SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS OF LATIN AMERICA

REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA DE LA COMPETENCIA COMUNICATIVA INTERCULTURAL EN LAS AULAS DE INGLÉS DE AMÉRICA LATINA

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Abstract

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) for foreign language education has developed over the last 25 years and has become a predominant guide for public policies regarding interculturality within the instruction of foreign languages. In Latin America, national governments have adopted ICC into English Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy national standards and policies. Nevertheless, how ICC has been adopted in the classrooms needs to be clarified. This systematic review of empirical studies on ICC in Latin America identifies the emergent themes and gaps in the research. The search identified 23 Latin American papers written in Spanish or English from SCOPUS, SciELO, and WOS databases in September of 2022. The review results are organized into four themes. It analyses what has been studied in the EFL classrooms in schools, ICC English Language Teaching degree programs, EFL in higher education, and the development and analysis of ICC in didactic materials for EFL. Findings, among others, indicate a gap in investigations in schools, a change in EFL teachers' perceptions of ICC, a preponderance of practitioner action research, and critical pedagogy.

Key Words: Intercultural Communicative Competence, Latin America, English as a Foreign Language, systematic literature review, English Language Teaching.

Resumen

La competencia comunicativa intercultural (CCI) para la educación de idiomas extranjeros se ha desarrollado en los últimos 25 años y se ha convertido en una guía predominante para orientar las políticas públicas sobre interculturalidad en la enseñanza de idiomas extranjeros. En América Latina, los gobiernos han adoptado las ideas del CCI en las normas y políticas nacionales de pedagogía de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE). Sin embargo, es necesario aclarar cómo se ha adoptado CCI en las aulas. Esta revisión sistemática de estudios empíricos sobre CCI en América Latina, identifica los temas emergentes y las brechas en la investigación. La búsqueda identificó 23 artículos latinoamericanos escritos en español o inglés, de las bases de datos SCOPUS, SciELO y WOS en septiembre de 2022. Los resultados de la revisión se organizan en cuatro temas. Analiza lo que se ha estudiado en las aulas de ILE en las escuelas, los programas de grado de Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera con CCI, el ILE en la educación superior y el desarrollo y análisis de CCI en materiales didácticos para el ILE. Los hallazgos, entre otros, indican una brecha en las investigaciones en las escuelas, un cambio en las percepciones de los profesores de ILE sobre CCI, una preponderancia de la investigación-acción de los practicantes y la pedagogía crítica.

Palabras Clave: Competencia comunicativa intercultural, América Latina, Inglés como lengua extranjera, Revisión sistemática de la literatura, Enseñanza del idioma inglés

In 1997, Byram integrated the two concepts of intercultural competence and communicative language teaching in the foreign language classroom with his "savoirs model" of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), which became a foundational text over the next two decades (Byram 2021; Risager 2022). Risager (2022) stresses that, unfortunately, in the 25 years that followed the publication of the model, the growth and struggle against racism, poverty, sexism, war, disease, and climate change have intensified, requiring evermore cross-border and cross-cultural collaboration. In the last ten years, the people of Latin America (LA) have experienced a wave of migration due specifically to refugees from hyperinflation in Venezuela (Plataform R4V 2021). Extensive research has shown that children of migrants have suffered discrimination and racism in schools (Bustos & Díaz 2018; Leihy & Arancibia 2021; Martínez Rojas et al. 2021; Mondaca Rojas et al. 2020b). Due to these problems of racism and poverty, as well as the many other global challenges, teaching interculturality and global citizenship is as significant as ever (Mondaca Rojas et al. 2020a; Mondaca-Rojas & Aguirre-Munizaga 2022; Risager 2022).

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ICC, initially implemented in Europe and the USA in the 1990s, has been broadly researched around the globe in the last 30 years (Byram 2021; Henao et al. 2019). In addition to Byram's ICC Savoirs model, arguably the most influential in foreign language acquisition, researchers have proposed numerous Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Sensitivity models which are used in EFL research. None of these models, however, need to be applied to only in foreign language research. Twenty-five years after proposing his model, Byram states that ICC does not imply that students must speak a foreign language.

> Intercultural communication can also apply to other geopolitical entities, such as ethnic minorities with their own education systems. Furthermore, as argued in Chapter 1, intercultural competence is important in other contexts where other social allegiances and social identities are salient, but language competence is not problematic (Byram 2021:97).

Byram's savoirs model, however, proposes that linguistically, for a student to communicate effectively with another speaker of the target foreign language, the student should be interculturally competent (Byram 2021). So, ICC is more than just the parallel teaching of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in addition to teaching foreign language communication competence.

