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Abstract

This paper presents a systematic review of the extent and nature of teaching and learning research in higher education in Colombia over the past two decades and shines light on a body of literature from the South that has been relatively invisible on the global stage. The study found that the volume of SOTL taking place in higher education in Colombia is greater than indicated by previous research, but is taking place unevenly across the higher education landscape. This paper explores the challenges faced by Colombian scholars in engaging in and publishing teaching and learning research. The findings show that while teaching and learning research is happening in higher education in Colombia there are major issues in identifying and locating that research due to a lack of consistent terminology to describe SOTL. The findings also show that the nature of research emerging from Colombia is highly aligned with the global North in terms of methods, methodologies and themes. This paper concludes with recommendations on how to make Colombian learning and teaching research more visible and to reflect to a greater extent the diversity and richness in teaching and learning that takes places in Colombia.

Título

Investigación sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje en la educación superior en Colombia: una revisión de la literatura

Resumen

Este trabajo presenta una revisión sistemática del alcance y la naturaleza de la investigación sobre enseñanza y aprendizaje en la educación superior en Colombia durante las últimas dos décadas. El trabajo arroja luz sobre un cuerpo de literatura del Sur que ha sido relativamente invisible en el escenario mundial. El estudio encontró que el volumen de SOTL que se lleva a cabo en la educación superior en Colombia es mayor que el indicado por investigaciones anteriores, pero se está llevando a cabo de manera desigual en el panorama de la educación superior. Este documento explora los desafíos que enfrentan los académicos colombianos para participar y publicar la investigación de enseñanza y aprendizaje. Los hallazgos muestran que, mientras que la investigación sobre enseñanza y aprendizaje está ocurriendo en la educación superior en Colombia, existen problemas importantes para identificarla y ubicarla debido a la falta de una terminología consistente para describir el SOTL. Los hallazgos también muestran que la naturaleza de la investigación que surge de Colombia está altamente alineada con el Norte global en términos de métodos, metodologías y temas. Este documento concluye con recomendaciones sobre cómo hacer más visible la investigación sobre aprendizaje y enseñanza de la educación colombiana, así como para lograr reflejar en mayor medida la diversidad y la riqueza en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje que tiene lugar en Colombia.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a review of the learning and teaching research emerging from Colombia in the past two decades in order to increase the visibility of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) from the 'global South'. The terms 'global South' and 'global North' are used in this paper to reference the social, economic, education and political inequalities between developed and developing nations, while acknowledging that these are contested terms and that power disparities and inequality also exists within nations (Trefzer, Jackson, McKee & Dellinger 2014).

Learning and teaching research from Latin America is largely absent in the global SOTL discourse, with the silence of scholarly voices from Latin America and other countries from the global South particularly notable in studies that claim to be sector-wide (such as Fanghanel *et al.* 2015; Fanghanel Potter, Pritchard & Wisker 2016). This lack of visibility of SOTL from Latin America is reflected in comments such as: "SoTL is a model that is used in the higher education sector (particularly in North America, Australasia, UK, South Africa and some European and south-east Asian countries) to reflect on, and transform, teaching and learning practices" (Fanghanel *et al.* 2016:3).

The invisibility of SOTL taking place in Latin America is partially explained as a reflection of the dearth of teaching and learning research occurring in Latin American countries (Fischman, Alperin & Willinsky

2010; Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017). Fischman *et al.* (2010:2) note the “relatively minor role that the faculties of LAUs [Latin American Universities] are playing in the global production of scientific knowledge”, while Guzmán-Valenzuela (2017) found no evidence of SOTL literature in higher education from Latin American authors in the period 2000 to 2007 in the Web of Science (WoS) database, and only 34 journal articles in the period between 2008 and 2015. Of those articles, Colombia was the third highest producer with five articles, behind Chile (13 articles) and Brazil (seven articles).

The authors of this paper, researchers at a private university in Colombia, were concerned by the reports of limited teaching and learning research taking place in Latin America, and particularly in Colombia, especially given that this narrative is inconsistent with evidence of teaching and learning research taking place at the university the authors are affiliated with. This prompted the authors to undertake a systematic literature review to deepen their understanding of the incidence and nature of teaching and learning research in higher education in Colombia. The literature review presented in this paper forms the initial phase of an evaluation study of SOTL at the authors’ university and extends the work of Guzmán-Valenzuela (2017) by exploring literature beyond that indexed in major databases. The literature review found that teaching and learning research is being conducted in higher education in Colombia to a greater extent than indicated by the low volume of articles indexed in major databases. In this paper we explore the nature of teaching and learning research emerging from authors affiliated with Colombian universities as well as the factors that render that literature largely invisible on the global stage.

2. The context of teaching and learning research in Colombia

From literature we identify four key issues that frame the context of teaching and learning research in Colombia. The issues include the difficulty of locating teaching and learning research literature when the English term ‘SOTL’ is not used in Colombia; the impact of English (as the global language for research dissemination) on publications from Spanish-speaking nations such as Colombia; the politics of research dissemination and publication; and the geo-politics of knowledge production.

