

Initial Language Teacher Education: Components Identified in Research

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Background: Initial Language Teacher Education (ILTE) has moved conceptually from technical-oriented visions to socio-cultural perspectives that integrate cultural, historical and institutional settings where teachers shape their professional identities. However, relevant discussion in the field indicates that ILTE configurations are grounded on conceptual frameworks that fail to represent the complex nature of teacher preparation.

Purpose: In this systematic review we explore whether recent conceptual ILTE understandings are acknowledged in current research as this information is relevant for stakeholders in education.

Method: For this reason, this systematic review aims at analysing what teacher education components are addressed in such research in nationally ranked academic journals from 2014 to 2019 and how those components were researched.

Results: Findings indicate areas related to student teachers' learning are still at the forefront in ILTE. Additionally, that area is still inquired from a disjoint and discreet perspective. Results also show growing discussion about the teacher as a person and contextual elements from a more holistic and interconnected perspective acknowledging the integrative nature of components affecting pre-service language teachers' education.

Keywords: Language Initial Teacher Education, student teachers, conceptualization, teacher education components

Introduction

The theoretical foundations of teacher education (TE) have shifted reflecting the interests, concerns and changes of different social, economic, political, and historical moments and agents. Said changes have emerged as a result of globalization (Schuck et al, 2018), information and communication technologies (López, 1997), multiculturalism, plurilingualism, policy reforms, socio-political contexts, ideologies, values, changing beliefs, and relationships. Resulting transformations have claimed different ways to deal with and understand realities and their tensions across different areas and contexts. Initial Language Teacher Education (ILTE) is no exception and has underscored the incorporation of new conceptions to educate citizens (Schuck, et al., 2018; Vaillant, 2007). Teacher formation cannot longer rest on traditional assumptions deriving only from “how to” models (Schuck, et al., 2018). Complex visions of teachers' preparation are needed to respond to the realities of educational settings and of society. Consequently,

teacher education should revisit its configurations and conceptualizations under the light of these new complex visions to elucidate how to relate, connect and incorporate them to ILTE educational views.

Prior comprehensive literature reviews from diverse theoretical stances on ILTE research have explored the underlying nature of its conceptualizations and configurations (Calvo et al., 2004; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Ejea, 2007; Fandiño, Bermudez & Varela., 2016; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Loya, 2008; Parsons et al., 2018; Richards, 1998) showing how such understandings responded to different views. Previous literature has indicated that scholarship focuses on traditional components of ILTE programs: didactic subjects, planning, and evaluation under the light of normative and descriptive visions (Sjöberg, 2018; Stevahn & McGuire, 2017). Studies also addressed the competences needed to prepare students teachers (Gomez & Walker, 2020) as well as their lack of preparation to critically analyse “the conditions determining their work, especially in view

of current global and local policy trends” (Sjöberg, 2018, p. 604). Besides, research identified student teachers and teacher educators’ need for experiential learning (Kershner & Hargreaves, 2012) and knowledge and skills to function in complex environments (Stevahn & McGuire, 2017). Another pinpointed need is “discussing and planning what is taught, why it is taught, how it is taught, and when it is taught to create a cohesive and integrated programme” (Stevahn & McGuire, 2017, p.318).

Scholarship recognises teachers’ centrality to help achieve a nation’s aims (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Fundación Compartir, 2014; Rubiano, 2013; Schuck, et al., 2018). Education is responsible for social adaptation in a society (Florez-Ochoa, 1999) therefore, it is important to understand education and TE from perspectives that can respond to challenging world dynamics and tackle varied, distinctive, and complex worldwide phenomena (Vaillant, 2007) that emerge in their classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2006) and beyond. In this framework, the quality of teachers’ learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) during their initial education is paramount (Morante & Gómez, 2007; Vezub, 2007). Inasmuch, scholars, governments, and international agencies have been exploring strategies to improve the quality of education (Brown & Wisby, 2020) and teacher education. Aligned with these ideas, authors such as Garcia and Rosado (2021) suggest that the integration of complex epistemologies into ILTE could generate knowledge, skills and understandings to help teacher educators and student teachers “face variant, diverse, unique, and intricate phenomena (Vaillant, 2007)” (Garcia & Rosado, 2021, p. 282). In this sense, these authors indicated that ILTE “Programs should, for instance, demonstrate in their designs how multiple factors interconnect to influence teachers’ learning thus ultimately affecting teacher quality” (p.282) in order to achieve this purpose.

