B-LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

A documentary review was carried out on the production and publication of research papers related to the study of the variables B-learning and English Language Teaching. The purpose of the bibliometric analysis proposed in this document was to know the main characteristics of the volume of publications registered in the Scopus database during the period 2018-2022, achieving the identification of 52 publications in Latin America. The information provided by this platform was organized through graphs and figures categorizing the information by Year of Publication, Country of Origin, Area of Knowledge and Type of Publication. Once these characteristics have been described, the position of different authors towards the proposed theme is referenced through a qualitative analysis. Among the main findings made through this research, it is found that Spain, with 16 publications, was the country with the highest scientific production registered in the name of authors affiliated with institutions in that country. The Area of Knowledge that made the greatest contribution to the construction of bibliographic material referring to the study ofB-learning and English Language Teaching were the social sciences with 42 published documents, and the Type of Publication that was most used during the period indicated above was the Journal Article with 42 documents of the total scientific production.

Keywords: B-Learning, Teaching, English, Latin America.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technologies ICTs have become key tools for any stage of the Teaching-Learning processes mainly in the desire to capture the attention and interest of its participants and thus achieve better results. Although it does not consist of a single typology, many have stood out for the impact generated in their receivers such as videos, discussion forums, applications, among others that promote the active participation of all those involved because they are faced with more dynamic alternatives that come out of everyday life. Hence, the implementation of learning methods such as B-Learning is carried out frequently in classrooms without distinction of area of knowledge.

According to Mirelle Ramírez and Claudia Peña, authors of the article "B-learning to Improve the Teaching and Learning Process" this method is distinguished from others "by the ease with which it integrates technological tools and resources and digital media with traditional classroom activities

led by a guide or facilitator, which provides more flexibility to personalize their learning experiences". It is for this reason that institutions and teachers have not hesitated to select it as their best option to achieve their goals, including those responsible for teaching a second foreign language. Such is the case of English, called the global language par excellence. (Ramírez-Sosa & Peña-Estrada, 2022)(Ramírez-Sosa & Peña-Estrada, 2022)

There is no doubt that "the teaching of the English language has experienced an intense evolution as a social discipline and professional field" since little by little it has managed to become one of the best skills that a person can have and offer in his curriculum vitae because it guarantees effective communication in multicultural environments. Globalization and the constant migration of people with different languages has led to the learning of English being indispensable, achieving inclusion as a compulsory subject in all university careers. In the case of Latin America, universities have chosen to improve their foreign language programs through the hiring of teachers specialized in the Teaching of English as a second language, always seeking to achieve good levels of writing, comprehension and grammar. However, for everyone it has not been easy, so it has become necessary to resort to technological methodologies that facilitate this process. Taking into account the above and in order to meet our general objective, this research article seeks to describe the main characteristics of the set of publications attached to the Scopus database and that are directly related to the B-learning variables in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities as well as the description of the position of certain authors affiliated with various institutions during the period between 2018 and 2022.(Quintana Muñoz, 2019)

2. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Analyze from a bibliometric and bibliographic perspective, the elaboration of works on the B-learning variables in the Teaching of the English Language in the Latin American Universities during the period 2018-2022.

3. METHODOLOGY

This article is carried out through a mixed orientation research that combines the quantitative and qualitative method.

On the one hand, a quantitative analysis of the information selected in Scopus is carried out under a bibliometric approach of the scientific production corresponding to the study of B-learning in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities.

On the other hand, examples of some research works published in the area of study indicated above are analyzed from a qualitative perspective, starting from a bibliographic approach that allows describing the position of different authors against the proposed topic.

It is important to note that the entire search was performed through Scopus, managing to establish the parameters referenced in *Figure 1*.

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Figure 1. Methodological design
Source: Authors.

3.1.1 PHASE 1: DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was executed from the Search tool on the Scopus website, where 52 publications were obtained from the choice of the following filters:

b-learning AND teaching AND english AND language AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2022) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2021) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2020) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2019) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2018)) AND (LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Mexico") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Colombia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Ecuador") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Peru") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Chile") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Argentina") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Brazil")) TO (PUBYEAR , 2018)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "CHEM"))

➢ Published documents whose study variables are related to the study of B-learning in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities.
➢ Limited to the years 2018-2022.
➢ Limited to Latin America.
➢ No limit of area of knowledge.
➢ Regardless of type of publication.