2.1 SOTL: What’s in a name?

The terms used to describe teaching and learning research impact on the visibility of that research in the literature. The term ‘Scholarship of Teaching and Learning’, or ‘SOTL’, is extensively used in higher education in the global North (Fanghanel *et al.* 2015; Tight 2018). However, this English-language term is not widely known or used in Colombia. Additionally, the term SOTL is not easily translated into Spanish. The literal translation of ‘scholarship’ into Spanish is ‘erudite’ (*erudición*), which is a word not in common usage in Spanish. This impedes a straightforward translation of SOTL in Spanish. In Spanish-speaking countries, teaching and learning research is usually referred to as ‘research in the classroom’ (*investigación en el aula*). The search terms of ‘SOTL’ or ‘Scholarship of Teaching and Learning’ in academic search engines are, therefore, unlikely to identify teaching and learning research emanating from Colombia. Additionally, while the term ‘*investigación en el aula*’ is used as a proxy for the English term SOTL in this paper, we acknowledge that ‘scholarship’ has a broader scope than ‘*investigación*’ (research) that is not reflected by the use of the term ‘*investigación en el aula*’.

In addition, there are disparate understandings of what ‘research in the classroom’ encompasses and alternate terms are being used in the teaching and learning research emerging from Spanish-speaking countries (Restrepo Gómez 2009). The term ‘research of the classroom’ (*investigación de aula*), for example, has been proposed as an alternative to ‘research in the classroom’, as a more flexible approach to thinking about what takes place in the teaching-learning process and where research might take place (Restrepo Gómez 2009). The different terms used to talk about teaching and learning research in Spanish mirrors the disparate ways in which SOTL has been defined (Fanghanel *et al.* 2015) in English, and which continue to change over time.

The terms used to frame teaching and learning research, and particularly the difference between common terms used in English- and Spanish-speaking countries, complicate the task of identifying teaching and learning research in Colombia, even when the work is published in English.

2.2 Who is publishing and where?

Colombian academics are under similar pressures to academics in other Latin American countries to publish their research (Delgado 2011; Neff 2018) as a path to individual career progression as well as to enhance the global ranking and prestige of their university (Cárdenas 2016; Flowerdew 2015). The visibility of their research is strengthened through publication in high-ranked journals, particularly within “the global and U.S.-centric research network” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:1). Consequently, many Latin American academics seek to publish in high-ranked journals from the global North (Fischman *et al.* 2010).

However, authors from the global South are routinely excluded from publication in “prestigious journals” and those “included in mainstream indexes” (Delgado 2011:iv). This is partially attributed to the clear link between “where higher education journals are based or published and where their authors come from” (Tight 2014:383). As high-ranked journals come predominantly from the global North, publication in those journals is weighted against authors from other parts of the world (Mwangi *et al.* 2018). The prioritisation of authors from the North (Tight 2014) and the marginalisation of knowledge emanating from peripheral nations such as Colombia reflects what Canagarajah (2002) refers to as the existence of a geopolitics of academic writing.

In recent decades, there has been a large increase in the number of academic journals in Latin America – most of which are published by universities (Delgado 2011). This reflects a strategic response by universities to the pressure on their academics to publish, and the difficulty of them doing so in high-ranking journals from the global North (Arevalo-Guizar & Rueda-Beltran 2016; Delgado 2011). The patronage of universities in Colombia, as in other Latin American countries, of non-commercial, open-access online publications indicates a desire for the articles they publish “to be read and quoted outside the region” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:7) and within it. These open-access journals play an important function in providing a platform for Latin American academics to disseminate knowledge, albeit without visibility in major international indexes (Arevalo-Guizar & Rueda-Beltran 2016). Guzmán-Valenzuela and Gómez (2019) theorize that the extensive publication by academics from Latin America in these local and regional journals, while maintaining a publication presence in journals from the global North represents a “*dual pattern of publication*” by Latin American scholars that is utilised as a means of achieving “*dual epistemic recognition*” (2019:115, emphasis in original).

In Colombia, academic journals are required by the Colombian research agency, Colciencias, to conform to the standards for publication of high-ranked scientific journals from the North in order to be indexed nationally for global recognition (Cárdenas & Nieto Cruz 2017). Journal ranking in Colombia is primarily based on criteria specified by organisations such as “JCR (Journal Citation Reports, led by Thomson) and SJR (Scientific Journal Rankings managed by Scopus)” (Cárdenas 2016:3). The focus on international rankings by Colciencias has occurred despite the establishment of “regional directories, repositories, and indexes published in local languages” (Delgado 2011:v) which include “Latindex, RedALyC, SciELO, [and] CLACSO” (Delgado 2011:v). By complying with international standards, Colombian publishing is arguably “yielding authority from the locals to the hegemony of the west” (Cárdenas & Nieto Cruz 2017:8), with the potential trade-off being enhanced research visibility on the global stage (Cárdenas 2016:2). This focus on international rankings also comes at the cost of universities “compromis[ing] the[ir] academic freedom and social goals” (Arevalo-Guizar & Rueda-Beltran 2016:2).