In this review, we contribute to the literature in ILTE. First, with the identification of current understandings underlying ILTE conceptualizations and configurations. Second, by exploring whether such understandings are integrating or acknowledging complex perspectives. This is a theme worth exploring not only from the conceptual level, but also from the empirical one by analyzing research that is aiming at making improvements in ILTE programs. This view has the potential to reveal if and how researchers approach their teaching and learning processes in a cline from simplistic or holistic and integrative views.

In this framework, gathering and analysing research about what is being investigated in ILTE and how it is

done constitutes valuable information that could serve as a springboard for analysis and discussion as well as input for decision-making of different stakeholders in relation to ILTE’s conceptual and curricular foundations. Analysing studies on ILTE may reveal what components, whether explicit or tacit, are addressed and how they are being approached to improve teaching and learning processes in programs indicating their stance in a simplicity-complexity continuum.

Language Teacher Education Conceptualizations

Research in TE reveals the diversification and multidimensionality of teacher education programs and their conceptual orientations. A conceptual orientation refers to “a cluster of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them” (Feiman-Nemser, 1990), more specifically to “a coherent perspective on teaching, learning, and learning to teach that gives direction to the practical activities of educating teachers” (p.6). Consequently, considering what components give directions to ILTE configurations and how those components are being acknowledged to improve the teaching and learning of student teachers becomes relevant.

Moore (2005) distinguishes three main discourses under which most language TE programs and their configurations have been framed: the craft model, the skill-based, that evolved into the “reflective practitioner discourse” (2005, p.4), and the “charismatic subject” model, that represented teachers as individuals with especial characteristics and a caring-oriented dimension for students (Teacher’s attributions). Wallace (1991), also outlined three models. The first model refers to “someone who is expert in the practice of the craft. The young trainee learns by imitating the expert’s techniques and by following the experts’ instructions and advice” (p.6). Following this foundation, many TE programs have set courses for prospective teachers to imitate what the teacher master would say and do. The second model is grounded in “technical rationality” (Schön, 1987) or the “applied science model” (Wallace, 1991). Technical rationality is based on the concept that the best means should be chosen and used to achieve the proposed objectives. Wallace (1991), in reference to this model, states that “the whole issue of the practice of a profession is therefore merely *instrumental* in its nature” (p.8).

The third model proposed by Wallace is the Experiential model, which expands the *knowledge-in-action* concept introduced by Schön, as the practitioners’ “thinking what they are doing while

they are doing it” (1987, xi), to produce knowledge from their own daily experiences and reflections. The knowledge received by pre-service teachers along with the previous experiential knowledge imply phases of reciprocal practice (experience) and carefully structured reflection to conduct professional practice. However, teachers need theoretical knowledge and reflections based on intentional inquiry of their own context; they also need knowledge of others for interrogating and interpreting teaching to “connect it to larger social, cultural, and political issues” (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999, p.250).

Other conceptualizations in ILTE, for example, Johnson’s (2009), embrace a socio-cultural perspective in which “cognitive development is an interactive process, mediated by culture, context, language, and social interaction” (p.1). This represents a change in language teaching since “understanding the cognitive and social processes that teachers go through as they learn to teach is foundational to informing what we do in L2 teacher education” (Johnson, 2009, p.3). Similarly, Fandiño, Bermudez, Ramos, et al. (2016) advocate for ILTE models that empower teachers to work as intellectual transformers at the service of education and lead teachers to create their own practices, contents, and processes acknowledging their own and situated learning contexts. Accordingly, Fandiño et al. (2016) propose socio-cultural and critical models as reference for theoretical and methodological implementations thus permitting the inclusion of bottom-up decisions from all interested parties and contexts and reducing fragmented or partial views based on decontextualized assumptions in ILTE programs. For the purpose of offering a more comprehensive view of teacher preparation, Kumaravadivelu (2012) proposed the KARDS conceptual model (Knowledge, Analysing, Recognizing, Doing and Seeing) “that aims at interpreting the world of language teacher education in all its complexity and multidimensionality” (p.123) and calls for programs to strengthen professional, procedural and personal knowledge. Korthagen (2017) proposes the integration of “the cognitive perspective” and “the situated perspective”. The first refers to relevant guidelines which are important to build representations of both theory and practice, and the second focuses on practical experiences in school contexts for teacher learning.

