THE SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DIMENSION FROM AN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper has the objective to show the connection between the social and emotional dimension and English as a foreign language. The methodology implemented required the use of different databases such as Dialnet, EBSCO, Scopus and Scielo, taking into account some inclusion criteria, such as searches performed in English and Spanish languages and articles and books published between the years 2015 to 2022, mainly in Latin America, United States and Europe. The most used databases are identified and, from there, the most frequent publication years for research and studies on the two topics social and emotional dimension and the English as a foreign language. Subsequently, the marked tendency of descriptive, qualitative and mixed in both topics revised. The conceptualization of the two issues in question: social and emotional dimension and English as a foreign language is established as well as their connection. As a conclusion, it is established the importance of the social and emotional dimension within the learning of English as a foreign language.
Key words: social/emotional, English, foreign language, teaching, learning

Resumo

Este trabalho tem como objetivo mostrar os resultados da revisão bibliográfica a respeito da conexão entre a dimensão social e emocional e o inglês como língua estrangeira. A metodologia implementada precisou a utilização de diferentes bases de dados como Dialnet, EBSCO, Scopus e Scielo. Alguns critérios de inclusão também são levados em consideração, como buscas realizadas em inglês e espanhol e artigos e livros publicados entre 2015 e 2022, principalmente na América Latina, nos Estados Unidos e na Europa. Os resultados são registros relacionados aos temas da dimensão socioemocional e aprendizagem de inglês; principalmente na América Latina, nos Estados Unidos e na Europa. São identificadas as bases de dados mais utilizadas e, a partir delas, são estabelecidos os anos de publicação mais frequentes de pesquisas e estudos sobre os dois temas em análise. Posteriormente, mostra-se a tendência marcante de desenhos metodológicos descritivos, qualitativos e mistos nos diferentes trabalhos revisados. Estabelece-se a conceituação dos dois temas: o socio-emocional e a aprendizagem do inglês como língua estrangeira e, por fim, as conclusões. A importância da dimensão social e emocional na aprendizagem do inglês como língua estrangeira é estabelecida.
Palavras-chave: socioemocional, inglês, língua estrangeira, ensino, aprendizagem

INTRODUCTION

The social/emotional dimension is prevalent in the development processes of human beings due to its involvement in obtaining and applying the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions. This, in turn, allows people to set goals, to show empathy for others, to establish relationships, and to make responsible decisions (Adams, 2017). Similarly, this dimension is described as the set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to properly understand, express and regulate emotional phenomena (Martínez, 2018). It is noticeable that there is a direct relation among all family, cultural, academic, social, or simply operational processes in which humans

are involved and social-emotional factors. The importance of those factors lies in their relation with the entire dimension of the human being and, consequently, on their influence on intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic has to do with those impulses of the subjects themselves, those motivations and behaviors that make them feel comfortable and lead them to solve problems of any difficulty, lead them to develop cognitive skills and strive to meet family expectations. The extrinsic has more to do with acting according to social judgment and external qualification.

Likewise, social-emotional education helps the individual to develop processes of self-knowledge, understanding of others and understanding of his own environment. The social-emotional dimension work integrates cognitive aspects, which perfects logics and rationality for a better development within a community or within society. At the same time, it leads to taking care of oneself and others; The above is in line with an essential element of languages, particularly English, which is one of the central themes of this article. For example, Setiyadi (2020) suggests that learning is socially and psychosocially influenced.

First of all, language is an essentially social phenomenon and has aspects that are interrelated, for instance, home, community, school, religious gatherings, reading, radio and television. These aspects make a difference in the process of learning a foreign language. The author also emphasizes that we must not lose sight of the interactional element of language; language is a vehicle for interpersonal relationships and social interactions between individuals; for example, the CLL model, which translates as Community Language Learner, considers language as a social process, where emotional aspects also converge, which means that language is a person in contact and in response, it means, language is an experiential vehicle for human interactions.