2.3 Publication in what language?

English has become the de facto language for publication of academic research, the “international lingua franca ... for scholarly publications” (Flowerdew 2015:252). English is the language in which “people need to write if they want their papers to be published in the world’s most prestigious journals” (Skapinker 2014: para 6), and if they want to “succeed in publishing internationally” (Cortés & Arellano 2017:127) and increase their research impact. In Colombia, the pressure on scholars to publish in English is particularly strong (Curry & Lillis 2017). This is due to the policy focus in Colombia on Spanish-English bilingualism (Bonilla Carvajal & Tejada-Sánchez 2016) and its use as a tool for increasing global competitiveness (Usma Wilches 2009). Despite this, English is not reflected in the language of publication of most Colombian journals. Only three of the 505 journals classified by the Colombian national bibliographical index, Índice Bibliográfico Nacional, are published completely in English (Cárdenas 2016). The majority of Colombian journals are published in Spanish, with some journals publishing manuscripts in several languages, usually Spanish, Portuguese and English. The predominance of Spanish as the main language of journal publication in Colombia appears to indicate the importance of dissemination to a local and regional audience, and alludes to the emergence of regional structures of knowledge production “which challenge the dominance of the global North” (Collyer 2018:56).

Additionally, the degree to which Colombian academics have the linguistic skills to publish their work in English is highly varied. The majority of science professors from a small sample of Colombian universities were found to have low English proficiency levels (Cortés & Arellano 2017), whereas academics in the field of English Language teaching “have been trained to teach English, [and] they might be expected to write and publish in that language” (Flowerdew 2015:258). Hence, despite the national focus on English-language bilingualism in Colombia, and with the exception of the discipline of English language teaching, the majority of journals from Colombia continue to be published in the national language of Spanish.

2.4 Whose knowledge is valued?

The nature of the Colombian higher education system reflects a “homogenous system of Western teaching, pedagogy and curricula” (Nemogá-Soto 2018:4) that stems from “the vestiges of [its] colonial past” (Granados-Beltrán 2018:178). The structural inequities inherent in this system of education marginalise localised knowledges and traditions of education that do not conform to the Western knowledge paradigm, including epistemologies of Colombians of afro-descent (García Córdoba 2016), indigenous and other marginalised people’s knowledges (Nemogá-Soto 2018).

The nature of higher education in Colombia is shaped by the “political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions” (De Courcy, Loblaw, Paterson, Southam & Wilson 2017:3) in which teaching and learning research takes place. The Colombian bilingual education policy, for example, marginalises local languages and reinforces colonialities of knowledge (Restrepo & Rojas 2010), whereby the English language, which represents dominant knowledge from the global North, is privileged. This in turn flows through to the type of research that is prioritised, as is evident in the numerous Colombian journals that specialise in English teaching (such as *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*; and *Profile*), while there is little evidence of research undertaken on indigenous languages in higher education in Colombia (for one example see Nemogá-Soto 2018).

The marginalisation of local knowledges is further exacerbated by the bias exhibited by publications from the North towards knowledges drawn from the global South, a process that Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) describes as ‘abyssal thinking’, which renders invisible the knowledge drawn from peripheral nations (Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017). This bias reflects unequal power relations that leads to epistemic violence towards ways of knowing and understanding the world that are outside of the positivist research tradition (Briggs & Sharp in McFarlane 2006; de Sousa Santos 2014). Consequently, knowledge generated from teaching and learning research that draws from countries outside of the global North, and from alternative ways of knowing the world, are less likely to be published.

3. Research Design

A systematic literature review was conducted of teaching and learning research in higher education in Colombia.

3.1 Defining SOTL

Our understanding of SOTL is adapted from Boyer’s (1990) definition of the Scholarship of Teaching as a rigorous and systematic exploration and experimentation by practitioners of their own teaching practice that is then disseminated to the field for scrutiny. While Boyer’s conceptualisation of the Scholarship of Teaching was focused on the investigation of individual teacher researchers, our understanding of SOTL also includes research conducted in collaboration with other teachers and with students (Fanghanel *et al.* 2015) and includes practitioner research of student learning. For the purpose of this paper, we apply this definition of SOTL to the terms teaching and learning research and ‘*investigación en el aula*’ (research in the classroom). While we acknowledge that this is somewhat problematic given the different scope of the words ‘scholarship’ and ‘research’, this approach has

been used to provide a common meaning where these terms are used in order to accommodate the untranslatability of 'SOTL' into Spanish and the lack of use of the term SOTL in the Spanish literature.

3.2 Inclusions and exclusions

Literature was only included in the study if it aligned with the definition of SOTL outlined in the previous section, that is, it was practitioner-focused research. Additionally, it was only included if at least one of the authors was affiliated with a Colombian university and the practice was related to teaching and learning in higher education in Colombia. Hence, literature that related to teaching and learning theory rather than practice, or that provided instruction on how to conduct teaching and learning research, was omitted from the study.

Given that the literature review was exploratory, no time boundary was placed on the start of the literature search. As the literature review was conducted at the end of 2018 and early 2019, only literature published prior to 2019 was included in the review.

3.3 Search terms

The authors encountered some difficulty in defining the search terms for this study, given that teaching and learning research takes place across all disciplines and a range of theoretical and methodological approaches are used. Search terms were also needed in English and in Spanish in order to capture SOTL literature published in either language.

The general search terms that were applied to the first scan of the literature were 'Colombia', 'Scholarship of Learning and Teaching', 'SOTL', 'classroom research' and 'higher education' in English, and '*investigación en el aula*', '*innovación en el aula*', '*innovación pedagógica*' and '*educación superior*' in Spanish. Specific methodologies such as action research were not included in the search.

A limitation of the study is the narrow focus of these terms given the wide range of themes, disciplines and approaches in teaching and learning research. It is likely that an increase in the search terms would increase the literature identified in this study, although there were no consistent key words used in the journal articles that form the basis of this study.