From the above conceptualizations, we have identified three areas. The first area is *Student teachers’ learning which* addresses questions such as *What knowledge? How to teach? How do they Learn?* The second area, *Teacher as a Person*, refers to the way teachers are positioned by a particular conception and

addresses the question *how does a conception position or conceive the teacher?* (Stuart & M. Tatto, 2000). The third area addresses questions about *what are the particularities and influencing factors* in terms of *social, political and cultural* contexts where ILTE conceptualizations are embedded. With these ideas in mind, components of ILTE and how they have been addressed to do research were considered to reveal such conceptualizations. The questions posed are: What Language Teacher Education components have been researched? and How are these components being researched?

Method

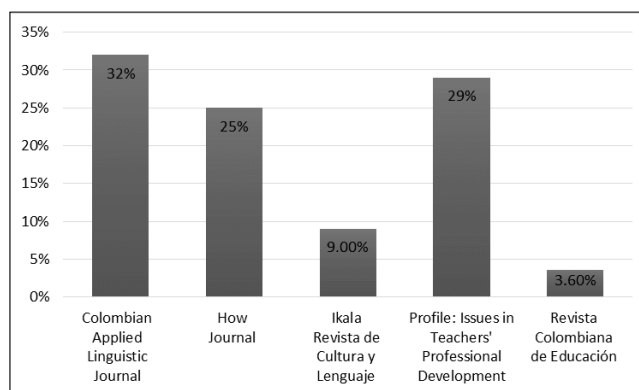
To conduct the systematic review and answer the questions, three important stages were followed: issue identification, literature search and information gathering.

Issue Identification

This review started with the idea that ILTE conceptualizations have evolved and such evolution is reflected in the gradual recognition of other areas that affect teachers’ learning, thus affecting their preparation. That is to say, there should be multiple factors which could be interrelated or not, explicit or tacit in ILTE configurations. Therefore, addressing other areas and the way such areas are tackled in research could provide indication of ILTE visions.

Searching the Literature

For the second stage, nine high impact journals ranked by the National Colombian System for Journal Publications (PUBLINDEX) were selected to assure the quality of studies. The initial selection focused on journals that published ILTE studies during a sustained publication timeline. As subsequent revision discarded three journals for their wide scope of publication, reducing the number to six journals (three ranked in Scopus) whose intentional focus on language teaching and learning made them pertinent for the review: *Profile: Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development (Q1)*, *Ikala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura (Q2)*, *Revista Colombiana de Educación (Q3)*, *How Journal (MinCiencias Category B)*, *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal (MinCiencias Category B)*, and *Revista Educación y Educadores (MinCiencias Category B)*. *Revista Educación y Educadores* was excluded later because the articles were from other disciplines, one of the exclusion criteria. Figure 1 shows the percentage of articles included per journal.

Figure 1*Distribution of articles in journals*

We revised each issue of the selected journals per year. Information about authors, titles, year, country, research purposes, research methodology, findings, and conclusions was systematized. Revising the methodology allowed the identification of the articles' research approach: qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods.

One inclusion criterion was that student teachers were subjects or participants in the studies. Therefore, the terms "initial teacher education", "student teachers", "prospective teachers" and "pre-service teacher education" "teacher candidates" were used to screen the articles. 97 articles were initially chosen. Another inclusion criterion was that articles were empirical studies. In a second revision, 24 theoretical or reflective studies and 18 related to other disciplines were discarded through abstract reading, reducing the number to 55 empirical studies, from the 5 journals listed previously. Inclusion criteria was limited to empirical studies, articles related to ILTE and student teachers as subjects of studies. Exclusion criteria applied to review and reflective studies and papers related to other disciplines.

Analysis

Articles were reviewed one by one to find information related to ILTE's main interests and how these were addressed. Selected empirical studies were placed in two categories: Student teacher knowledge base and Student teacher learning about teaching. In other words, whether researchers conducted the inquiry from a perspective that focused on just one category or on more than one aspect. Further analysis allowed classification of articles into finer subcategories.