Secondly, the psychosocial establishes differences such as age, aptitude, motivation, attitude, personality and cognitive styles that are part of motivation and attitude as affective categories. Motivation has an instrumental sense to achieve goals, objectives and get a job. These are elements that must be aware of before starting to learn a language. Attitude is defined as that positive or negative affection towards something, which in this particular case is towards the target language.

On the other hand, Mei (2008), cited by Beltrán (2017, p. 91), defines English as "a language learning, which is different from the mother tongue, which is also not the language used in the students' daily lives where they do their activities". Cocio (2015) adds to this idea, if this learning is carried out in a non-anglophone context, for instance, Chile [and Colombia], the conditions for the development of language skills will be different from the ones that normally exist in an English-speaking context. Thus, in an effort to promote the acquisition of English as a second language, Colombia launched the National Bilingualism Program in 2004. The Ministry of National Education of Colombia designed the National Bilingualism Program (Programa Nacional de bilingüismo, PNB) and stipulated the guidelines and objectives for its development throughout the country (Fandiño et al., 2013). In recent years, the study of the social-emotional dimension in human beings has been gaining strength in the field of education, and it has been considered in the design and implementation of different programs in the educational field. By the time the bilingualism program was created, the consideration of the social-emotional aspect was still minimal, if considered at all. However, research now considers social-emotional factors as a relevant topic.

In addition, there are different resources, programs, and training options on the official website of *Colombia Aprende* to strengthen the processes of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. In addition, it is considered a scenario in the strengthening of the social-emotional dimension since it establishes interaction and socialization among students, decision-making processes in different situations and spaces for self-recognition.

This paper shows a documental review based on two categories, namely: social emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language. The document search was carried out in four databases: Dialnet, EBSCO, Scopus and Scielo and it considered the four inclusion criteria: the chronology of years between 2015 and 2021, texts in English and Spanish, doctoral theses and master papers, and scientific research articles were reviewed. Afterwards, a classification and refinement exercise of the information was carried out to discard the results that did not meet the aforementioned criteria.

Initially, a total of 124 documents were obtained and, after the classification work, 57 works regarding the social-emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language were recorded.

Methodology

This article describes the document review methodology. In relation to the review exercise, Manchado, et al., state that it gathers peculiarities that allow us to explore not only what has been done on a topic, but also who, where and in how. Based on the results obtained, hypotheses can be generated on future research questions and study areas that are not sufficiently developed can be proposed.

This methodology was also used in different academic scenarios; it is a fundamental tool for researchers, academicians and clinical staff (Fernandez-Sánchez et al., 2020). The document review shown in this article examined the connection between the socio-emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language. To carry out this document review, the EBSCO, Dialnet, Scopus and Scielo databases were used. Also, the following inclusion criteria were taken into account: a) search period between 2015 and 2021, b) publications in the Spanish and English languages, c) doctoral theses and master's studies, d) scientific research articles.

The next step was to use the Mendeley bibliographic manager to delete those documents that were replicated. Then, a careful analysis of the information was done. As stated by Tricco, et al. (2018), the reviews were a synthesis of knowledge and follow a systematic approach that configures the evidence in a specific topic where concepts, theories, sources and knowledge gaps were identified. Subsequently, a critical reading exercise was carried out in order to identify, in the documents, the topics of social-emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language based on the inclusion criteria. Table 1 shows the databases used; the search inclusion criterion of the years between 2015 and 2021 allowed to identify a total of 124 documents; as a result, a total of 28 duplicate documents were found and a total of 39 were excluded. Some documents were discarded because they were government reports, reflection papers, symposia memories, academic or conference reports.

Table 1. Databases used and selection.

Selection	Databases in Use			
	EBSCO	**Dialnet**	**Scopus**	**Scielo**
Document search record found between the years 2015 and 2021	26	35	28	35
Total Documents Identified	(n= 124)			
Total Duplicate documents	(n=28)			
Total Documents Excluded	n=39			
Total Documents Included	n=57			

Source. Compiled by author.