3.4 Search strategy

The first scan of the literature was conducted through a database search using the library search engines of Universidad de los Andes (Uniandes), Colombia, and Charles Darwin University (CDU), Australia. These two university search engines provided access to 40 and 256 databases respectively. There was some overlap of major databases such as EBSCO, Wiley, ProQuest, Science Direct, Web of Science and SAGE between the universities, but the individual collections were significantly different and reflected each university's geographical location and disciplinary and political positioning.

The two institutional collections were used in order to ensure a comprehensive search of the scholarly literature emerging from English and Spanish language sources in international and regionally indexed publications. Despite the extensive scope of this first scan of the literature, the search revealed little

evidence of SOTL in higher education in and from Colombia. Although this scan was broader than the search of Web of Science conducted by Guzmán-Valenzuela (2017), this first scan of literature found similar limited evidence of teaching and learning research.

A second scan was conducted using Google Scholar and the same search terms were used. This led to the identification of more journal articles showing that SOTL was taking place in higher education in Colombia. At the completion of the first two literature scans, 34 relevant journal articles had been identified.

At this point, the authors decided to widen the scope of the search to investigate if there was additional literature not being picked up by the search terms, the databases and the search engines used. The third scan of literature involved a review of publications listed on the websites of a selection of Colombian universities known by the authors to have a strong interest in pedagogy. A search was conducted of the websites of the following universities: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Universidad del Norte and Universidad de los Andes. This third scan of the literature was time-intensive as it was conducted by the authors manually scanning journals and books published by the selected universities. This third scan led to the identification of the majority of the literature included in this review.

The small number of websites included in the third scan is a limitation of the study. While the literature identified provides evidence of extensive learning and teaching research taking place in higher education in Colombia, a review of the websites of all 189 Colombian universities (uniRank 2019) would be required in order to gain a comprehensive view of SOTL in higher education in Colombia.

3.5 Selection of literature

Potential articles were selected for further review based on their titles and review of their abstracts. The full texts were then skimmed to ensure that they related to SOTL as defined for this study and met the inclusion characteristics for this study. Key information on each text was recorded in a spreadsheet. The information recorded included standard bibliographic information such as the name of the author/s, the title of the article, and the year published and key words. In addition, the university affiliation of the author was identified, as well as its status as a public or private university, the discipline in which the study was situated, and the methods and methodological approach taken in the study.

3.6 Analysis of data

The study reflects a mixed methods approach to data collection. Quantitative data was collected to identify the incidence and patterns of SOTL in higher education in Colombia. This included the number of journal articles and book chapters that met the search inclusions by year, by publication type, by language of publication, by author affiliation, by discipline and by key terms. Each journal article and book chapter was also scanned to gain a qualitative picture of the context of the study. This led to the identification of patterns, inclusions and gaps in the nature of approaches, methods and methodologies used in the studies reported in the literature.

4. Findings

4.1 Teaching and learning research is increasing in Colombia

The review identified 83 journal articles and 103 book chapters focusing on teaching and learning research in higher education in Colombia published between 1999 and 2018. Of these articles, eight were published between 1999 and 2006, 35 in the six years 2007 to 2012, and 40 articles in the six years 2013 to 2018.

The amount of teaching and learning research identified in this study indicates that greater activity is taking place in Colombia in this field of research than identified by Guzmán-Valenzuela (2017) in the WoS. While the annual production of teaching and learning research identified in this study is highly variable (see Figure 1), overall, the trend shows that it is increasing in Colombia.