Articles were also analysed to establish if authors declared whether their findings provided implications about student teachers' knowledge base and/or

student teachers' learning about teaching. The research aims were analysed to obtain their main focus. This helped identify the ILTE components being researched (e.g. practicum). The resulting information made evident that some components were not necessarily explicitly taken as part of ILTE configurations, e.g. beliefs, identity, as these areas do not make part of subject matters responding to the curriculum plan. Therefore, we classified them according to their level of explicitness as explicit or tacit. However, some studies had a combination, for example, practicum and beliefs. In these cases, it was necessary to determine the component and the connection (s) established around the research aims: What type of knowledge base were they addressing, teaching knowledge or disciplinary knowledge? Were they explicitly or tacitly addressing how student teachers learn?

Results

This section reports on the results of this study aiming at answering the research questions: 1) What Language Teacher Education components have been researched? and 2) How are these components being researched? Results on the first question also show the resulting categories emerged in the analysis: *Student Teachers' learning, Teacher as a Person, Socio-cultural and Political Contexts and Explicit and Tacit Components in ILTE Research*. For the second question, a further detailed analysis of studies on resulting categories and subcategories is presented.

Language Teacher Education components

Concerning the first question of this review: What language TE components have been researched? The analysis revealed that studies fell into one of three layers: Student teacher's learning, teacher as a person,

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and socio-cultural and political contexts (see figure 2). Most studies focused on what student teacher's learning represents (67%), that is, the assumptions of what teacher conceptualization comprises. The second group of studies corresponds to positioning the teacher as a person (26%) and the third, socio-cultural and political contexts (7%) focuses on studying the field connected with the context.

Student Teachers' learning

In the Student Teachers' learning category, there are studies aiming at researching how to improve, explain or elucidate student teachers' learning how to teach, what to teach, and how they learn what they need to

learn. Thirty-seven research articles focused on the question "where does knowledge come from and how is it learned?" In other words, the attention is on the interaction (Illeris, 2007) of the learning process (interpersonal and societal) and is determined by specific orientations (transmissionist, modelling, experiential, etc.). Figure 3 shows the research lines in this area and the number of articles per line where most empirical studies are situated. Practicum, for instance, has the highest number with six studies.

Teacher as a Person

The second group of studies focused on some of the elements associated with the teacher as a person, namely, attitudes, beliefs, identity, needs, emotional

Figure 2

Elements in ILTE identified in the three layers of conceptualizations

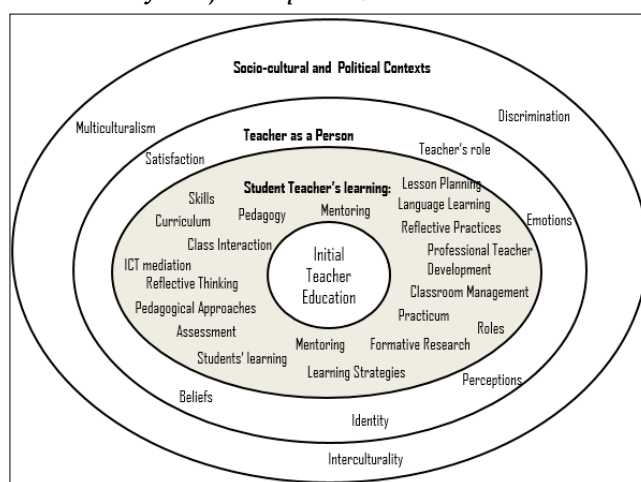
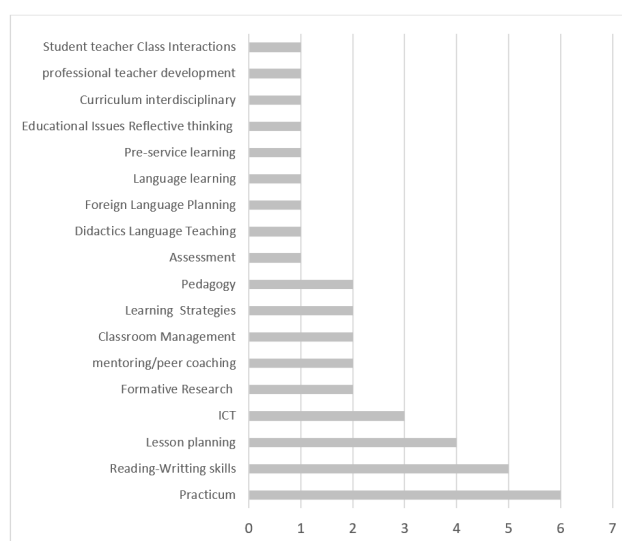


