Background, Research Design and Procedures of the Literature Review

ABOUT the CHAPTER

A systematic review of the relevant literature on the topic of interculturality in language education is an important component of the EUREDIE Project. Its fundamental aim is to map and outline the theoretical, conceptual and methodological aspects of the field of interculturality with a particular focus on its intersections with the field of language education. Concurrently, it is expected to provide Early Career Researchers (ECRs) who work on the subject of interculturality in the field of linguistics, communication and literature with a state-of-the-art of the research field and to support them in their engagement with interculturality-sensitive research. This chapter will present the process in its entirety, stating its rationale and significance, describing the construction of the corpus and methodological approach and procedures in detail and with reference to the aims of the project.

Keywords: literature review, interculturality, language education, early career researcher, methodology.

Introduction

The EUREDIE project has produced three major results, the first of which is the tripartite report on the field of interculturality in language education, that is embodied in the present book. The other two include the development and implementation of a problem/task-based online study program through a six-week three-module online intensive summer school for a select group of early-career researchers (ECRs) involved in language education and a digital platform for researcher e-learning & networking offering a massive open online self-directed e-learning course centered around the issues of interculturality, inclusion, diversity and language education for the ECRs involved in the related fields.

Result 1 of EUREDIE includes three main components: review of the literature, a study on ECRs' perception of interculturality in language education, and an analysis of the research-related needs of ECRs. As part of the first result, this chapter focuses on the methodology of the literature review while the results are mainly addressed in chapters 3 and 4. What follows is a discussion of the rationale and significance of the study and then a detailed description of the processes and procedures of the methodology employed in the literature review.

The Rationale and Significance of the Study

The rationale behind this literature review lies in the contemporary plurality of theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives within the interculturality-language education nexus. The long-held essentialist approaches to culture and interculturality have been significantly challenged in the last three decades, and brought about a diversity and plethora of theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives to the field (see also Chapter 1). This was also accompanied with the explosion in the amount of research and knowledge available in general. It should also be noted that, due to the rapidly changing cultural dynamics in the world and the developments in the field of information and communication technologies, the relationship between culture and communication are also changing, which have a major impact on language and interculturality research and lead to drastic developments. In this context, a systematic review of this particular field was viewed to be necessary to outline the major lines of thinking and researching.

It is needless to say that it is possible to locate a number of studies that have already carried out systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses of the studies in the literature. One of the oldest ones is the "Meta-Analysis of Intercultural Communication Competence Research" by Bradford, Allen and Beisser in 2000, which explored the association between past studies on intercultural communication effectiveness and intercultural communication competence, and examined the relationship between knowledge-based

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and skill-based attributes in predicting intercultural communication competence within a corpus of 16 quantitative studies. One of the latest ones is a qualitative meta-analysis of intercultural research, with a major focus on computer-mediated, synchronic, oral interactions between language learners from different countries from the perspective of intercultural communicative competences (Clavel-Arroitia & Pennock-Speck, 2023). Another study includes a meta-analysis of the relationship between study abroad and intercultural competence, in which 72 studies that included a pre-test and post-test measure of intercultural competence in a study abroad program were reviewed (Burrow, 2019). In a similar vein, Shadiev and Sintawati (2020) reviewed twenty-five articles on intercultural learning supported by technology published between 2014 and 2019. Elias and Mansouri (2020) also reported the findings of a systematic review of studies on interculturalism and intercultural dialogue which included a corpus of 351 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters published over the period 2000–2017.

Even a cursory scan of these reviews of the literature would yet demonstrate that each of them is understandably limited in different ways, ranging from the type of studies reviewed and a focus on a particular aspect of the topic in question to scope and time span, which makes the present literature review highly timely and necessary. Against this backdrop, the literature review here has been carried out with the main purpose of mapping and outlining the theoretical, conceptual and methodological landscape in the field of interculturality with a particular focus on its intersections with the field of language education in the last decade, which in turn would inform the other two results of the project- online study program and the digital platform for researcher e-learning & networking. Specifically, the research question addressed in the review is as follows: What are the major theoretical, conceptual and methodological themes and trends in the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with the field of language education from 2012 to 2022?

Methodological Framework

Approach

The approach to literature review adopted in this study can be broadly defined as systematic and descriptive. Systematic reviews refer to a method of making sense of large bodies of information, mapping out areas of certainty/uncertainty, identifying where little or no relevant research has been done and where new studies are needed, and providing different perspectives on

questions addressed (Howell Major, & Savin-Baden, 2012; Petticrew & Roberts, 2006) Systematic reviews follow well-defined and transparent steps, requiring the components of the definition of the question or problem, identification and critical appraisal of the available evidence, synthesis of the findings and the drawing of relevant conclusions (Boland, et al., 2017).