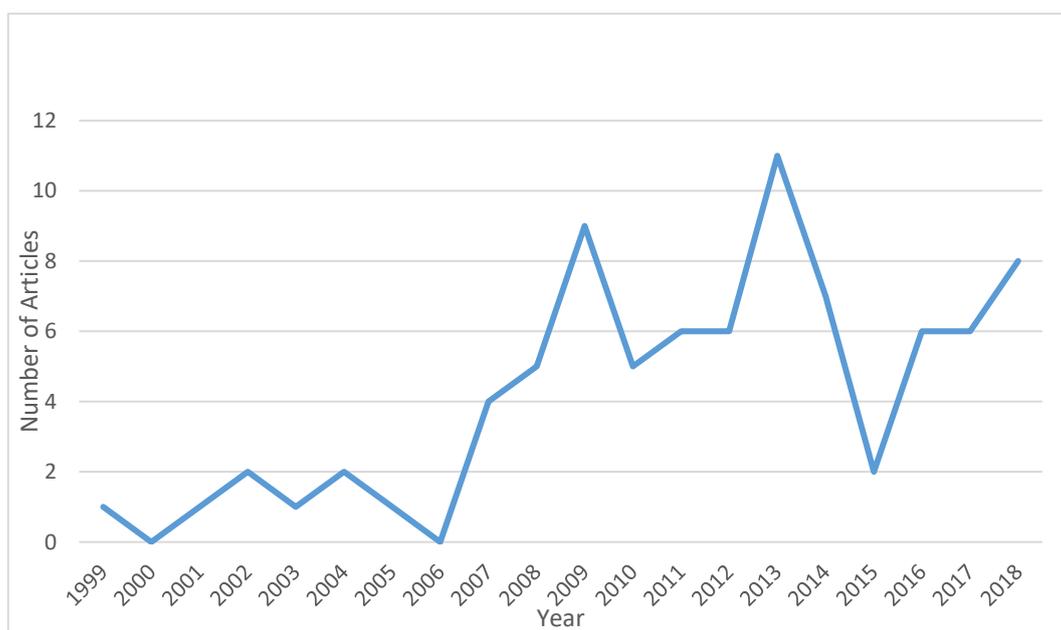


FIGURE 1: HIGHER EDUCATION SOTL ARTICLES FROM COLOMBIA 1999 TO 2018

4.2 Publication of SOTL is predominantly non-commercial

Of the 83 journal articles identified in this study, 68 (82%) were published by universities and professional organisations. Of these, 64 of the articles were published by Colombian universities, two by universities in other Latin American countries, and two by professional organisations. Only 15 of the journal articles were published by commercial publishers. These included articles published by Taylor & Francis/Routledge (4), Wiley (3), Springer (3), SAGE (2), Emerald Insight (2), and Tempus (1). While most of the journal publications were non-commercial, all of the book chapters identified in this study were non-commercial, and were published by two private universities, Universidad del Norte and Universidad de los Andes.

The extent of non-commercial publication of SOTL accords with earlier research that found that scholarly journals from Latin America are predominantly non-commercial operations which “depend on institutional patronage” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:7). This support is provided with the intention to “improve the social and academic standing of the universities” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:7). In addition, the journal articles published by Colombian universities were available online and were open-access, similar to many Latin American universities who are engaging increasingly in e-publishing practices (Fischman *et al.* 2010).

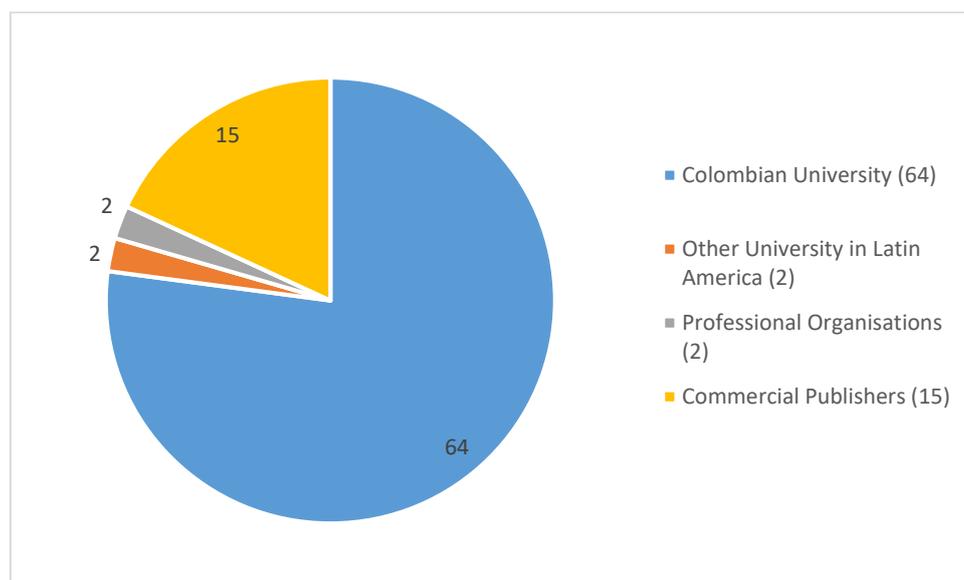


FIGURE 2: PUBLISHERS OF SOTL JOURNAL ARTICLES FROM COLOMBIA BETWEEN 1999 AND 2018

4.3 There is an unevenness in teaching and learning research in Colombia

Teaching and learning research in Colombia is concentrated in the hands of less than a fifth of the nation’s universities. Academic staff affiliated with 34 of Colombia’s 189 universities (uniRank 2019) were responsible for the production of the journal articles identified in this study. Of these 34 universities, staff from two universities produced 29 (33%) of all journal articles: Uniandes produced 15 articles (17%), while Universidad Nacional de Colombia (UNAL), a public university, produced 14 (16%) of the articles. It is notable that these two universities are highly ranked in the 2019 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking (272 and 275 respectively) and are in the top ten universities in Latin America (QS 2019).

Staff affiliated with just 14 universities produced 77% of the total number of articles, while the staff affiliated with the remaining 20 universities produced just one article each. Of these articles, 44 (53%) were written by authors affiliated with public universities and 37 (45%) were from authors affiliated with private universities. Two of the articles (2%) were the result of collaborations between authors from public and private universities.

While SOTL is being generated by staff from both private and public universities in Colombia, there is a difference in where SOTL is being published. Of the 15 journal articles published by commercial publishers from the global North, 14 of these were authored by academics affiliated with private universities. Based on the literature identified in this study, this suggests that the pressure on

academics from some private universities to publish in high-impact journals from the North may be strong, based on an “incentive structure [that] sends the message that only the top-ranked journals matter, and that only those who publish in the approved ‘journal lists’ matter” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:17).

The unevenness of learning and teaching research was even more pronounced in the 103 book chapters that were identified in this study. All of these were contained in books published by private universities. Of these, 96 were by academics from Universidad del Norte (Uninorte), and their work was included in edited books published by that university. Seven chapters were identified by authors from Universidad de los Andes in books published by that university.