Figure 3

Research lines in student teachers' learning



Note: These are the lines declared in studies reviewed.

and affective factors that are perceived to influence student teachers' learning, professional development, image, positioning, and identity. Figure 4 shows the research and the number of articles per line. Identity, for instance, represents the highest number with six studies.

Aligning with socio-cognitive theories of learning, some studies show that researchers are assuming teachers as active agents. In general, studies suggest the insufficiency of teachers' reflections on their practices in terms of techniques, lesson planning, and instructional practices to elucidate student teachers' learning. In articles reviewed, beliefs, perceptions, perspectives, and assumptions were studied to determine how they inform or influence teachers' educational practices.

Socio-cultural and Political Contexts

The third area comprises studies that focus on how *the context*, whether the school or the community affects ILTE at an interpersonal or societal level looking, for instance, at inclusion, exclusion, multiculturalism, and discrimination. There are four studies in this group. Figure 5 shows the research lines in *context* and the number of articles per line.

Explicit and Tacit Components in ILTE Research
Figure 4

Research lines acknowledging the teacher as a person

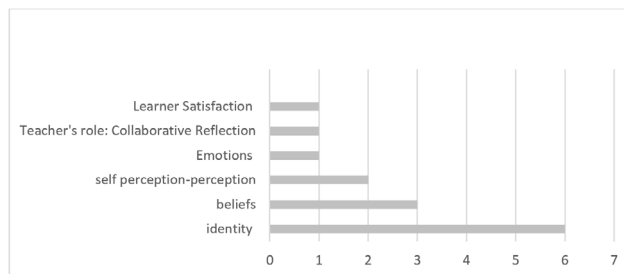
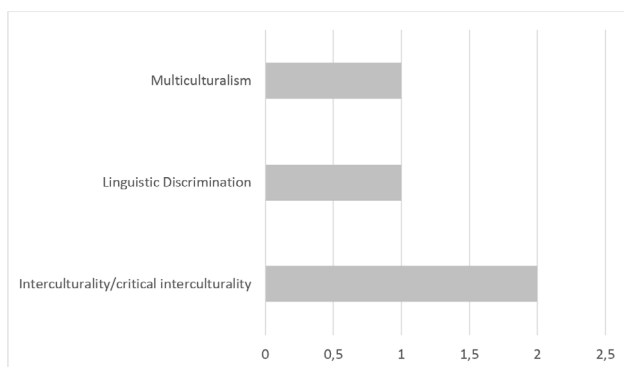


Figure 5

Research lines for context



Out of the 55 studies, a total of 35 papers included both explicit and tacit components, 17 studies addressed an explicit component and 3 studies addressed a single tacit element (figure 6). The largest number of studies (35) still favour theoretical, technical and operational components in ILTE. However, sidelined components are emerging: Beliefs are assumed as important to reveal student teacher's roles in relation to their pedagogical and emotional influence on children (Aguirre, 2014), their own TE program (Ormeño & Rosas, 2015), theory implementation (e.g. critical literacy) and lesson planning (Gutierrez, 2015). Some studies focused on teachers' perceptions as a way to distinguish the development of key competences for student teachers, such as higher order thinking skills and reflective, research, knowledge transfer/integration, social, and self-management while experiencing a problem-based learning (Muñoz, 2017).

From the 35, other research focused on emotions and their effect on the practicum to develop an understanding of what student teachers experience during this process (Castañeda & Aguirre, 2018). Some studies explored intercultural issues (Granados, 2018; Viafara & Ariza, 2015) as well as skills needed to work with the communities of their school contexts (Lastra et al., 2018; Nieto, 2018). Other studies

explored conceptions and misconceptions that may affect development of research for teaching (Reyes et al., 2017). Some studies reported teacher’s development and factors affecting the practicum process (Morales, 2016) suggesting the relevance of emotions, the awareness of context, their students’ conditions, process of reflection and actions, among other factors that had implications for student teachers learning. Some studies about assessment are starting to emerge (Giraldo & Murcia, 2019).