Some additional models that are important in research in foreign language acquisition which have developed in parallel with the savoirs model are Bennet's (2004) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), Chen and Starosta's (1998) Triangular Model and Acheson & Schneider-Bean's (2019) Pendulum model of intercultural sensitivity, a useful adaptation of the DMIS. The utility of these models is that they allow unique perspectives of the components of ICC and facilitate their operationalization. For example, the Triangular model separates ICC into Sensitivity, Adroitness and Awareness, the three sides of the ICC triangle. From that model, Chen and Starosta (2000) developed a measurement scale of Intercultural Sensitivity (ISS). Globally, ISS has been widely used, including in Latin America, in studying the intercultural sensitivity component of ICC both inside the EFL classroom (Zárate Aliaga et al. 2020) as well as unrelated to language acquisition (Klenner Loebel et al. 2021).

ICC has been recognized and adapted by Latin American governments for EFL classes. For example, in 2015 in Colombia, the national government introduced ICC as a critical component in its National Bilingual Program, implemented due to English being considered the global *lingua franca* (Barletta 2009; Henao et al. 2019; Patiño Rojas et al. 2021). Interestingly, the phrase "Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural (CCI)," the Spanish and Portuguese translation of

ICC, does not appear to be commonly used in LA outside of Colombia. For example, in Chile in 2014, the Ministry of Education included in the English pedagogy standards the concepts of teaching intercultural competence while teaching English as a Foreign Language in schools (CPEIP 2014). In 2021, the ministry further updated the standards, making intercultural competence for communicating in English more explicit. However, they did not use the term CCI. Teachers should be teaching English "..as a vehicle for cultural exchange and cultural representation…they should promote interculturality among students so that they develop the appreciation for their own culture and identity, as well as the appreciation of other cultures" (CPEIP 2021:92) [authors translation]. The following is a final confirmation that the term Intercultural Communicative Competence may not be commonly used in LA, although the concept is being used. Singer et al. (2018) are the only authors that have published regarding ICC in the English Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in a Chilean context. The authors also state they could find no other publications from Chile before they published. Regardless they accurately summarize ICC in line with the Chilean Ministry of Educations 2021 definition. "the interlocutor should acquire and develop the ability to use the language in a context characterized by a plurality of identities, lifestyles and world visions." (Singer et al. 2018:251) [authors translation].

In summary, these three facts of documented racism in Chilean schools (Bustos & Díaz 2018; Leihy & Arancibia 2021; Martínez Rojas et al. 2021), the current intercultural standards added to national EFL programs in LA (CPEIP 2021; Henao et al. 2019) and the scant production of empirical articles on ICC in EFL classrooms (Singer et al. 2018) invites further exploration of ICC in the LA region. This paper will present a systematic review of empirical articles on ICC using the SCOPUS, WOS, and SciELO databases in the Latin American context, including the methodology used. Emerging themes and gaps in Latin American research will be identified. In order to contextualize those themes, first, a descriptive analysis will be presented, including a comparison of the Latin American papers with a recent global systematic review, a review of the methodologies used in LA, and investigators' epistemologies and positionality. Then the findings will be presented and organized in four themes; a) what has been studied in the EFL classrooms in schools, b) ICC English Language Teaching degree programs, c) EFL in higher education, and finally, d) development and analysis of ICC in didactic materials for EFL didactic materials and the development of authentic materials.

Methodology

Lasserson et al. (2022), in the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions, emphasize that systematic reviews are essential first steps before embarking on new research. A systematic review ensures that the

research question is not being duplicated, and the review can identify knowledge gaps or a lack of evidence in existing primary research. Additionally, decision-makers are provided with a synthesis of the primary research which has already occurred (Page et al. 2021). The search was performed in Scopus, WOS, and SciELO databases on Sept 14th, 2022. Scopus is the largest academic peer-reviewed article database (Cardoso et al. 2022). WOS is the next largest, and it includes access to SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online). Clarivate explains that SciELO focuses on regional journals in Latin America, Spain, Portugal, the Caribbean, and South Africa, which is important for this study.

Guided by the study's objective, the data collection process considered the following key terms in the respective data sets: "Intercul* Communicat* Compet*" or "Compete* Comunicati* Intercultural*". The asterisks sign was used to ensure that the search included all word variations (i.e., communication, communicative & intercultural, or interculturalidad). These search terms include the three target languages of Spanish, Portuguese, and English. The search used the articles' titles, keywords, and abstract fields. The date range was open and generated papers in SCOPUS from 1984 to 2022, in WOS from 1985 to 2022, and in SciELO from 2005 to 2022. The types of documents included in the database search were articles and articles of revision.