4.4 Institutional support promotes participation in teaching and learning research

The universities which produced the majority of the articles and chapters related to SOTL, Universidad del Norte (two journal articles and 94 book chapters), Universidad de los Andes (15 journal articles and 7 book chapters), and Universidad Nacional de Colombia (14 journal articles), all have teaching and learning centres. The support provided by these centres appears to be linked to the greater output of SOTL stemming from these universities as compared to other Colombian universities.

While these three centres provide support to staff members to engage in teaching innovation, with a particular focus on the integration of learning technologies, what appears especially valuable is their support for learning and teaching research and publication. That is, these centres “promote a stronger research and review culture” (Fischman *et al.* 2010:17) that provides the professional development and mentoring needed for academics to develop their skills in this area. We recognise that this finding might reflect the small selection of websites searched in the third scan of the literature.

4.5 Spanish and English are the languages of publication in Colombia

The literature reviewed in this study shows English to be the overwhelming language of publication of SOTL journal articles, with 70 (84%) of the articles reviewed published in English. In contrast, 100% of the book chapters identified were published in Spanish, Colombia’s national language. The use of both languages in the SOTL literature reflects the strength of Spanish as a language of research dissemination within Colombia along with English, which is regarded as the global language of academic discourse in many disciplines (Cortés & Arellano 2017).

The high number of journal articles in English also reflects disciplinary trends. Literature relating to the teaching of English as a foreign language was prevalent in the third scan of literature undertaken in this study. Literature from this discipline was published in the English language in journals such as *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, published by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

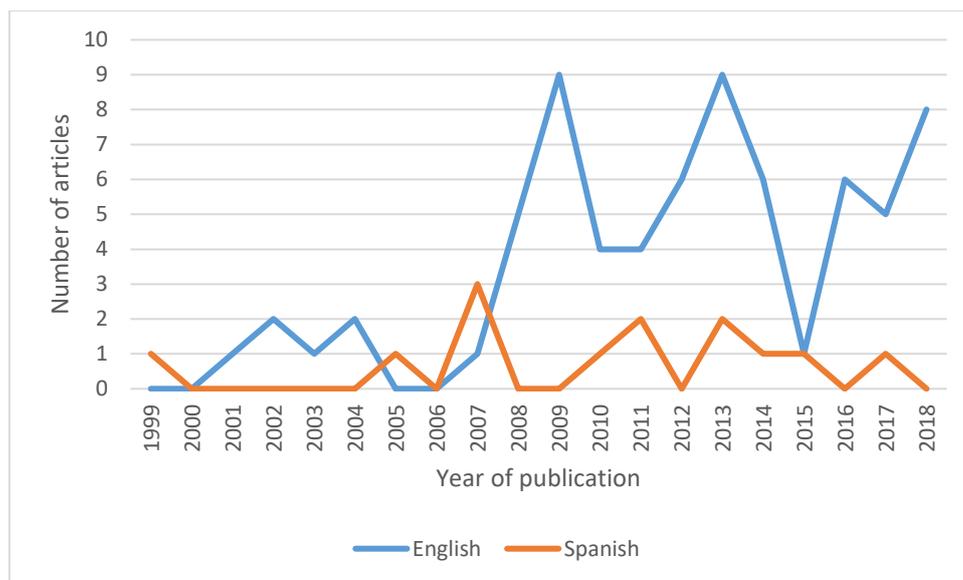


FIGURE 3: LANGUAGE OF SOTL JOURNAL ARTICLES FROM COLOMBIA 1999 TO 2018

4.6 SOTL is emerging from a range of disciplines

SOTL in Colombia is emerging from a range of disciplines. This study identified a strong focus on SOTL in the discipline of English language teaching, with 69% of the articles relating to English teaching either as a specialised field or in the context of bilingual education or teacher education.

The remaining literature is from a range of disciplines. Science-based disciplines such as medicine (Ankle Peña-Silva, Valencia, & Rincón-Perez 2018), pharmacy (Valderrama Sanabria & Castaño Riobueno, 2017), biological sciences (Archila, Molina & Truscott de Mejía 2018) and engineering (Rosero-Zambrano, Ávila, Osorio & Aguirre 2018) were represented in the literature. Other disciplines such as architecture (Navarro Morales & Londoño 2018), language education (McDougald 2013; Pineda Hoyos 2018), social sciences (Lobo 2017) and business (Zambrano & Guerrero 2009) are also represented. Physics (de Castro & Martínez Gómez 2017) and mathematics (Rojas Álvarez, Escudero Trujillo & Cervantes Campo 2013) are strongly represented in discipline-focused edited books emanating from Uninorte.

The literature reviewed shows that while there is a broad spread of disciplines engaging in teaching and learning research, the highest volume of SOTL is emerging from the fields of education/English language teaching and linguistics.

4.7 Research in teaching and learning reflects global themes and theories

The methodologies (such as action research, case study), methods (such as focus groups, interviews, surveys, pre- and post-tests), themes (such as online teaching, online communication, eLearning tools for language learning, game-based learning) and theories (such as Gardner's Multiple Intelligences) reflected in the literature identified in this study overwhelmingly reflect global themes and dominant approaches to investigation. This reflects the nature of globalisation of higher education whereby much of the "complexity and richness of teaching and learning in specific contexts and in peripheral

regions such as Latin America” (Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017:5) has been replaced by generic and approaches to education drawn from the global North.