Our approach was systematic in that it aimed to include all findable articles that were written about the topic in question as much as possible, unlike other types of literature reviews which tend to use literature selectively. It also included the above-mentioned components throughout. Furthermore, in line with the research question of the review, no "hierarchies of evidence" or "typologies of evidence", which would require a selection of particular types of studies and/or particular study designs, were applied (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006: 58-60).

In this respect, as can be seen in Diagram 1 above, following the clarification of the research/review question, the review's inclusion criteria were set, the corpus of the review was constructed by locating and archiving the included studies, and finally a four-stage review and analysis procedure was carried out, including (i) creation of the descriptive reviews for each study, (ii) initial inductive coding, (iii) identification of recurring themes and trends on a yearly basis, and lastly (iv) narrative synthesis of the findings together with descriptive mapping of the trends and themes. Throughout these stages, the data was tabulated and analyzed in numerous ways to be able to identify cross-cutting themes and explore points of convergence and divergence across the data.

Corpus

The method of our research commenced with the construction of a corpus, a collection of the literature in the field under study. The first phase in the creation of the corpus of the relevant literature included the specification of the criteria for their selection and inclusion in the corpus. To do so, first a search span was selected from 2012 to 2022 - albeit until summer of 2022, when the collection was started, to be able to gear the focus towards the state-of-the-art of the field This was followed by the identification of the key words to ensure the relevance of the texts in our corpus. The list of the key words included interculturality, transculturality, intercultural/transcultural communication/competence/awareness, accompanied by another set of key words containing primarily language education/teaching/learning, as can be seen in Figure 1 below:

Diagram 1
The Process of the Literature Review

Formulation of Research/Review Question → Identification of Inclusion Criteria → Creation of the Corpus → Review and Analysis
- Creation of Descriptive Reviews for Each Study
- Initial Inductive Coding
- Identification of Recurring Themes and Trends on a Yearly Basis
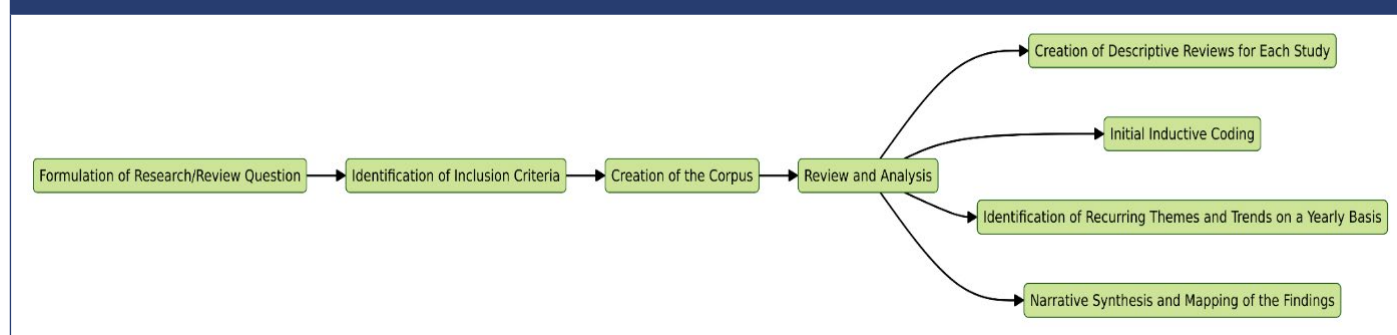- Narrative Synthesis and Mapping of the Findings

Figure 1
Keywords

The initial search utilizing these key words within the selected time span yielded a great number of papers and manuscripts, which was impossible to review and analyze. Therefore, we had to include further criteria to narrow it down with a focus on the publication/text type and the database and indexes, as can be seen in the following table (Table 1). A note of caution is in order, though. Any selection and/or inclusion process inherently involves excluding others, and, despite its necessity in order to draw the boundaries of the scope of the work, this may create potential gaps. In this regard, the present literature review had to leave out, for instance, the conference proceedings, non-indexed papers and dissertations that might provide valuable perspectives, insights and ideas. Furthermore, some very influential scholars in the field of intercultural communication, whose works mostly laid the groundwork for the studies within the interculturality-language education nexus, have also been excluded from this corpus.