The inclusion criteria are 1) ICC applied in the initial search parameters, 2) The context must be in a LA country,

and 3) the EFL classroom. The broad initial criteria in the search engines of the databases were designed to permit a more specific inclusion and exclusion process in an Excel database, and for the first inclusion criteria of ICC/CCI, the three databases yielded 1097 titles globally, WOS 360 documents, SciELO 30 documents, and Scopus 707 documents. These documents were then filtered and sorted in the Excel database to include/exclude documents for the second parameter, Latin American context. The countries included as Latin American, as defined in other systematic reviews, are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela (Guzmán-Valenzuela & Gómez 2019). This filtering was done by using the field of the address of the authors for identifying the country of affiliation. A country name search was also performed in the abstracts and the titles. The third inclusion/exclusion criteria of the context of EFL were applied by reviewing each abstract of the 84 papers in the set generated by the previous filter. Forty-four items were excluded, and 40 items were included. Next, duplicates of articles were identified. Seven articles were repeated in two databases, and two were indexed in all three databases. An initial reading set of 28 articles was produced. Five essays that were not empirical studies were eliminated, leaving a final analysis set of 23 articles. See Figure 1, PRISMA 2020 flow chart. The complete detailed analysis set is presented in Table 1.

Figure 1
Article search and selection process per recommendations PRISMA 2020 (Page et al. 2020).
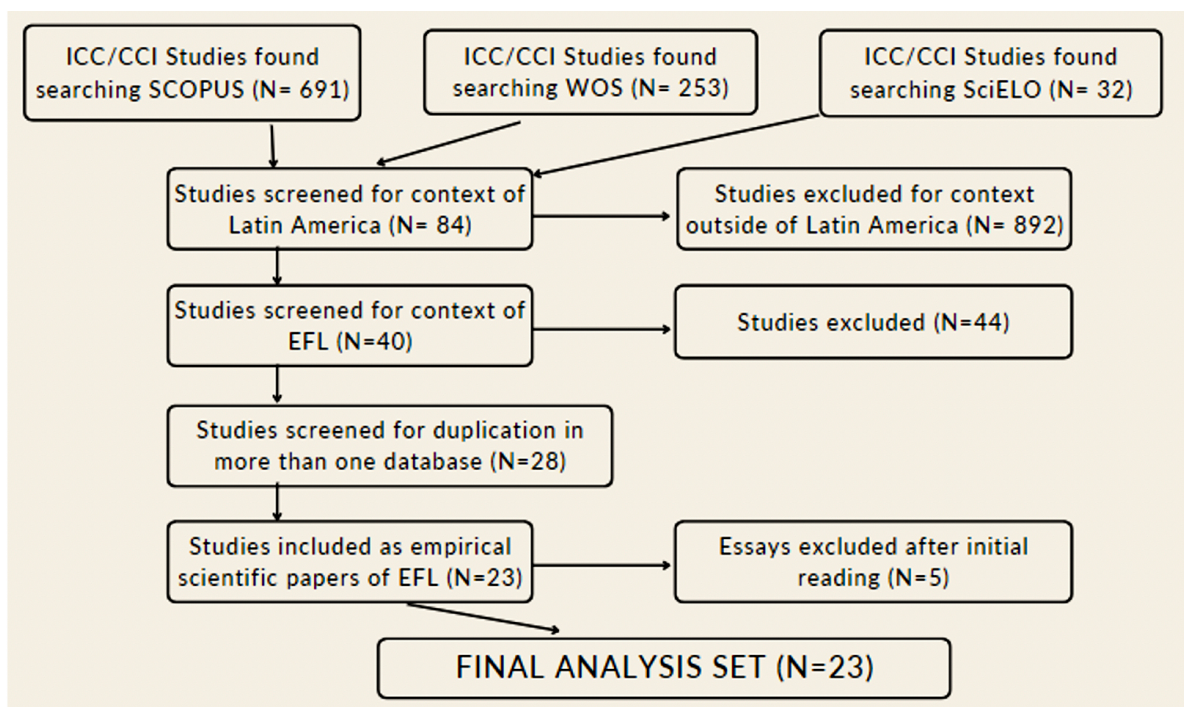
Table 1
Analysis Set based on the format of Cardoso et al. (2022)

