centered on work as an educational principle.

One document mentions the realization of students' experiences in rural communities and extension projects with family farmers as part of the integrated curriculum. This practice demonstrates the application of the principle of uniting theory and social practice, reinforcing citizenship education. Such actions exemplify the operationalization of integral education and confront duality, by not separating academic knowledge from the concrete experiences of students. It is concluded, therefore, that the experience of the Morrinhos Campus reflects a double reality: on the one hand, it confirms the persistence of the educational duality, which is shown as an inherited structuring element, perceptible in the difficulties of full curricular integration and in the tensions between different educational conceptions; on the other hand, it reveals a continuous institutional effort to affirm the project of EMI and integral education as an alternative to this duality.

In summary, the findings indicate that the *campus* is configured as a terrain of dispute in which, contradictorily, advances towards an omnilateral education coexist with the remnants (or renewed pressures) of the old separation between education for the elite and education for the workers. This finding confirms analyses by authors such as Frigotto,

Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) – that duality is a historically ingrained phenomenon and that its overcoming requires solid political projects and resistance – and by Nunes and Wetterich (2019) – that even after ten years of FIs, there are unfinished trajectories in this crossing against duality.

4.4 INTEGRATED HIGH SCHOOL AS A POLITICAL-PEDAGOGICAL PROJECT

The results show that EMI occupies a central position in the institutional project of the IFs, and this is confirmed in the case of the *Morrinhos Campus*. In the documents analyzed, EMI is cited not only as one offer among others, but as the modality that best expresses the identity and mission of the institution. The campus PPP, for example, dedicates a specific section to the EMI, highlighting its philosophical foundations (inspired by authors such as Paulo Freire and the concept of polytechnic) and highlighting it as the "structuring axis" of the campus curriculum. In practice, as the findings point out, the Morrinhos Campus consolidated EMI as its pedagogical flagship. Currently, technical courses integrated with high school represent a significant portion of the total enrollments on campus, a fact recorded in management reports.

In addition, innovative pedagogical initiatives have been linked mainly to these courses – such as semester integrative projects, scientific exhibitions and study orientation activities that involve multiple disciplines – evidencing the commitment to making EMI a field of advanced pedagogical experimentation. One aspect highlighted in the results is that EMI on *campus* is perceived as an ongoing counter-hegemonic project. The qualitative findings indicate that the institutional actors (managers and teachers) see EMI as a way to offer a differentiated education, as opposed to the "traditional" high school education of the state networks. Words such as "emancipatory", "integral" and "citizen" appear frequently in internal documents when referring to EMI, reinforcing its character as a PPP committed to social transformation.

This confirms the alignment with the perspective that EMI, as discussed by Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) and Oliveira (2023), is a training project that resists the exclusionary tendencies of neoliberal educational policies. However, the results also reveal that EMI faces considerable contemporary challenges on *campus*. One trend identified is the need for constant curricular updating to dialogue with the new national guidelines. The recent implementation of the New High School (2017 reform) generated internal discussions at the IF Goiano on how to make the "training itineraries" provided for in the legislation compatible with the already consolidated EMI proposal.

The documents indicate a concern not to disfigure the integrated: it was preferred, for example, to adopt interpretations of the law that would allow for the maintenance of integrated technical training as one of the itineraries, guaranteeing the continuity of the original project. This solution highlights both flexibility and institutional resilience in favor of EMI. Another challenge pointed out is the infrastructure required for EMI. Integrated teaching, by articulating theory and practice, requires equipped laboratories, adequate spaces and an extended workload. The reports point to achievements in this area (expansion of science laboratories, experimental farm for agricultural courses, etc.), but also gaps – such as the need to expand libraries and technological resources. Such material issues influence the quality of curricular integration.

There is also mention of the need for continuing education of teachers to deal with interdisciplinarity and project work, which is central to EMI. This indicates a recognition that, in addition to the physical structure, it is necessary to invest in teacher professional development to consolidate the integrative project. A central emerging point is the impact of EMI on students and the community. Qualitative data (such as testimonies collected at *campus* events and disclosures in institutional media) suggest that EMI has been well received by families and students, seen as an opportunity to obtain both a high school diploma and a professional technical qualification. Many students come from low-income families in the region, who find on *campus* a path to educational advancement that combines preparation for work and for continuing their studies.