3.1.2 PHASE 2: CONSTRUCTION OF ANALYSIS MATERIAL

The information collected in Scopus during the previous phase is organized and subsequently classified by graphs, figures and tables as follows:

➢ Type of publication.
➢ Country of origin of the publication.
➢ Year of publication.
➢ Area of knowledge.

3.1.3 PHASE 3: DRAFTING OF CONCLUSIONS AND OUTCOME DOCUMENT

In this phase, we proceed with the analysis of the results previously yielded resulting in the determination of conclusions and, consequently, the obtaining of the final document.

4. RESULTS

4.1 TYPE OF PUBLICATION

Figure 2 shows the co-occurrence of keywords found in the publications identified in the Scopus database.

Figure 2. *Type of Publication*
Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data exported from Scopus.

Figure 2 clearly shows that the predominant type of publication in the study of B-learning in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities was the journal article with a total of 42 documents. Secondly, conference proceedings are located with 6 papers followed by reviews with 3 publications.

The review "B-learning in the teaching of English as a second language: a systematic review of the literature" focuses on the search for articles related to the B-learning teaching method and its use "as a didactic strategy in the teaching of English as a second language at the upper secondary and university level". Taking into account some criteria they managed to classify the articles taking into account the experiences and perception of teachers and students in "the processes of teaching and learning English as a second language." The results show that b-learning can favor the understanding of grammatical topics and the development of communicative skills of English as a second language". (Esparza & Rojas, 2021)(Esparza & Rojas, 2021)(Esparza & Rojas, 2021)

4.2 DISTRIBUTION OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

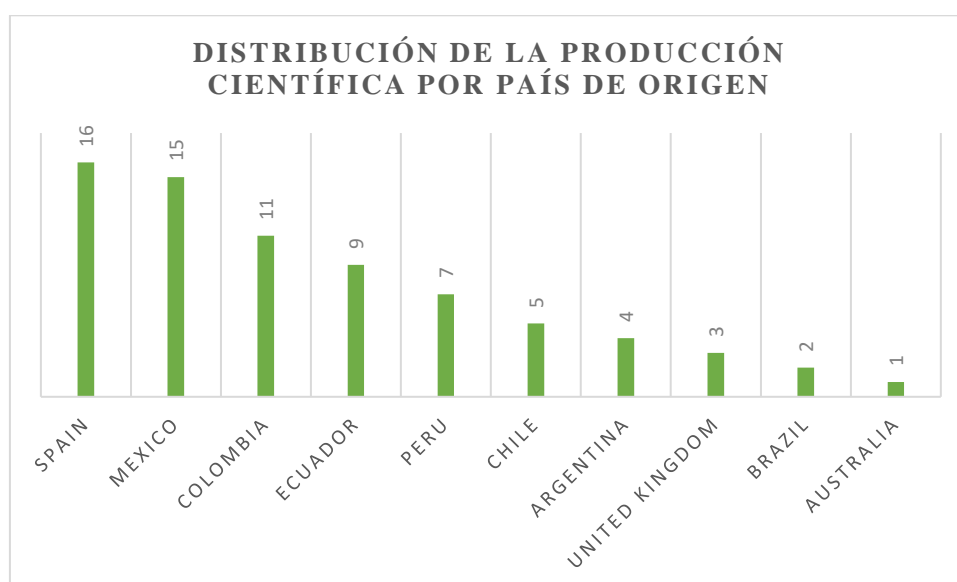*Figure 3* shows how scientific production is distributed according to the country of origin.