Nº	Author(s), year, title, and source of publication
1.	Alghasab, M., & Alvarez-Ayure, C. P. (2021). Towards the promotion of intercultural competences: Telecollaborative conversations between Kuwaiti and Colombian English as a foreign language university students. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2021.1934483
2.	Álvarez Valencia, J. A., & Fernández Benavides, A. (2019). Using social networking sites for language learning to develop intercultural competence in language education programs. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication, 12*(1), 23–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/17513057.2018.1503318
3.	Avila León, I., & Hernández Díaz, A. (2020). Course of Intercultural Communicative Competence through English in Postgraduate Medical Education. *Revista Habanera de Ciencias Médicas, 19*(6). http://www.revhabanera.sld.cu/index.php/rhab/article/view/2889
4.	Barletta Manjarrés, N. (2009). Intercultural competence: Another challenge. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 11*, 143–158. http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=169214144010
5.	Bernal Pinzón, A. N. (2020). Authentic materials and tasks as mediators to develop EFL students' intercultural competence. *HOW, 1*(27), 29–46. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.27.1.515
6.	Cuartas Álvarez, L. F. (2020). Intercultural communicative competence: In-Service EFL teachers building understanding through study groups. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 22*(1), 75–92. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v22n1.76796
7.	Esteban-Núñez, M. T. (2021). Pre-service language teachers' knowledge and practices of intercultural communicative competence. *HOW, 28*(1), 11–29. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.28.1.596
8.	Fernández Benavides, A. (2019). Intercultural components in the multimodal structure of a language learning website. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 21*(1), 59–74. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v21n1.69951
9.	Gómez Rodríguez, L. (2012). Fostering intercultural communicative competence through reading authentic literary texts in an advanced Colombian EFL classroom: A constructivist perspective. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 14*(1), 49–66.
10.	Gómez Rodríguez, L. (2013). Enhancing intercultural competence through US multicultural literature in the EFL classroom. *Folios, 1*(38), 95–109. https://doi.org/10.17227/01234870.38folios95.109
11.	Gómez Rodríguez, L. (2015a). The cultural content in EFL textbooks and what teachers need to do about it. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 17*(2), 167–187. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v17n2.44272
12.	Gómez Rodríguez, L. (2015b). Critical intercultural learning through topics of deep culture in an EFL classroom. Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura, 20(1), 43–59. http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=255042320003
13.	Gómez-Rodríguez, L. (2018). Efl learners' intercultural competence development through international news. *GiST Education and Learning Research Journal, 16*, 185–208. https://doi.org/10.26817/16925777.431
14.	Henao Mejía, E. A., Gómez Salazar, J. O., & Murcia Yalí, J. H. (2019). Intercultural awareness and its misrepresentation in textbooks. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 21*(2), 179–193. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.14177
15.	Olaya, A., & Gómez-Rodríguez, L. (2013). Exploring EFL pre-service teachers' experience with cultural content and intercultural communicative competence at three Colombian universities. *PROFILE, 15*(2), 49–67.
16.	Patiño Rojas, D. M., Conde Borrero, C., & Espinosa González, L. (2021). Creencias y percepciones de los estudiantes sobre la competencia comunicativa intercultural del programa de licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras de la universidad del valle.[Beliefs and perceptions of students about the intercultural communicative competence of the degree program in foreign languages of the Universidad del Valle.] *Folios, 53*. https://doi.org/10.17227/folios.53-8001
17.	Porto, M. (2019). Using the Council of Europe's autobiographies to develop quality education in the foreign language classroom in higher Education. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 19*(6), 520–540. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2019.1673401
18.	Quintana Arias, R. F., & Bello-Serna, C. L. (2020). Biopolítica, vida cotidiana e interculturalidad: La clase de inglés como un espacio emancipatorio que da solución al conflicto intercultural bilingüe en un colegio público de Bogotá. [Biopolitics, daily life and interculturality: The English class as an emancipatory space that provides a solution to the bilingual intercultural conflict in a public school in Bogotá.] *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 22*(2), 127–141. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.15765
19.	Ramírez Espinosa, A., Colmenares Rodríguez, S., & Castellanos, M. (2019). Desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa intercultural a través del trabajo con una obra literaria.[Development of intercultural communicative competence through work with a literary work.] *Signo y Pensamiento, 38*(74). https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.syp38-74.dcci
20.	Rico Troncoso, C. (2012). Language teaching materials as mediators for ICC development: A challenge for materials developers. *Signo y Pensamiento, 30*(60), 130–154. https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/860/86023575010.pdf
21.	Rodriguez Ruiz, M., & Varela Spínola, N. (2019). Improving the Intercultural Communicative Competence of English Language Students. *Journal of Intercultural Communication, 49*, 18. https://immi.se/oldwebsite/nr49/ruiz.html