To carry out the synthesis and systematization exercise, the Excel program was used. Table 2 shows a matrix with bibliometric variables.

Table 2. Bibliographic Matrix.

Year	Country/University	Title Doctoral thesis/article	Author(s)	Problem question (s)
Research Objectives	Thematic referents/authors/	Methodological design	Concluding summaries	Key elements

Source. Compiled by author.

Results

The inclusion criteria established for the methodology mentioned above are presented independently; the number of results in accordance with the inclusion criteria is specified below.

Figure 1 shows a total of 32 records regarding the social-emotional dimension, as evidenced in *Figure 2*, a total of 25 findings related to the topic of English as a Foreign Language were obtained, as shown in *Figure 2 Document search of the topic of English as a Foreign Language*.

Figure 1. Document search of the theme of social-emotional dimension

Databases-Criteria	EBSCO.	Dialnet	Scopus	Scielo
Document search between the years 2015-2021	5	10	7	10
Publications in English language	1	2	7	4
Publications in Spanish language	4	8	0	6
PhD Theses and Master's Degrees	0	8	0	0
Scientific research papers	5	2	7	10

Source. Compiled by author.

In the search for documents associated with the social-emotional issue, between 2015 and 2021, the largest number of records was found in the Dialnet and Scielo databases, 10 in each; in EBSCO, 5 records; in Scopus, 7 records. As a result, a total of 32 records were found. A total of 14 documents were found in English, and 18 in Spanish. In doctoral theses and master's studies, 8 records were found in the Dialnet database. For the last criterion, that is, scientific research articles, 5 records were found in EBSCO, 2 in Dialnet, 7 in Scopus and 10 in Scielo.

Regarding the topic of English as a Foreign Language, within the document search between 2015 and 2021, 3 documents were found in EBSCO, 11 in Dialnet, 4 in Scopus and 7 in Scielo, for a final total of 25 records. Regarding the language criterion, 6 publications were obtained in English and 19 in Spanish. For doctoral theses and master's degrees, 9 records were found in Dialnet. For the criterion of scientific research articles, 3 papers associated with the topic of English as a Foreign Language were found in EBSCO, 2 in Dialnet, 4 in Scopus and 7 in Scielo. These data are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Document search of the subject of English as a Foreign Language

Databases-Criteria	EBSCO.	Dialnet	Scopus	Scielo
Document search between the years 2015-2021	3	11	4	7
Publications in English language	0	1	3	2
Publications in Spanish language	3	10	1	5
PhD Theses and Master's Degrees	0	9	0	0
Scientific research papers	3	2	4	7

The period of publication of the works in relation to scientific production on the topic of social-emotional dimension began in the years 2015 and 2016 with 15.6% and 12.5% studies, respectively. Then, there is a decrease for the year 2017, with 9.4% records. After this year, a considerable rise began again and for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 the social-emotional studies with 12,5%, 12,5% and 15,6% articles, respectively. In 2021, the largest number of publications associated with the subject under study was evidenced with 21,9% records, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Period of publication of the documents on the topic of social-emotional dimension.
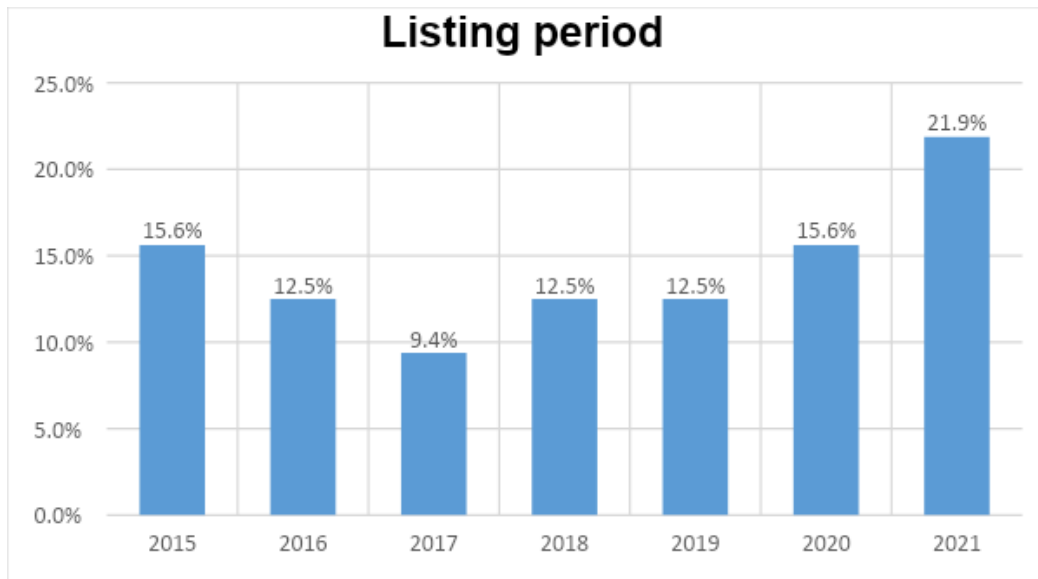
Source. Compiled by author.