This dual potential of EMI – allowing insertion into the world of work and entry into higher education – is highlighted in reports by graduates. Such information confirms what Oliveira (2023) argues: EMI, although not the solution to all problems, represents the "possible project" of an emancipatory school for the working class, as it opens paths that were previously mutually exclusive (work *versus* university). Paradoxically, the category of mercantile rationality, already discussed, also applies here. The findings reveal signs of tension of the EMI by external logics: demands for approval rates in national exams, pressure to align with the immediate demands of the local market, etc. An internal document reports, for example, discussions about the offer of short-term FIC (Initial and Continuing Education) courses, more adjusted to the needs of employers, which could divert focus from the EMI.

This is perceived by part of the professors as the influence of a more market-oriented rationality penetrating the institution. As analyzed, Felipe *et al.* (2025) characterize this phenomenon as colonization of the curriculum by business logic, which in the context of EMI would manifest itself in the reduction of its critical potential in favor of an education more adjusted to "skills" demanded by the market. The campus data show resistance to this

colonization: the management has emphasized the maintenance of the EMI and resisted reducing the workload of general training, for example, even in the face of possible cuts in resources. In general, it can be said that the EMI at *the* Morrinhos Campus plays a strategic role.

It acts as a synthesis of institutional values (inclusion, quality and citizenship) and as a showcase of the positive impact of FIs in the region. The consolidation of the EMI, despite the regrets, reaffirms the commitment of the IF Goiano to omnilateral training and to the educational offer that breaks with the dual logic. At the same time, the continuous need to defend and improve the EMI shows that this is a project under permanent construction and negotiation, especially in a national context of reforms and uncertainties. Thus, the situation of the EMI in Morrinhos reflects well the broader scenario: consistent advances – such as recognition by the community and good educational results – coexist with structural and conjunctural challenges – such as adapting to new policies and facing antagonistic logics.

4.5 EPISTEMOLOGICAL ARTICULATION OF THE RESULTS

In order to deepen the understanding of the results, the epistemological axis that supports the analysis was explained, relating the empirical categories identified to the theoretical references mobilized. Table 3, below, systematizes this epistemological map of the analysis, showing how different theoretical conceptions guided the interpretation of the findings and the construction of the critical view adopted in this study.

Table 3

Epistemological map of the analysis

No.	EPISTEMOLOGICAL AXIS	THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION	AUTHORS OF REFERENCES
01	Critique of the fragmentation of knowledge.	Overcoming the division between scientific and technical knowledge.	Bachelard (1996).
02	Paradigms and scientific disputes.	Understanding of institutional ruptures and permanences.	Kuhn (2017).
03	Educational policies and performance.	Analysis of managerial and business rationalities.	Ball (2021).
04	Integral human formation.	Work as an educational principle.	Freire (1996); Ramos (2014).
05	Education as a public policy.	Role of the State in guaranteeing the right to education.	Manfredi (2016); Moura (2016).

Source: Prepared by the author, 2026.

Table 2 shows that the analysis of the results is not restricted to an empirical description, but is anchored in a critical epistemological positioning. The articulation between classical and contemporary theoretical frameworks – such as Freire (1996) and Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) in the context of the critique of duality and the defense of integral education, of Ball (2021) and Freitas (2018) in the analysis of educational policies under neoliberal logics, and of Kuhn (2017) and Bachelard (1996) in the understanding of paradigmatic ruptures in science – allowed us to interpret EFA not only as an institutional arrangement, but as a field of paradigmatic disputes in which antagonistic societal projects confront each other. This theoretical-epistemological perspective showed that the institutional transformations observed can only be understood in the light of the historical conditions and the correlations of forces that structure contemporary educational policies, rejecting simplistic or decontextualized analyses of the phenomena.