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Nº	Author(s), year, title, and source of publication
22.	Singer, N., Rubio, M., & Rubio, R. (2018). Representaciones de estudiantes de traducción en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. [Representations of translation students in learning a foreign language.] *Onomázein Revista de lingüística filología y traducción, 39*, 245–269. https://doi.org/10.7764/onomazein.39.10
23.	Zárate Aliaga, E. C., Lavado Rojas, B. M., & Pomahuacre Gómez, W. (2020). Competencia comunicativa intercultural y rendimiento académico en lenguas extranjeras.[Intercultural communicative competence and academic performance in foreign languages.] *Revista Conrado, 16*(74), 30–37.

Analyses

The findings of this systematic review of empirical studies of ICC in the English classrooms of Latin America are organized into four themes which will be discussed in detail. The first of the themes is what has been researched in schools regarding ICC in EFL classes, and it presents the greatest opportunity for further investigation. Next, related to schools are didactic techniques and perceptions of students in English Language Teaching (ELT) degree programs, followed by the themes in EFL classes in higher education in general, and the last theme is the analysis and development of didactic materials for use in the classroom. In order to understand the Latin American context of these themes and findings, a detailed descriptive analysis of the empirical research from the region will be provided next.

Descriptive analysis

The first observation concerns the speed and the quantity of the publications on ICC in LA. The initial search of the three indexed databases revealed over one thousand items globally, with the initial items published in the 1980s and Byram publishing his model in the 1990s. However, in Latin America, the first empirical study of ICC appeared later in the game, having been published in 2009 in Colombia with the ironic title "Intercultural Competence: Another Challenge" (Barletta 2009). The research challenge was slowly taken up over the next decade, with nine empirical studies being published. After this slow adoption of the model, in the next three years, from 2019 until 2021, 14 papers were published. This trend extrapolates to a 400% increase. In the same vein of this idea of the challenge being taken up, the initial 10 years of research were published by just seven Latin American academics. Of these seven investigators, Gómez Rodríguez contributed to six of the papers. The other six academics of the first decade contributed to four of the papers. By contrast, Barletta's 2009 challenge has seen 27 more investigators published those 14 papers between 2019 and 2021. In order to contextualize this production, Table 2 presents a comparison with a global systematic review performed from 2011 until 2021 (Iswandari & Ardi 2022) .

Table 2

Comparison of LA analysis set with a global systematic review performed from 2011 until 2021 (Iswandari & Ardi 2022)

Present LA Study			Global Study		
	Total papers	23	19	Total papers	
Country of Investigation					
Colombia	18	78%	42%	8	Turkey
Cuba	2	9%	16%	3	Columbia
Peru	1	4%	11%	2	Indonesia
Chile	1	4%	11%	2	Iran
Argentina	1	4%	11%	2	China
			5%	1	Hungary
			5%	1	Serbia
Methodology Applied					
Qualitative	19	83%	68%	13	
Mixed	3	13%	16%	3	
Quantitative	1	4%	16%	3	

Table 2 also displays the methodologies of the investigations of the analysis set and compares it with the global sample, highlighting some Latin American characteristics in ICC research in EFL. Only one quantitative investigation was identified (Zárate Aliaga et al. 2020). It used a sample of 280 students and demonstrated a weak yet statistically significant correlation between grades and ICC. Due to its uniqueness, it is a valuable contribution to the LA field of ICC. That study and the three mixed method studies represent only 17 percent of the total versus 32 percent globally. There is a super preponderance of qualitative studies in Latin America, which is not the case globally. Another Latin American characteristic is that 17 of the 23 investigations are practitioner action research. The theme of ICC ties in with the strong Latin American epistemologies of critical pedagogy and decolonial themes, which also tend to be investigated using qualitative methods. Darwin and Barahona (2021) state that Latin American practitioner action research has developed a critical character modeled after the example of Paulo Freire. The 17 practitioner action research investigations used mixed methods twice and qualitative studies 15 times. A final observation of the analysis set pertains to the use of case study methodology. Yin (2018) states that case studies methodology has evolved, allowing for analytic generalizations using tests of validity. Three of the most recent papers used case study design (Cuartas Álvarez 2020; Esteban-Nunez 2021; Fernández Benavides 2019).

Concerning the epistemological paradigms of the authors that informed the research on ICC in the Latin American context, only a few investigators explicitly identify their positions in the papers. Risager (2022), a long-time collaborator of Byram, identifies herself as a critical postmodernist, especially concerning the decolonial and transnational theories. Regardless, she considers that Byram's ICC model is, in its essence, modernist and neo-positivist.