Figure 4. Period of publication of the documents on the topic of English as a Foreign Language shows that the years 2017 and 2019 have the largest number of articles related to the topic, with 20% and 28%, respectively. There is a decrease in the publications for the years 2016, 2020 and 2021 with 8%, 8% and 4%, respectively.

Figure 4. Period of publication of the documents on the topic of English as a Foreign Language
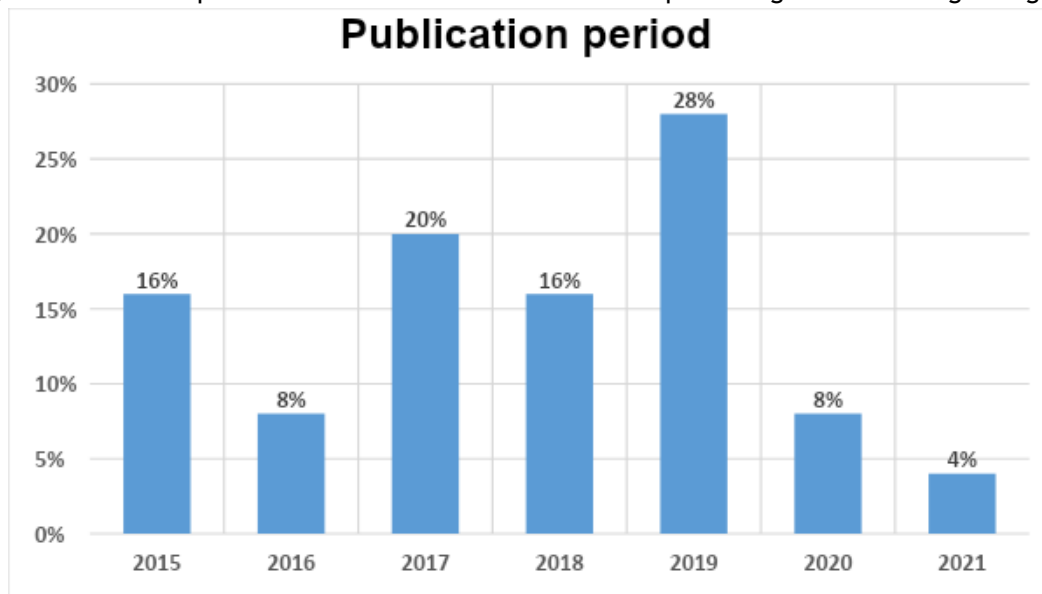
Source. Compiled by author.

Confluence between the social-emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language

Although the topics of emotions and learning a foreign language have usually been studied independently, recent studies show that these two topics converge in several aspects. One of the main connections is the use of a language during daily life since emotions emerge and affect the academic performance of a student. López-Pérez and De la Maya-Retamar (2021) argue that a primary objective in the instruction of a foreign language is communication. However, emotions can facilitate or hinder this purpose. So, they play such an influential role that they can make a student stay within their learning process or resign and decide not to continue. Besides, motivation is subsumed within the social-emotional dimension.