The 17 studies that focused on explicit curricular components were associated with the knowledge base: didactics, namely, lesson planning, practicum, research, language skills learning, teacher and student roles, assessment, mentoring, tutoring, internet mediation, classroom management, CLIL methodologies, reflective practices, and curriculum (subject matter, content, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987)). And the three remaining studies focused on one single component: identity.

How the components are being researched

The analysis to determine the focus of each study showed they could simultaneously represent more

than one area of conceptualization and various degrees of explicitness of curricular components in research issues. Categories and subcategories for analysis allowed the identification of studies’ main focuses and the areas of conceptualization. Table 1 presents the resulting classification of categories and subcategories.

Detailed analysis of selected articles revealed that 45 studies connected from one to three components in their ILTE investigation scope. 10 studies focused on the interconnections of more than three components. These studies became the focus of our attention. Additionally, as it has been explained, thirty-seven studies have explicit and tacit components, which implies that they naturally targeted one or two of the subcategories from either student teacher knowledge or teacher learning about teaching. This finding is not unexpected since issues studies are necessarily connected to one part of the configured elements in ILTE.

Interestingly, there were ten studies, which inquired into a particular issue by focusing on a variety of components related to student teacher knowledge or teacher learning about teaching (See table 2). They approached such components explicitly or tacitly.

As mentioned earlier, articles in table 2 addressed both explicit and tacit components that became crucial to attend in classroom actions. From these ten **Figure 6**

articles, one focused on six components and nine focused on five components. Some studies targeted *student teacher’s learning* impacting knowledge about

Explicit and tacit components in ILTE research

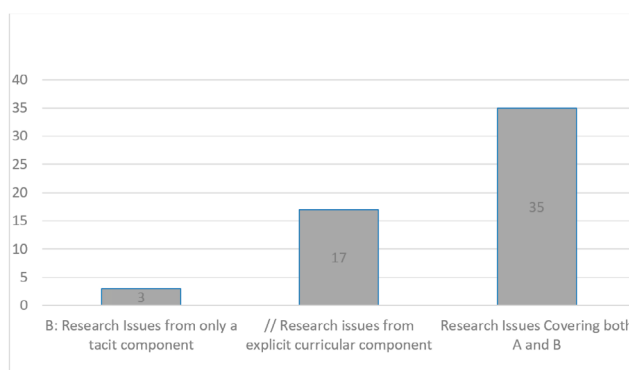


Table 1

Categories targeted in the studies

<i>Student teacher knowledge base</i>		<i>Student teacher learning about teaching</i>	
Teacher’s knowledge about teaching	Teacher disciplinary knowledge	Student teachers’ learning how to teach	Teacher education practices

Table 2

ILTE research that focus on integrated components

<i>Articles and authors</i>	<i>Explicit and non-explicit components</i>		<i>Student teacher knowledge base</i>		<i>Teacher learning about teaching</i>	
	<i>Explicit components</i>	<i>A wider perspective for a tacit component</i>	<i>Teacher's knowledge about teaching</i>	<i>Teacher disciplinary knowledge</i>	<i>Student teachers' learning how to teach</i>	<i>Teacher education practices</i>
Pre-Service English Teachers' Voices About the Teaching Practicum. Castañeda & Aguirre (2017)	x	x	x	x	x	x
EFL student teachers' learning in a peer-tutoring research study group. Viáfara (2014)	x		x	x	x	x
Preparing Net Gen pre-service teachers for digital native classrooms. Ekiaka Nzai et al. (2014)	x	x	x		x	x
Creencias acerca del aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera en un programa de formación inicial de profesores de inglés en Chile. Ormeño & Rosas (2015)	x	x	x		x	x
Action research processes in a foreign language teaching program: Voices from inside. Guerra et al. (2015)	x	x	x	x	x	
Beliefs, attitudes, and reflections of EFL pre-service teachers while exploring critical literacy theories to prepare and implement critical lessons. Gutiérrez (2015)	x	x	x	x	x	
Community based pedagogy as an eye-opening for pre-service teachers' initial connections with the school curriculum. Lastra et al. (2018)	x	x	x	x	x	
Content- and Language-Integrated Learning- Based Strategies for the Professional Development of Early Childhood Education Pre-Service Teachers. Alvira & González.(2017)	x	x	x	x	x	
Problem-Based Learning: An Experiential Strategy for English Language Teacher Education in Chile. Muñoz. (2017)	x	x	x	x		x
The Pedagogical Practicum Journey Towards Becoming an English Language Teacher. Lucero & Roncancio (2019)	x	x	x	x	x	