Figure 3. *Distribution of scientific production by country of origin.*
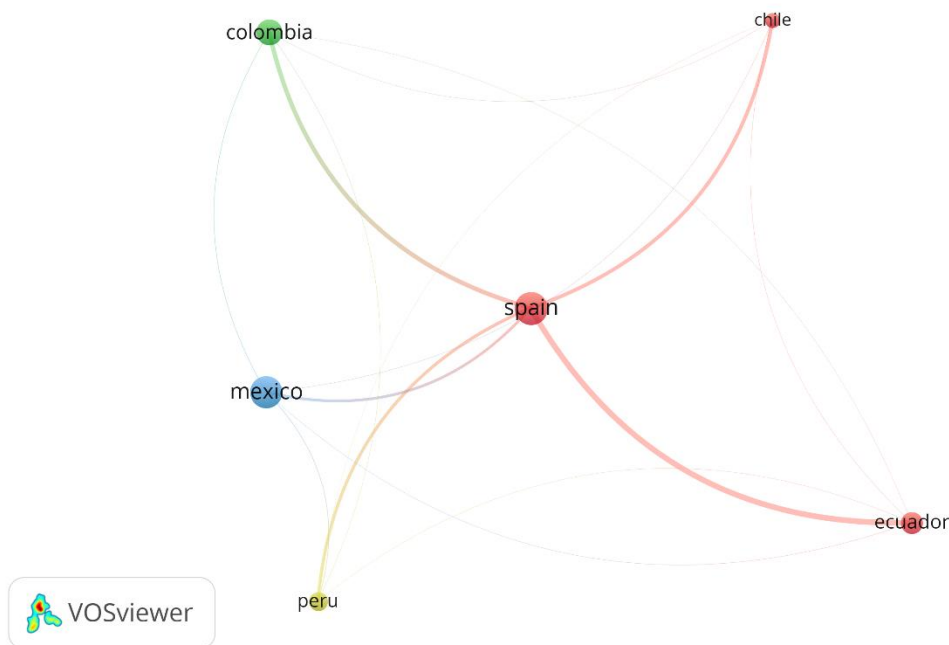**Source:** Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

In the study of B-learning in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities, Spain leads the list of published documents with a total of 16 records in the Scopus database during the period of the years 2018-2022, followed by Mexico and Colombia with 15 and 11 documents respectively.

The article "A b-Learning/m-Learning experience as a support for the improvement of the skills of the English area for Engineering students" which presents "the results of the experience of using the b-Learning/m-Learning approach as support for the improvement of the English area skills of engineering students of the Technological University of Peru (Arequipa headquarters)". For this, virtual platforms "Helbling-Ezone, Youtube and Edpuzzle" were used, resulting in improvements "in three dimensions: grammar and vocabulary, written production and oral production".(García & Vidal, 2019)(García & Vidal, 2019)(García & Vidal, 2019)(García & Vidal, 2019)

At this point, it is important to note that the preparation of scientific publications in many cases is carried out from collaborations that may involve private and/or public institutions from one or more countries. Therefore, the same publication can be linked to one or more authors with different nationalities and thus to more than one country simultaneously, being part of the total

number of articles or publications of each of them in the final sum. Next, in *Figure 4*, you will see in greater detail the flow of collaborative work carried out by several countries.

***Figure 4**. Co-citations between countries.*
Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

Figure 4 shows the grouping of research according to the collaboration between authors belonging to various international institutions. There is evidence of outstanding participation among authors affiliated with institutions in the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Brazil, Japan, India, among others.