> This lies behind his research and the very purpose of the model, namely, to categorize and list the objectives for the education of the intercultural speaker. One cannot do this without presupposing that there is something to know about and relate to, that there are groups in society to investigate, that there are conventions and rituals to learn and that there are prejudices out there to discuss (Risager 2022:51).

Some examples of authors who do identify their epistemological position in their papers are the following. Gomez Rodriguez (2012), while utilizing short stories with adult EFL students, brought a constructivist approach to his investigation and later a critical multiculturality to a second investigation utilizing similar tools (Gómez-Rodríguez 2015b). Three other authors of papers in line with Risager also self-identified as having critical epistemologies (Henao Mejía et al. 2019; Porto 2019; Risager 2022; Quintana Arias & Bello-Serna 2020).

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Table 3
Analysis Set organized by research themes for discussion.

ICC in English Foreign Language Classes in Schools	(Barletta Manjarrés 2009) (Cuartas Álvarez 2020) (Quintana-Arias & Bello-Serna 2020)
ICC in English Language Teaching Degree Programs	(Esteban-Nunez 2021) (Gómez Rodríguez 2012) (Gómez Rodríguez 2015b) (Olaya & Gómez Rodríguez 2013) (Patiño Rojas et al. 2021)
ICC in English Foreign Language Classes in Higher Education	(Alghasab & Alvarez-Ayure 2021) (Álvarez Valencia & Fernández Benavides 2019) (Bernal Pinzon 2020) (Gómez Rodríguez 2013) (Gómez Rodríguez 2018) (Porto 2019) (Rodriguez Ruiz & Varela Spínola 2019) (Singer et al. 2018) (Zárate Aliaga et al. 2020)
Analysis of Textbooks and other didatic materials and tasks	(Avila León & Hernández Díaz 2020) (Fernández Benavides 2019) (Gómez Rodríguez 2015a) (Henao et al. 2019) (Ramírez-Espinosa et al. 2019) (Rico-Troncoso 2012)

ICC in EFL in schools

The context of this study is the problems of violence and racism, which have been documented in schools in LA (Bustos & Díaz 2018; Leihy & Arancibia 2021; Martínez Rojas et al. 2021; Mondaca Rojas et al. 2020b). The hope of many practitioners teaching interculturality in the foreign language classroom is to improve communication in foreign languages by growing intercultural sensitivity (Rico Troncoso 2012). National governments have encouraged teaching ICC in schools (Barletta 2009; CPEIP 2021; Henao et al. 2019; Quintana Arias & Bello-Serna 2020). However, the analysis of the empirical studies presents very little evidence regarding what is going on in the EFL classes of schools, indicating a significant gap.

There is only one study involving school students and two studies of EFL in-service school teachers. Quintana Arias and Bello Serna (2020) produced practitioner research on a seven-session ICC teaching cycle with high school students. It is important because it addressed ICC by bringing critical Latin American cultural themes into the classroom. The didactic techniques employed not only fulfilled the goals of ICC in EFL but also extended to other goals. The investigators also taught indigenous culture, language, myths, biopolitics, glocalization, and decolonialism. It is a good example of an approach classified as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), teaching a separate topic in a target foreign language, often English (Iswandari & Ardi 2022). Iswandari and Ardi (2022), in their global systematic literature review of ICC, identified an ongoing debate in the literature on whether ICC in EFL classrooms is central to language learning, alternatively, whether ICC is the same as teaching intercultural sensitivity, which may be in a citizenship class, at the same time as teaching English. An equivalent idea is in a language immersion school, teaching biology in the L2 target language of English. It would be CLIL and not ICC. Both are valuable learning activities, but they are not synonyms.

In the schools, the investigations of the EFL teachers were also significant. The first "Intercultural Competence: Another Challenge" was mentioned earlier as the first LA empirical study on ICC published in a journal indexed in the databases reviewed (Barletta 2009). Twenty EFL school teacher monographs in a Colombian context were analyzed, and it was found that teachers at that time had a very narrow and ideological view of what culture was. This paper was also a clarion call for methods to improve EFL utilizing ICC. Barletta made nine concrete recommendations which, based on the numerous investigations in Colombia over the next 13 years, appear to have been at least partially implemented. Eleven years later, Cuartas Alvarez (2020) published the results of a case study of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of three teachers studying and implementing ICC in the EFL classroom. He concludes that it is an effective method for teachers to improve their praxis for ICC. This type of investigation is in line with Barletta's recommendations.