Accordingly, "motivation comes from personal and social contexts, requiring an analysis that synthesizes it through developments achieved in sociocultural aspects. When done so, the

communicative approach allows the teaching and learning process of the English language to be motivational" (Dornyei, 2014, cited by Sánchez Freire and Pérez Barral, 2020, p. 5). Thus, the social context that serves as a platform for strengthening motivation during the process of learning a second language necessarily implies a mode of interaction and socialization with the other, or with the environment, which can influence that same individual in a positive or negative way within the role they have at the time. In accordance with the previous reasoning (Bar-On, 2006, cited by Rodríguez, 2015, p. 49) states that social intelligence has a clear relationship with interpersonal intelligence, which generates an exercise in empathy and a sense of co-responsibility when these relationships occur.

Likewise, anxiety is emphasized as one of the factors that influence the process of learning a foreign language. It consists of an internal alteration or disfigurement that shocks those who experience it and puts them in a vulnerable situation. It is necessary to consider that three types of anxiety have been specifically recognized in scenarios where learning or evaluations take place: (a) anxiety-trait described as the natural willingness of an individual to suffer from anxiety episodes; (b) anxiety-state, whose limited and not permanent response or reaction is due to experiences at a specific time; (c) specific situation anxiety, which is repeatedly experienced and related to the predisposition of the subject in a given context García Pastor and Miller (2019). Accordingly, the social-emotional aspect must be considered as inseparable from the process of learning English and taken into account in the planning and execution of the teaching programs of this language.

Characteristics of the studies

According to the characteristics of the studies analyzed, a great preference towards a descriptive, qualitative and mixed methodological design is noticeable. Figure 3 shows the methodological design from both sides: the socio-emotional and English as a Foreign Language. On that matter, Mirmán (2018) establishes a series of descriptive studies based on frequency distributions, among others, to explain and compare some characteristics that define the curricular factors related to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, socioeconomic and cultural variables, as well as the learning modes of students in relation to English as a Foreign Language.

Additionally, (Hernández, et al., 2010 cited by Chancay, 2018, p. 134) argue that the mixed approach arises as a result of the need to face the complexity of research problems through the fusion of different research techniques, instruments and designs. The distinctive characteristics of this type of qualitative approach are described from the qualitative perspective, therefore, techniques such as participant observation, interview and focus groups are used. As for the analysis, descriptive statistics and content analysis are carried out (Buelvas, 2020). From this perspective, instruments such as questionnaires, and checklists are used in initial and diagnostic research stages.

Figure 5. Sample of the methodological design
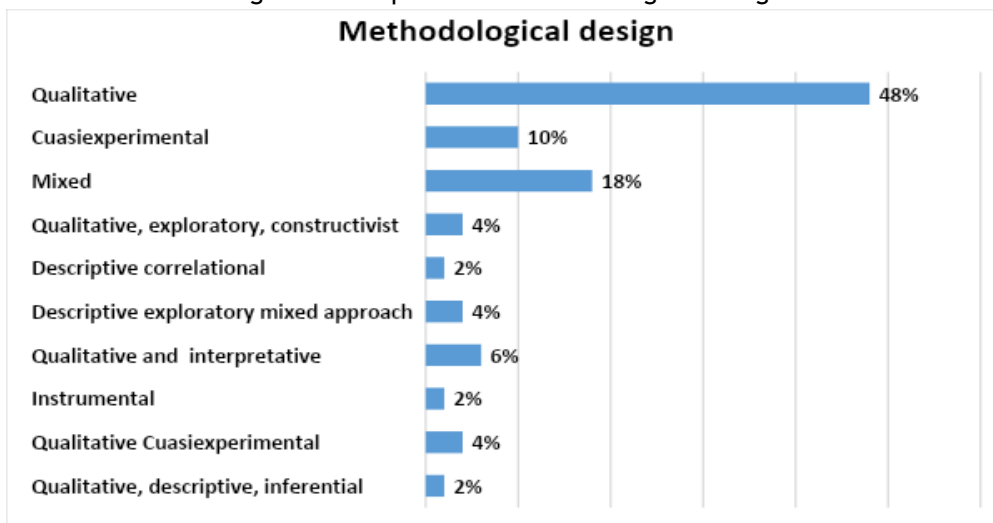
Source. Compiled by author.