The rise of the internet and the impact of technology on all aspects of life has flowed through to education and education delivery. Reflecting this, learning technologies were a major theme in the literature reviewed, with 41% of the journal articles and the majority of the book chapters relating to online or blended learning. The literature extended to pedagogical approaches enabled by technology such as the use of flipped classrooms (Navarro Morales & Londoño 2018), the use of communication tools such as discussion boards and other learning technologies, which can be used to enhance approaches to active learning (Lobo 2017) or problem-based learning (Echavarría 2010).

Other universal pedagogical dilemmas are evident in the literature. These include such things as teaching large groups of students (de Castro & Martínez Gómez 2017), enhancing reading comprehension (García Montez, Sagre Barboza & Lacharme Olascoag 2014), and enhancing student autonomy (Trujillo Maza, Gómenz Lozano, Cardoza Alarón, Moreno Zuluaga & Gamba Fadul 2016).

While there was little evidence in the literature of place-based theories of teaching or learning, or contextually based pedagogies or research practices, there were a few exceptions. These exceptions included research that responded to institutional and national pressures to build bilingualism into teaching practice (Archila *et al.* 2018), building intercultural competence in the classroom (Olaya & Gómez Rodríguez 2013), and an article which focused on the learning of indigenous students which was written by an indigenous academic (Cuasilpud Canchala 2010).

5. Discussion

The quantity of literature identified in this study indicates that teaching and learning research in higher education in Colombia is more than suggested by previous research (Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017) and is increasing in volume. However, the majority of this literature is difficult to locate, rendering it largely invisible to a global audience. One of the main reasons for this is the broad scope of activity that is encompassed by teaching and learning research, which makes it difficult to search, particularly when terms such as SOTL are not used in the publication.

In Colombia, SOTL is not a term that is widely known or used in the academy. In the journal articles identified in this study, only one included ‘SOTL’ (Ossa Parra, Guitérrez & Aldana 2014) and no articles included the Spanish equivalents ‘*investigación en el aula*’ or ‘*investigación de aula*’ in the keywords. The keywords in the articles most often related to the discipline (such as ‘medical education’ or ‘English for special purposes’), learning modality (such as ‘computer-based instruction’ or ‘distance learning’), technological tools used in the learning innovation (such as ‘Moviestorm’ or ‘clickers’), the pedagogical approach (such as ‘content-based instruction’ or ‘clay modelling’), and the main theme of the research (such as ‘bilingual written argumentation’ or ‘presentation skills’). The lack of consistent search terms means that even when journals are indexed, articles related to SOTL are still difficult to locate.

The difficulty in locating teaching and learning research from Colombia is evidenced in the following example. The first and second scans of the literature in this study did not pick up any articles from the

journal *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Development*, published by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. This journal has a specific focus on dissemination of classroom-based research in the teaching of English as a second or other language. It was not until the third scan of the literature, the review of publications on selected university websites, that this rich source of SOTL dissemination was located. This was despite *Profile* being registered with many English- and Spanish-language academic directories:

Scopus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Latindex, EBSCO, Informe Académico, Academic OneFile, Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico – REDIB, and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). It is indexed in the MLA International Bibliography, Educational Research Abstracts online (ERA), The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), The Emerging Sources Citation Index (Clarivate Analytics), The European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS), Iresie, LatAm Plus, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database (LLBA), Redalyc, SciELO Citation Index (Web of Science), CLASE, Dialnet, and Publindex – Colciencias, classified in category B (Universidad Nacional de Colombia 2019).

Despite inclusion in such an extensive range of directories and indexes, the search terms used in this review did not pick up any articles from this journal. While the term 'SOTL' is widely used in the North, this term, and its Spanish equivalents, are rarely used in the teaching and learning research produced in Colombia. This may be because academics who engage in learning and teaching research in Colombia do not see "pedagogic research" (Cotton, Miller & Kneale 2018:1625) as inherently different to disciplinary research. If this is the case, it provides a perspective that is contrary to that of Boyer (1990), who sought to distinguish between disciplinary research, or what he termed the Scholarship of Discovery, with pedagogical research, or the Scholarship of Teaching, in order to make visible the scholarly work of teachers. Additionally, the conflation of disciplinary and pedagogical research seems unlikely in Colombia given the emphasis on disciplinary research over teaching and learning research. Aligned with this, the confusion about what SOTL encompasses (Cotton *et al.* 2018), and the absence of a common meta-language in the academy in Colombia to talk about SOTL, may be due to a lack of awareness of SOTL as a research movement. In either case, the lack of common terms to talk about and search for teaching and learning research from Colombia contributes to its invisibility.

To make the teaching and learning research easily searchable, there is a need for academics engaged in teaching and learning research in Colombia to agree on and use common terms in the dissemination of their work. Leadership from Colciencias, the national research agency, would assist with the achievement of this vision. The meta-language of teaching and learning research would also benefit from being used at the institutional level through staff professional development, and through teaching and learning centres. Additionally, journals also have a role to play in reinforcing the use of common, searchable terms that would contribute to the visibility of teaching and learning research taking place in Colombia.