4.3 DISTRIBUTION OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION BY YEAR OF PUBLICATION
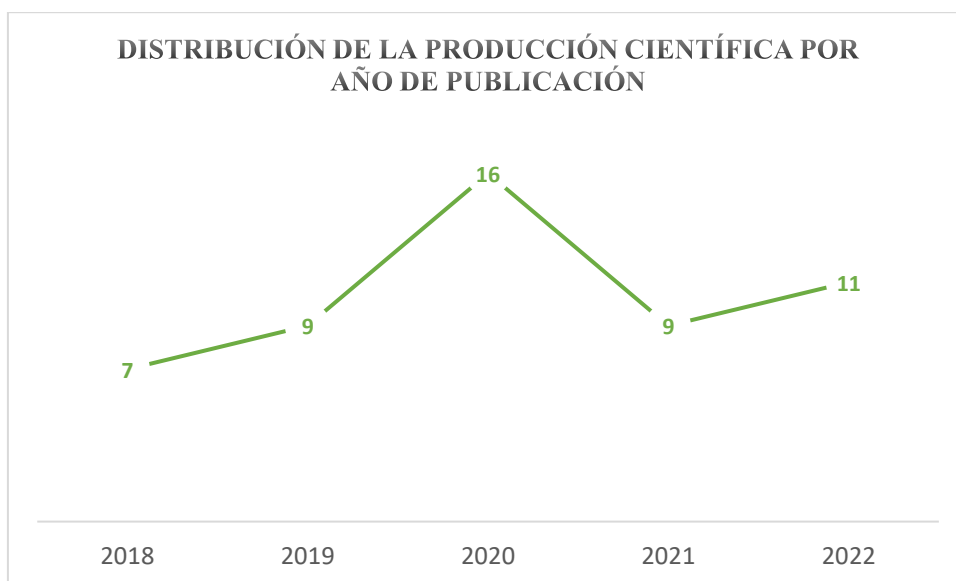
***Figure 5**. Distribution of scientific production by year of publication.*
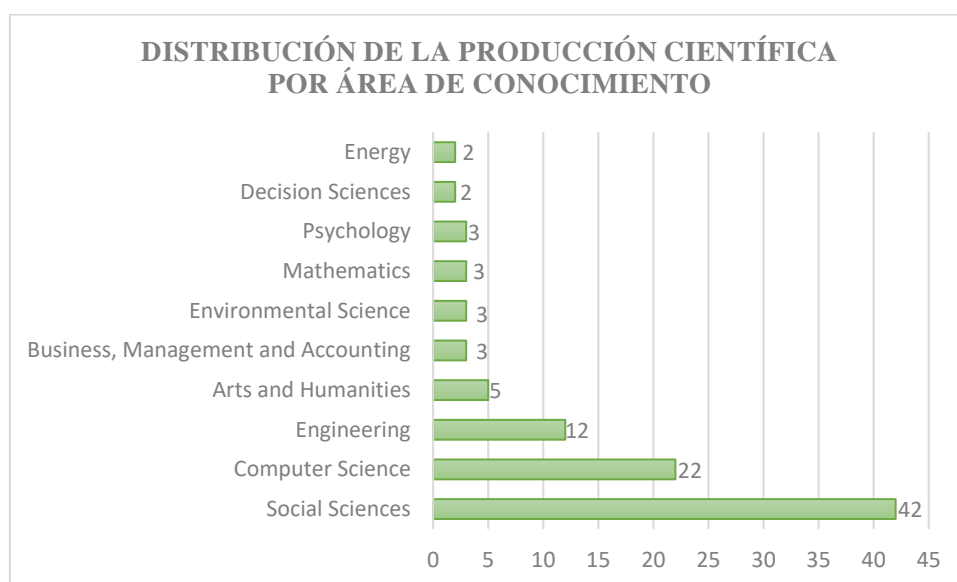**Source:** Own elaboration (2023); based on data exported from Scopus

In figure 5 we find the scientific production concerning the variables B-learning and English Language Teaching in universities during theperiod between 2018 and 2022 at the Latin American level, which resulted in the publication of 52 documents, in the Scopus database, containing the keywords. Likewise, it is evident that some changes were experienced throughout the period. We started with the year 2018 with 7 documents, a number that increases during the following years reaching the highest number of publications in 2020 with 16 documents. Again the decrease in publications in 2021 is observed, a figure that increases slightly the following year reaching 9 documents.

In the article "Conceptions of learning of EFL teachers in training on SLAs through online discussion forums and WhatsApp in blended learning" shows the perceptions of a group of teachers of English as a second language in relation to the use of forums and whatsapp as learning tools. The results suggest the need to train future teachers in the use of online discussion forums (ODFs) with an in-depth approach to learning that includes the negotiation of meanings.(González Calleros, Navarro Rangel, Perales-Escudero, & Sandoval-Cruz, 2022)(González Calleros, Navarro Rangel, Perales-Escudero, & Sandoval-Cruz, 2022)

4.4 DISTRIBUTION OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION BY AREA OF KNOWLEDGE

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the elaboration of scientific publications from the area of knowledge through which the different research methodologies are implemented.

DISTRIBUCIÓN DE LA PRODUCCIÓN CIENTÍFICA POR ÁREA DE CONOCIMIENTO

Area	Value
Energy	2
Decision Sciences	2
Psychology	3
Mathematics	3
Environmental Science	3
Business, Management and Accounting	3
Arts and Humanities	5
Engineering	12
Computer Science	22
Social Sciences	42