teaching and pedagogy as well as experiences of student teachers' learning about teaching. Other studies researched student teachers' knowledge base about teaching and disciplinary areas taking into account perceptions, conceptions, and beliefs. Studies are embracing the interrelated and interconnected nature of learning processes in ILTE. Despite the low tendency, this number may reflect the gradual acknowledgement from researchers of the holistic nature of ILTE as they have started to study issues from a more multidimensional view. These are important elements to interpret findings from a more holistic view.

Discussion

Results of the research questions in relation to the components of ILTE and how they are being researched to improve teachers' preparation, were framed into three specific layers, namely student teacher's learning, teacher as a person, and socio-cultural and political contexts.

The analysis identified a large group of 35 studies that connect explicit and tacit elements. Additionally, from those 35 studies, 10 embraced more open visions of what student teachers' learning implies by acknowledging an interrelation of elements in such learning (i.e. identity, beliefs) and their connections with how to teach and how they learn what they need to teach. The second major group, 17 studies, focus on *what work best* for knowledge, skills, and routines. They framed their studies in linear perspectives. Lastly, 3 studies examined a non-explicit component: identity, highlighting the important meaning for student teachers' professional growth in ILTE.

Within the scope of this review, findings for the first research question in relation to the components of ILTE confirmed Sjöberg (2018) and Stevahn and McGuire (2017) ideas that traditional components such as didactic subjects, how to plan, implement, and evaluate are still at the forefront in ILTE research suggesting the presence of a strong technical-orientation in current configurations (See figure 2 layer 1). However, attention to *learning* in relation to emotions, beliefs, perceptions, psychological needs, have started to emerge. The review identified several studies in the second layer related to *how does a conception position a teacher?* (See figure 2). Elements such as beliefs and identity are identified as fundamental to understand student teachers' learning (Villareal et al., 2020).

Findings show the scarcity of studies related to how the context influences student teachers and the context changing nature (Livingston, 2017) (see figure 2, socio-cultural and political layer). This dearth of articles could be indicative of the difficulties to understand or make research in this area as well as how these issues can be connected to actions in classrooms that deal with learning how to teach the language. This finding coincides with elaborations by Elen and Clark (2006) in relation to the need to research other key multilevel components which have been neglected, however, critical to understand learning and teaching. Recognizing and researching the said components will increase student teachers' preparedness to analyse critically, as indicated by Sjöberg (2018), the circumstances influencing their work, framed in local and international policy shifts, thus facilitating situated teaching and learning and reducing instrumentalized views of ILTE. Additionally, the findings concur with ideas from Stevahn and McGuire (2017) that schools of education should consider not only what and how, but also for whom and when to generate more integration of components.

In relation to the second question on how components were researched, findings show that although issues are largely studied under fragmented views, there is an increasing number of studies tackling components as interrelated and interconnected affecting the teaching and learning processes recursively. For instance, Castañeda and Aguirre (2017) addressed six components in ILTE by studying the practicum and integrating this explicit element with pre-service voices (reflections) to unveil their influence on all components: how to teach, knowledge about teaching, their language competence as well as TE practices. Their findings connect ILTE as a whole interrelating and integrating elements to improve curriculum decisions and enhance learning. It connects the learning how to teach with the classroom and the local context, mentors, partners, and their own reflections as decisive elements to improve learning in ILTE programs providing different "perspectives of what language teaching means" (p.169). Ormeño and Rosas (2015) studied beliefs and their influence in language teaching and learning processes. The study connected their beliefs to learning how to teach as well as to knowledge about teaching (pedagogy and didactics) framed in specific contexts. According to the authors, these perceptions should be considered to determine the ILTE contents. This tacit component (e.g. beliefs) is made visible as key for the curriculum in teacher preparation.