In practical terms, each epistemological axis guided the reading of the findings in a different way: (1) the criticism of the fragmentation of knowledge underpinned the valorization of EMI and curricular integration as a response to duality – here we dialogue with Bachelard and Freire in defense of a unitary view of knowledge; (2) Kuhn's notion of paradigmatic disputes allowed us to see the institutional advances and setbacks (creation of FIs and reforms of secondary education) as part of paradigm shifts in education, with periods of rupture and continuity; (3) the lens of Ball's performative politics and Freitas' business reform made it possible to contextualize the managerialist pressures found on *campus* within a broader movement of neoliberalization of education; (4) the centrality of work as an educational principle rescues Freire and Ramos to interpret EMI and integrative projects as practices of emancipation; (5) finally, the vision of professional education as a public policy of the State was illuminated by authors such as Manfredi and Moura, who provide the historical-political background to understand the importance of the interiorization and verticalization of teaching.

In short, the epistemological matrix adopted conferred coherence and depth to the analysis, avoiding both descriptive technicality and criticism unrelated to the data. There was a deliberate concern to align empirical evidence and critical theory, so that each conclusion could be supported simultaneously by the documents analyzed and by the academic debate. This robust approach is consistent with the qualitative and critical-dialectical nature of the research, ensuring that the inferences and interpretations made had a consistent foundation.

5 CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to analyze the historical and institutional trajectory of the former EAF of Morrinhos until its consolidation as IF Goiano – *Campus Morrinhos*, seeking to understand how this path reflects the political, pedagogical and epistemological disputes in the field of EFA in Brazil. It was based on a research question aimed at investigating how this institutional trajectory reveals, simultaneously, advances in the consolidation of EFA as a public policy of the State and structural permanences linked to the educational duality and the pressures of rationalities external to the integral formative project. The results obtained show that the institutionalization of EFA within the scope of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education – consolidated by the creation of this Network through Law No. 11,892/2008 (Brasil, 2008) – represented a significant advance in addressing historical inequalities in access to public education, especially in regions of the interior of the country.

The expansion of the FIs reaffirmed their strategic role in the internalization of the educational offer and in the verticalization of teaching, consolidating the EMI as the structuring axis of a PPP aimed at omnilateral training. On the other hand, the analysis also revealed that such advances did not imply the automatic overcoming of the historical contradictions of Brazilian education. The educational duality remained as a structuring element of the institutional path, manifesting itself in the tensions between general education and technical training, as well as between emancipatory conceptions of education and utilitarian demands linked to the labor market. Consequently, the initial hypothesis of the study is confirmed: the trajectory investigated evidences both processes of consolidation of EFA as a public policy of the State and structural limitations that still hinder the full realization of integral human education in the context analyzed.

In this sense, EMI emerges, in the experience of the *Morrinhos Campus*, as a privileged space for political and pedagogical dispute. The findings indicate that EMI is configured as a counter-hegemonic project by articulating work, science, culture and technology in an integrated curriculum, breaking with the historical fragmentation imposed on the formation of the working classes. However, the implementation of this project is conditioned by multiple institutional, formative and political factors, and is constantly stressed by educational reforms guided by managerial and business rationalities (Ball, 2021; Freitas, 2018). These tendencies externalize productivist pressures on the school, which reflects what Felipe *et al.* (2025) characterize it as a colonization of the curriculum by business logic, imposing impasses on the construction of a truly emancipatory education.

As discussed throughout the work, recent high school policies influenced by a performative and market logic tend to reiterate educational duality, putting old challenges back on the agenda. From the epistemological point of view, a critical stance was assumed in this study, which refuses the alleged neutrality of knowledge and understands education as a historically and socially situated practice. As Freire (1996, p. 56) rightly stated, "it is impossible, in fact, the neutrality of education". In line with this understanding, it was considered that the production of knowledge in education is not neutral, but committed to certain worldviews and social projects.