While this study shows evidence of teaching and learning research taking place in Colombia, a concern arising from this study is the predominance of educational themes in the research that draw from the global North and an absence of themes and research approaches that draw from the richness and diversity, as well as the challenges, facing higher education in Colombia. Contextual factors such as the more than 50 years of internal violence experienced in Colombia, the current peace process, the

high levels of social and economic inequity, and immigration due to instability in neighbouring Venezuela, have major ramifications on education in Colombia. Yet these are not evident in the framing of teaching and learning approaches in the literature. This speaks to what Montoya Vargas (2016) refers to as the intellectual dependency of Colombia on the North and a tendency to seek intellectual authority from outside of the country. This stems from the historical context of Colombia, when colonisation by the Spanish saw the country ruled by “a small elite of white origin suffering from the complex of being European-born and living outside of Europe, and transmitting this complex through education” (Montoya Vargas 2016:2). The intellectual authority of the global North remains.

The continued dominance of knowledge from the global North has been conceptualised as the geopolitics of research and of knowledge construction, whereby knowledge generated in peripheral countries such as Colombia is devalued (de Sousa Santos 2014; Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017). Guzmán-Valenzuela’s (2017:4) research found that “most of the academic productivity in the area [Latin America] draws on theories produced in the North and lacks a geopolitical perspective”. This is a view also supported by the findings of this study.

The intellectual dominance of the North in teaching and learning research is reinforced by the North-facing publication standards for Colombian journals established by Colciencias. This development was foreshadowed by Fischman *et al.* (2010:15), who predicted that the trend to meet international publication standards had “the potential to undermine the national and regional relevance of the Latin American publications by transforming them into ‘generic’ or ‘colonised’ journals”. The colonisation of Colombian research evident in this study is reflected in a body of SOTL literature that “does not take into consideration the complexity and richness of teaching and learning in specific contexts” (Guzmán-Valenzuela 2017:5). That is, there is little that situates the vast majority of the teaching and learning research reviewed in this study in the political, economic or social context in which it has taken place. This renders silent the specific and localised challenges that face higher education teaching in Colombia.

The literature clearly indicates that measures are needed to promote and support research that makes visible the diverse contexts and localised challenges in the Colombian educational landscape. McFarlane (2006) holds out hope that this can occur, that a more equitable and nuanced exchange of knowledge can take place between nations where power differentials exist. However, he also identifies the likelihood of this happening as a “challenge [that] requires a consistent interrogation of the epistemic and institutional basis and implications of the North-South divide, and an insistence on developing progressive conceptions of learning” (McFarlane 2006:1413).

One particular challenge requiring interrogation is the linguistic colonisation of research from Colombia. While the majority of articles included in this study were in English, the number of book chapters published in Spanish and the number of Colombian Spanish-language journals indexed with Colciencias, suggest some push-back to English as ‘the’ global language. It appears that Spanish is seen by many academics as a legitimate language for academic research dissemination even though there is pressure to publish in high-status English-language journals in order to enhance their international profile and career prospects. A further challenge requiring attention is the absence of the indigenous languages and knowledges of Colombia within the SOTL research space.

Challenging the intellectual authority of the North requires a shift in perception by the academy about the value of local knowledge, the value of knowledge from peripheral nations and the “the creative possibility of learning between different contexts” (McFarlane 2006:1413). A critical approach to research using a framework such as the Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education (CCPEE) perspective (Robertson & Dale 2015) may be one way in which to guide a recentring of local knowledges. A CCPEE perspective focuses attention on the cultural, political and economic structures that impact on education in different contexts, and in doing so, encourages researchers to ask different types of questions about educational practice.

In particular, a CCPEE approach guides critical questioning about four educational ‘moments’: the nature and context of educational practice; the impact of educational politics and the nexus between politics and practice; the broad political context and the social project of education (such as the relationship between education and neo-liberalism); and finally, the outcomes and consequences of the educational process. The purpose of these moments is to stimulate critical questioning about teaching practice from different angles that may not seem evident at first glance and to interrogate educational norms and their unwitting reproduction. In sum, a CCPEE perspective may offer researchers a framework that stimulates richer, more nuanced and context-based understandings of teaching and learning processes.

6. Conclusion

This paper outlined the conduct and findings of a literature review that set out to examine the extent and nature of teaching and learning research in Colombia. The study found that there is much greater SOTL activity in higher education taking place in Colombia than suggested by previous research. However, much of this literature is difficult to locate due to the broadness of the field of pedagogical research and the lack of common and consistent terms used in Colombia to describe and flag it as teaching and learning research. Additionally, the literature reviewed indicates that SOTL activity is concentrated in the hands of academics affiliated with only a small number of Colombia’s universities. The study identified that teaching and learning research from Colombia is distributed across a range of academic disciplines, with a predominance coming from the field of English language teaching. The greatest concern regarding the nature of research was the focus on themes, pedagogies and research approaches from the global North to the virtual exclusion of local pedagogies and methodologies, reflecting an intellectual dependency on the North.

This paper concludes with recommendations for enhancing the visibility of SOTL that is taking place in Colombia and shifting the focus of pedagogical research to encompass the richness and diversity of the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic composition of Colombia, as well as its unique geopolitical context. Critical approaches to research such as the Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education (CCPEE) perspective are proposed as a means of tackling this challenge.

References

In Spanish-speaking countries it is usual for people to have two-part surnames. The formatting of these names shown in the reference list respects the manner used by the author in the literature. This includes some surnames shown as two names with a space between, others shown as hyphenated surnames. In some cases, authors have chosen to use only one of their two surnames.

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