Figure 6. *Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge*.
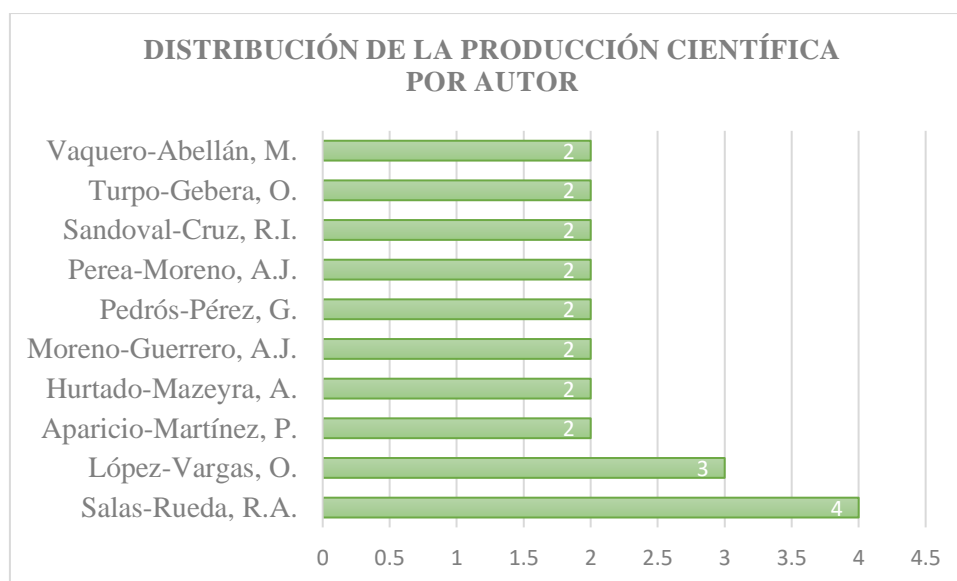**Source:** Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

Due to the nature of our variables and the advantages and disadvantages they can generate in an entire community, it is not surprising that most of the publications found in the Scopus database, on these are made from the social sciences occupying the main position in the publication of documents. Other areas such as computer science and engineering have contributed to the study of these variables, publishing 22 and 12 papers respectively.

As we can see in *Figure 6*, the variables object of this study are relevant in various areas of knowledge, since they can be analyzed from the different approaches that emphasize the influence that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have in today's life.

4.5 DISTRIBUTION OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION BY AUTHORS

In the following graph, you will observe the distribution of the bibliographic finding according to the author of the publications found in Scopus.

Figure 7. *Distribution of scientific production by authors.*
Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

Figure 7 shows the names of the different authors who have published documents related to the study of B-learning variables in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities in which the author Salas Rueda stands out with 4 texts, followed by López Vargas and Aparicio-Martínez with 3 and 2, respectively.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the bibliometric analysis carried out in the present research work, it was established that Spain was the country with the highest number of records published for the B-learning variables in English Language Teaching in Latin American Universities with a total of publications in the Scopus database during the period 2018-2022 and that the area of knowledge with the greatest contribution was the social sciences with 42 texts.

The findings yielded 52 documents in total that maintained some words in common, however, it should be noted that the texts directly related to our variables could not cover the entire theme of our study. Despite this, what was found and analyzed allows us to make the following conclusions.

On the one hand, we can assure that the B-Learning method is one of the preferred methods for teachers and students involved in the process of Teaching-Learning the Language in English since it can contribute to the decrease of dropout figures due to lack of time or special cause that prevents them from attending one hundred percent of the scheduled classes. Likewise, access to more visual, auditory and playful material has made students more involved in the process and therefore obtain better results in the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.

On the other hand, we find that for its maximum use it is necessary that the teaching team has the necessary knowledge in this type of technologies in order to achieve the adaptation of the same in the process and on the contrary do not feel overwhelmed when sharing the information through the platforms of the university or those that have been selected for this. Similarly, it should be borne in mind that in Latin America the indices of poverty and social inequality continue in very high figures, so many of the students may not have access to tools that allow them to access virtual classes and thus negatively influence the experience of the same during the development of the course.

In general, despite its disadvantages, B-Learning or "blended learning, is suggested as the ideal tool for the development of competencies and the achievement of meaningful learning, in addition to promoting effective and assertive communication among students", For this reason and in order to continue generating awareness of the importance of guaranteeing access to this type of information

in a transparent way by anyone, We hope to encourage with this article the participation of scientific communities in the study of these variables from any scientific profile and area of knowledge, always seeking to provide more alternatives that contribute to the investigation of topics of general interest.(Ramírez-Sosa & Peña-Estrada, 2022)

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