English Language Teaching degree programs

Five studies were identified in the review as coming from a context of English Language Teaching degree programs and are useful for revealing emerging themes in ICC in this context. Chronologically, of the first three studies, Gómez Rodriguez, produced two alone and one in collaboration with Olaya (Gómez Rodríguez 2012; Gómez Rodríguez 2015b; Olaya & Gómez Rodríguez 2013). His two solo studies utilized authentic short stories, and he concluded with the importance of selecting the most useful short stories. This task allows the pre-service teachers to reflect on what they are doing.

> They read the stories, spoke critically about them, listened to others' opinions, and wrote critical responses. In fact, this is the main purpose of ICC: to be able to deal with different perceptions of the world through the conscious reflections and evaluations of those differences, which can be achieved through language use in social interaction (Gómez Rodríguez 2015b:57).

Notably, using authentic materials appears to be more useful in teaching ICC in EFL classes than commercially produced materials (Bernal Pinzón 2020).

In the context of ELT programs, three investigations of student perceptions of ICC were published in Colombia over eight years. These future English teachers' perceptions are particularly important because they are destined for schools. Olaya and Gómez Rodriguez (2013) investigated the perceptions of 51 students from three universities. At that time, the students did not connect the fact that cultural content created greater communicative competence, and it is unlikely they would be teaching intercultural competence to their school students. In contrast, two additional investigations were published on ELT student perceptions and understanding of ICC at the beginning of the next decade with positive results. Patiño Rojas et al. (2020) studied perceptions again with a sample of 241 students in ELT programs. They concluded that great advances had been made in teaching ICC. However, knowledge and ability to apply specific strategies by teachers in formation were still lacking. These findings were corroborated simultaneously in a smaller, separate Colombian investigation using similar techniques and instruments (Esteban-Núñez 2021).

ICC in EFL in Higher Education

Nine studies were published involving University classrooms where students were not learning to teach English. Three of these nine involved information and communication technologies (ICTs). Two practitioner action research investigations were telecollaboration between LA EFL

students and native English students in other countries. Porto (2019) used Skype in 2012 to generate an ICC exchange between her Argentinian students and British students on the 30th anniversary of the Malvinas war. She utilized various successful didactic techniques and, in this specific study, discusses the use of student autobiographies.

The 2012 intervention is a rich source of data that Porto has used and shared in various other publications that are not in the WOS, SciELO, and SCOPUS indexation but are also valuable discussions of ICC, CLIL, Global Citizenship Education and theory (Porto 2021; Porto & Di Bin 2022). Alghasab and Alvarez-Ayure (2021) did a telecollaboration practitioner action research investigation between Colombian and Kuwait students. They implemented the suggestions from other literature that the students be well prepared in advance and concluded that telecollaboration successfully developed the ICC skills. The third ICT study analyzed a social networking site for language learning (SNSLL), Livemocha. The study found that considered alone, the site lacks the idea of ICC, which is not surprising considering its commercial nature but with teacher adjustments, it could be useful (Álvarez Valencia & Fernández Benavides 2019)

Three other studies of the nine analyzed the use of teacher designed or adapted materials and found them effective (Bernal Pinzon 2020; Gómez Rodriguez 2013; Gómez Rodriguez 2018). The studies strengthen the finding that teacher developed material is effective for teaching ICC. Rodriguez Ruiz and Varela Spínola (2019) report on tasks used in their EFL program in Cuba, which uses the four language skills and fits the different needs of students while reinforcing ICC.

The first study published in Chile mentioned earlier involved student perceptions but in a translation degree program rather than teaching (Singer et al. 2018). They found that those students prioritized writing as the most important skill. Chile's northern neighbor Peru is another country with just one investigation using ICC published in the WOS, SciELO, or SCOPUS journals (Zárate Aliaga et al. 2020). It was also unique as the only quantitative study, which was mentioned earlier in the descriptions of the studies. It was also not practitioner action research, but non-EFL teachers studying the ICC object with statistical analyses permitting generalizations with respect to grades.

ICC didactic materials - Analysis and development
The third theme identified in more than a quarter of the article set is the content analysis of EFL textbooks and websites regarding ICC, as well as EFL teachers' analysis of their own ICC materials. It was evident in six of the twenty-three studies.

Textbook and material analysis are the most common topics in this literature. Four studies present and analyze this topic. Rico-Troncoso (2012) published an extensive review of the theories and techniques he developed during his doctoral studies on analyzing EFL textbooks for ICC content. He also developed a teaching rubric for ELT and EFL students to use in analyzing and developing their own tools rather than commercial ones. This same rubric was used by Ramírez Espinosa et al. (2019) in their collaborative study on the development of 84 ICC activities surrounding an authentic literary text, Americanah. The authors state that it is valuable for teachers to make the materials they develop an object of investigation. That investigation clarifies a teacher's preconceptions and biases. It can identify how an investigator's epistemology shows up in their praxis (Ramírez Espinosa et al. 2019).