Tables 3 and 4 show the most frequent terms found within the literature review related to the topics of social emotional dimension and English as a Foreign Language.

Table 3. Frequency of terms in relation to the social-emotional dimension arising from the review.

Author (s)	Social Emotional Dimension/Key Terms
Pérez Bonet, G., et al. (2021); Bata, S. and Castro, C. (2021)	Emotional intelligence
Bañuls, R. (2015); Rodríguez, C. (2015)	Emotions
Adams, S. (2017)	Anxiety
Llopis, C. (2017)	Violent behavior
Bañuls, R. (2015)	emotional literacy
Villena, M. (2015); Fuentes, R. (2019)	*Bullying*
Martín, R. (2015); Rodríguez, C. (2015); Adams, S. (2017)	*Mindfulness*
Sánchez Muñoz, R. (2021); Buelvas, Y. (2020)	Empathy
Rodríguez, C. (2015)	Multiple Intelligences
Torres, C. (2015)	Mental Health
Rodríguez, C. (2015)	Social Intelligence
Chacaliaza Uribe, C. R. (2020);	Stress
Murillo Serna, N. (2020); Buelvas, Y. (2020); Vega, M. (2017)	Harmonious relations at school
Villena, M. (2015);	School abuse

Source. Compiled by author.

Table 4. Frequency of terms in relation to English as a Foreign Language

Author (s)	English as a Foreign Language/Key Terms
López-Pérez, M. and De la Maya-Retamar, Guadeloupe. (2021).	Anxiety/emotions
Sánchez Freire, J. V., Pérez Barral, O. (2020)	Communicative approach
Protacio, M.S. (2019).	Interaction
Pérez Bonet, G., et al (2021); Bata, S., Castro, C. (2021); Alanoca, M. (2019).	Emotional intelligence
Sim, M.-A., & Pop, A.-M. (2016); Fernández, A. (2016).	The four skills (*listening, speaking, writing and reading*)
Chancay, C. (2018).	Interculturality
Pérez Gómez, F. A., Velandia Galeano, J.H., & Gómez Márquez, A. C. (2021)	Oral Skills

Source. Compiled by author.

Conceptualization from the social-emotional dimension

One of the main goals of this review is to clarify the concept of the social-emotional dimension according to the different research sources. Firstly, it is important to consider that both terms, that is, dimension and social-emotional are associated with emotional intelligence and their denomination varies in different bibliographic sources, for example, it is also found as *social-emotional competence*.

One of the authors who is mostly cited in the different bibliographic sources is Dr. Rafael Bisquerra Alzina. Also, (Bisquerra, 2007, cited by Bañuls, 2015, p. 87) in terms of emotional intelligence, articulates this concept with social-emotional factors and states that emotional Intelligence, a construct proposed by psychology, is composed of basic socio-emotional competencies that must be developed in the human beings. These competencies have a greater educational application than the concept of EI, since they take into account the person-environment interaction and give greater importance to learning and development.

Besides, (Biquerra, 2003, cited by Rodríguez Ledo, 2015, p. 63) defines social-emotional competence as the set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to properly understand, express and regulate emotional phenomena. The RAE (*Real academia de la lengua española*, s/p) defines *competence* as the expertise, aptitude or suitability to do something or intervene in a given matter. In addition, the incorporation or implementation of models concerning the development of social-emotional skills within the educational field makes the SEL (*Social and Emotional Learning*) model take hold. According to Bennouna et al. (2021) social and Emotional Learning strives to build knowledge, attitudes and skills that students need to achieve school success and much more. Furthermore, the social-emotional intelligence model of (Bar-On, 2006, cited by Bravo-Andrade, et al., 2021, p. 3) supposes a series of interrelated competencies that facilitate the way people understand themselves and others, as well as the way they establish interactions and face the demands of the environment. This model consists of five dimensions:

1)   Intrapersonal competencies, including self-esteem, emotional awareness, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualization.