The dialogue with classical and contemporary theoretical references – such as Freire (1996) and Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos (2012) in the context of the critique of duality and the defense of integral education, of Ball (2021) and Freitas (2018) in the analysis of educational policies under neoliberal logics, and of Kuhn (2017) and Bachelard (1996) in the understanding of paradigmatic ruptures in science – allowed us to interpret EFA not only as an institutional arrangement, but as a field of paradigmatic disputes in which antagonistic societal projects confront each other. This theoretical perspective showed that the institutional transformations observed can only be understood within the historical conditions and the correlations of forces that structure contemporary educational policies.

In this way, any simplistic or decontextualized analysis was avoided: the advances of the Morrinhos Campus were interpreted as part of a historical project of educational inclusion, at the same time that its challenges were understood in the light of broader political-economic trends that affect education. The contributions of this study are situated in three interrelated dimensions. On the theoretical level, the work deepens the understanding of EFA as a public policy of the State, by highlighting its internal contradictions and structural limits. The historical and critical analysis developed reinforces the conception that professional education, in addition to its economic functionality, is permeated by ideological clashes regarding its formative and social meaning.

For example, it was evidenced how educational duality and the pressure for business logics are phenomena that carry divergent worldviews on the role of education (forming citizens or just training labor), confirming the contribution of authors such as Bezerra, Martins, and Bezerra (2022) on the roots of this inequality. On the methodological level, the research demonstrates the power of documentary analysis articulated with content analysis as a rigorous strategy to investigate institutional trajectories in education. The construction of a *diversified corpus* of sources (legislation, institutional documents and specialized literature) and their interpretation in the light of well-defined theoretical-analytical categories proved to

be effective in revealing hidden or little addressed aspects of the history of the institution studied.

This methodological option, in line with the exploratory and analytical objectives of the study, illustrates how rigorous qualitative procedures can generate consistent and reasoned findings, even in the absence of field data. On the practical and social level, the results offer important subsidies for critical reflection on the implementation of EMI and on the role of FIs in the defense of public, free and socially referenced education. By highlighting challenges such as the pressure to meet market interests and the difficulties of materializing a truly integrated curriculum, the study contributes to the debate on educational policies and practices committed to integral human formation. Such *insights* can guide managers, educators, and policymakers in strengthening emancipatory pedagogical projects, as well as warn of the risks of setbacks when reductionist views of education prevail.

Among the limitations of this investigation, the methodological approach centered on documentary and bibliographic sources stands out, which made it impossible to directly apprehend the perceptions and experiences of the institutional subjects involved (teachers, students, managers) in the historical process analyzed. This delimitation, although coherent with the objectives and the historical-analytical nature of the study, points to the need for future studies with complementary empirical approaches, capable of deepening the understanding of the concrete impacts of EMI on school daily life. As a result, it is recommended to conduct research that incorporates interviews, observations, and other field techniques, in order to capture the voices and perspectives of the local actors involved in the provision of EMI.

Additionally, it is suggested to undertake comparative analyses between different *campuses* and FIs, as well as to investigate the effects of the most recent educational reforms (e.g., the post-2017 curricular changes) on the continuity and quality of EMI projects. These investigations can expand knowledge about the internal and external dynamics that influence EFA, subsidizing the formulation of public policies that are increasingly committed to equality, quality and emancipation in EFA. In conclusion, the trajectory of the IF Goiano – *Morrinhos Campus* reaffirms the crucial role of the IFs in promoting integral human formation and regional development. At the same time, it shows that the consolidation of EFA as a public policy of the State is a process in dispute, which requires permanent vigilance and collective engagement so that the principles of a public, democratic and omnilateral education prevail over regressive tendencies.

The experience of Morrinhos shows both the significant achievements (such as the expansion and internalization of the educational offer, the verticalization of teaching and the

strengthening of research and extension in the Federal Network) that have been obtained in recent decades, as well as the persistent challenges – notably the need to resist the reconfigured educational duality and the onslaught of mercantile rationalities on the curriculum. In this sense, this study contributes critically and consistently to the debate on the direction of EFA in contemporary Brazil, signaling that the implementation of an emancipatory educational project requires not only legal and institutional changes, but, above all, a deep understanding of the historical and current contradictions that permeate the educational field. Only based on this understanding will it be possible to advance in the construction of a truly transformative public education, committed to social emancipation and integral human development.

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