This benefit of self-reflection is absent when analyzing EFL textbooks. However, similar tools can be used, and because commercial textbooks are more widely used, textbook analysis is more important for public policy. The most prolific LA investigator on ICC, Gómez Rodríguez (2015a), analyzed three commonly used EFL textbooks in LA for the ICC content and found them to present exclusively superficial culture, i.e., congratulatory celebrations in a homogeneous national fashion. These tasks may correspond to the knowledge component of ICC. He found no indication of the understanding skills component of ICC, the ability to improve communication by applying to the conversation an understanding of one's own culture vs. the target culture with whom an interlocutor wishes to communicate. It contrasts with a recent study titled *Intercultural awareness and its misrepresentation in textbooks* (Henao Mejía et al. 2019). A textbook series, "English, Please!" was produced by the Colombian Ministry of Education specifically with the goal of ICC for the Colombian National Bilingual Program (Henao Mejía et al. 2019). The authors' finding was that the text was an advancement but was overly reductionist and instrumentalist. Only 32 tasks corresponding to the most complicated understanding skills component of ICC out of the 269 ICC tasks were included in the textbook series. The difference between these two textbook analyses highlights an important theme for Latin America. What is Interculturalidad? The 269 tasks in a custom-made ICC textbook series are labeled by these investigators as misrepresentations of intercultural awareness in the article's title. The definition they are applying is different from the textbook authors.

The next study to be discussed is an atypical study from the context of a medical school in Cuba (Avila León & Hernández Díaz 2020). The investigators presented a qualitative study of the analysis of not only the materials but also of an entire course that they designed. The study did not report on the results of the course. The Cuban medical students

taking the EFL course could be tasked with working in Angola, a non-Spanish-speaking country in Southern Africa with many different ethnicities and languages. The study is noteworthy because it approaches the teaching of English as the lingua franca and then adds the teaching of intercultural competence as an ancillary topic to language skills. This teaching methodology is classified as CLIL, which was discussed earlier.

A final theme of analyses of material was presented in a study of the ICC content of the social networking site for language learning (SNSLL), Livemocha (Fernández Benavides 2019). This idea discussed earlier originated from the author's Master's thesis. It is a novel and practical approach. In the last decade, language learning has added to the printed books mentioned above a substantial amount of material on websites. This specific analysis is presented as a case study that can be applied to other sites. Livemocha's semiotic design added the visual and spatial to the linguistic in language teaching. Unsurprisingly, for a commercial site, the ICC analyses revealed only a superficial presentation of a non-conflictive homogenous culture.

Conclusion

This systematic review of the literature has revealed numerous emergent themes for Intercultural Communicative Competence in foreign language classes in Latin America. Investigation and Learning was published for the first time in LA towards the end of the first decade of the 2000s in Colombia (Barletta 2009). It was due to the implementation of various national policies by the Ministry of Education. Those seeds grew over the next ten years in Colombia and now appear to have spread to other countries, with many more investigators taking up Barletta's challenge.

This systematic review has highlighted numerous studies that can inform EFL teachers about didactic techniques and tasks as well as materials to use in classrooms to improve ICC. The review also informs education investigators about numerous gaps in the research. Methodologically, there is a gap in the diversity of methods. There is a super preponderance of qualitative studies in Latin America, which is not the case globally. Further research into the techniques and instruments being used would be valuable and may present improvements to the methodology and results obtained.

Other gaps in the research literature of LA that have been investigated in other contexts were studies involving correlations between ICC and gender, age, or study abroad experience (Iswandari & Ardi 2022). These investigations normally involve intercultural sensitivity (IS), a component of ICC. The design and validation of instruments to measure IS and ICC in a LA context using Spanish also did not appear in the literature. Extending the search parameters to other terms or indices may produce these studies.

Further analyses could also include whether CLIL is being included with ICC in the language classroom or simply whether CLIL is being used and the subjects being taught are multiculturalism and English simultaneously (Quintana Arias & Bello-Serna 2020).

Many of the investigations are practitioner action research. Many have a goal of transformational change in the classroom; some are explicitly critical pedagogy. It would be useful to analyze these themes in more depth.

The ICC seeds have been planted in LA, and the tree is growing. There are many opportunities for more growth.

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