2)   Interpersonal competencies, made up of empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships.

3)   Management of stress or anger, including stress tolerance and impulse control.

4)   Adaptability, consisting of flexibility, reality testing and problem solving.

5)   Mood, which has to do with the ability to generate optimism and happiness.

The document analysis showed, for the most part, that research was focused on social-emotional work from the perspective of childhood, adolescence and university-level students. (Bisquerra, 2009; Zahonero and Martin, 2012 cited by Tapia and Muñoz, 2019) assert that research shows that incorporating the socio-emotional component into training has effects on personal development, satisfactory interpersonal relationships and the prevention of violence. With regard to personal development, it improves self-esteem.

In research works and reports there is a clear concern for the socio-emotional issue and how this has taken hold in recent years at the educational level. In this regard, (Garner, 2010; Haeussler and Milicic, 2014, cited by Marchant et al., 2020) argue that researchers, academics and education professionals consider social-emotional learning a central aspect that must be strengthened to favor the integral development of students. The importance of the school context for the social-emotional development of children and adolescents is evident considering the number of hours and years spent in the educational process and the significant relationships and ties that are established during that time.

Conceptualization from English as a Foreign Language

The MEN (Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia, 2018) acknowledges the importance of the implementation of teaching English as a Foreign Language and claims that English increases its prominence as a language for business and work. Likewise, many of the cultural and entertainment options can be accessed if foreign languages are mastered. Also, English is the most used as a first or second language and it acquires the role of lingua franca when a wide range of people use it regardless of their origin and nation (Mirmán, 2018).

The documents related to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language show that it is approached from different perspectives, for example, from the role that the teacher plays within the process. The role of the teacher is mostly as a mediator and an expert, and that of the student as active and passive. (Arellano et al., 2020).

The studies also point to the relevance of the need to analyze aspects related to social-emotional issues such as anxiety in the English learning processes. In this regard, García and Miller (2019) explain that many students experience anxiety in the process of learning English, which is boosted in our educational system due to the demands to master the language imposed upon students mainly in higher education.

The communicative function of English as a Foreign Language also showed an important role in the reviewed literature. In recent times, the communicative approach has prevailed in the teaching of

English, it itself is characterized by emphasizing ideas and generalizations rather than isolated facts, it emphasizes more on meaning than on form (Gómez Guerrero and Escalona Reyes, 2021).

Results

Within the narrative of the documents consulted, there is a clear preference towards descriptive, qualitative and mixed methodologies in both subjects: social-emotional factors and English as a Foreign Language. Social-emotional factors are important components considered more frequently in recent years in the educational field, they imply concerns, worries and imperative need to delve deeper into the topic. English as a Foreign Language is the most emphasized topic in the school curricula of the Colombian Education in bilingualism programs at the national level. For both topics, case studies prevail particularly at the school level, analysis and comparison of situations focused on the educational field.

Different authors approach the topic of English as a Foreign Language from research perspectives related to methods that promote communicative processes, social interaction, strengthening of the four skills: *reading, writing, listening and speaking*, as well as the influence of emotions on learning English.

Scientific production from the social-emotional level has been growing in 2020 and 2021. One of the countries that provides more works of research in this area is Spain and a special mention should be made to Latin America, the United States and some European countries that have a clear interest in that topic. Countries where English is the second language or a foreign language as well as Latin America and some Asian countries produce studies regarding English as a Foreign Language.

Knowledge

Review article derived from the thesis entitled Social and Emotional Skills in the learning of English as a Foreign Language, to qualify for the title of Doctor of Education Sciences from the University of San Buenaventura, Medellín-Colombia headquarters.

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