Additionally, within a multiple case study, Guerra et al. (2015) highlighted how the connection between ILTE programs and schools can be enhanced by collaboration and engagement, and to simultaneously support teachers' learning. This study about the practicum was framed from a perspective that gives voices to participants assuming they are within a community. The authors concluded that personal dimensions played an important role in participants' beliefs and actions. The study suggested that participant integration needs to be bounded to improve teacher learning, not only academically but also personally.

This finding suggests growing understandings of ILTE complexity. Underlying this, it is the appreciation of education, and particularly of ILTE, as a complex phenomenon, in the sense of Cochran-Smith et al.'s (2014) assumption that "It may be, however, that what is needed are new research questions and theoretical frameworks that account for wholes, not just parts, and take complex, rather than reductionist perspectives" (p. 1). There is gradual acknowledgement of other components beyond what constitutes a skillful teacher in ILTE configurations. In line with this, the call is for more integrative views of ILTE to advance towards its improvement (Garcia & Rosado, 2021).

Another important issue is the blurry boundary between research into teaching and research into ILTE (Clandini & Husu, 2017). Identification of the focus of studies made evident the difficulty in distinguishing whether the point of interest was student teacher's learning or how to best teach a skill (Nieto, 2018; Porras et al., 2018). Nonetheless, acknowledgement of ILTE as a whole and how the goals and means could be studied and implemented from a more holistic and multidimensional view were evident. Figure 8 shows what a conceptual orientation may imply in terms of three dimensions delineated in the theoretical framework, suggesting the need to interrelate and connect them to underscore the complexity of ILTE. Teacher preparation needs comprehensive stances that better equip prospective teachers to face their educational realities and this comprehension should be also directed in practice.

As mentioned earlier, ten studies from the review instantiated broader perspectives that could be represented. In these studies, the concept of the whole of ILTE is assumed as an interconnected process that gives importance to each part's role and to parts' relations to one another to understand the outcomes of the whole.

Implications

Although, most articles in these journals are framed into the Colombian and Latin-American context, these findings could be helpful for researchers and teacher educators aiming at improving and discussing ILTE assumptions and at recognizing the intricacies of educating teachers for complex educational scenarios.

These findings could help trace how teacher education components and their articulation infuse prospective teachers' responses to problems, decision-making and professional growth in multiplicity of school contexts and occurrences. Evidence from the analysis of empirical studies may reveal what is currently occurring and emerging in ILTE scenarios.

These findings are limited to pre-service teachers in the Colombian context. Therefore, it would be important for further studies to consider teacher educators and mentor teachers to expand knowledge about components in ILTE as well as include other educational contexts.

Conclusion

This review focused on what ILTE components have been researched and how they are being researched in recent and relevant literature. The review revealed research has developed mainly from a fragmented vision thus underrepresenting the complexities ILTE comprises and affecting the quality of student teachers' preparation. It also revealed that research into contextual elements affecting student teachers' learning, an aspect which had been previously neglected in ILTE configurations, have started to be recognized as part of ILTE educational scenarios.

Another gradual change detected is the increasing number of studies addressing both explicit and tacit elements affecting learning processes. However, curricular components that represent the society's perspectives and visions of high-quality teaching are still missing. Although ten studies started to use integrative perspectives to study ILTE issues, there is still a focus on singular components or parts without assuming ILTE as a complex whole.

As extensively discussed in the literature, current societal challenges require ILTE to move beyond traditional perspectives to incorporate more components that have been found to impact and influence teacher's learning and development. Such integral teacher education would, in turn, respond to

needs in situated teaching contexts enabling students' teachers to face classroom teaching practice challenges affecting ILTE, such as multiculturalism, bullying, racism, inequity, among other issues represented and expressed by students and other agents in school contexts.

Results from this review identified studies that may contribute to better understand how the interconnected nature of ILTE works in action in order to improve it. Our hope is that such findings could help other teacher educators, program designers and practitioners identify components that could be incorporated in their programs and research agendas. Therefore, an important question is how teacher educators' understanding of their own classroom actions can be more tractable to help improve ILTE. This review could serve as a springboard to pose further questions about what ILTE components can reveal about the nature of conceptualizations and how they could be configured and addressed to recognize their interrelated and interconnected nature in particular ILTE programs.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

None declared.

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