The initial corpus included a total of 333 articles, 45 books and 15 book chapters. Yet, in the following phases, some works were excluded from the corpus due to the accessibility and/or relevance issues. As such, the final corpus consisted of a total of 315 articles, 37 books and 10 book chapters. Then, a table was created featuring the title, author(s), publication year, source of the publication, type of the publication, the database and the index of each work, the list of which was then further categorized according to its year and type of publication. This was followed by the creation of an archive including all the studies to be reviewed and analyzed.

The *first phase* of the analysis process included the readings of the selected corpus, with the purpose of creating a descriptive review for each item in the corpus, rather than relying on the abstracts in accordance with the aims of the literature review. A review template was created with a focus on four broad themes of: theoretical and conceptual framework/orientation, research question(s) and methodology, findings and/or new perspectives/insights, and the overall conclusion together with suggestions for further research. A sample review is presented in Figure 2 below for illustrative purposes.

Once the reading and review process was completed by the participants of each team of the project, in the *second phase*, the initial coding was implemented in order to identify the recurring topics and themes that emerge from the corpus, which yielded the following list. The initial coding was inductive in nature in that it included all diverse and/or alternating recurring elements appearing in the corpus.

- Intercultural Competence
- Intercultural Communicative Competence
- Critical Intercultural Awareness
- Cultural Representation
- Role of Culture in Foreign Language Teaching
- Otherness
- Identity
- English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
- English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
- Study Abroad
- Internationalization of Higher Education
- Citizenship Education
- Technology

These topics and themes were then sorted into three main categories and their subcategories, as can be seen in Table 2 below. This categorization provided an overview of the topics that occurred most frequently in relation to interculturality in language education research in the years between 2012 and 2022. This was followed by the tabulation of the corpus items according to these categories.

Following the initial coding, the data set was analyzed in more

Review and Analysis Procedures

Table 1
Inclusion Criteria for the Construction of the Corpus

Key Words	Time Span	Publication Type	Databases	Indexes
interculturality, transculturality, intercultural/ transcultural communication/ competence/ awareness accompanied by language education/teaching/ learning (not only English but also other languages	2012-2022	Book-length manuscripts, book chapters, handbooks, encyclopedia entries, and articles (i.e. Research articles, theoretical articles, review articles)	SCOPUS, Jstor, Google Scholar, ProQuest, EBSCO, ERIC, Web of Science, DOAJ, Open DOAR	Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), SSCI-Expanded and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)

Figure 2
A Sample Descriptive Review

Item Number (according to the final list)	323
Title of the article / book	Creating a virtual "third space" in a telecollaborative project to promote English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' language proficiency and intercultural awareness
Publication year	2022
Author(s)	Hui-Chin Yeh & Leechin Heng
Theory / Concept / Problem addressed	Telecollaborations afford language learners opportunities to interact with people from different countries around the world, targeting their communicative and intercultural adaptability, but research that focus on telecollaboration has mostly lent itself to the study of knowledge acquisition with particular emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills and learning Standard English. There is a need to expand that focus in order to create a telecollaborative virtual "third space" (Bhabha, 2017) as a meeting point of different cultures for language learners to not only improve language proficiency covering all language skills but also establish intercultural awareness. This study addresses this need in the Taiwanese setting.
Aims and objectives	The study examines how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' language proficiency and intercultural awareness, and the insights learners have gained from telecollaboration.
Methodology, e.g., research design, tools, participants, etc.	Participants: A total of 32 third-year university students from a university in Taiwan enrolled in a required EFL course and 23 and 9 first/second-year CAL university students from Australia and New Zealand respectively enrolled in Chinese major courses, took part in the study. The students were divided into 23 transnational pairs, with one from either Australia or New Zealand teaming up with a student from Taiwan. Procedures: In the five-week collaborative interchange, entitled WOWME, students in their respective groups were required to collaborate on a bilingual digital media production such as podcast, video, or e-brochure to be shared through Google drive. Data: Data were gathered from online interchanges, reflective essays, responses to open-ended questions that were included in E-Portfolios and which served as a summative assessment to evaluate the learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the course, and digital media output produced by participants in Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand. Data Analysis: As the study aimed to investigate the effects of creating a "third space" for Taiwanese students to engage in language exchange and intercultural learning opportunities, only their responses to the summative evaluation questions in their E-portfolios and their reflective essays were analyzed qualitatively through content analysis (Patton, 2014).
Findings	To answer the first research question of how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' language proficiency, the summative assessments in the Taiwanese learners' E-portfolios reveal that corresponding with their native English-speaking teammates in the third space enabled them to develop confidence in English communication and "practice English in a natural manner", codeswitching at times, which would be unacceptable in the classroom setting, and focusing exclusively on the intent of communication (6).
	To answer the second research question of how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' intercultural awareness, data suggest that telecollaboration encouraged English learners to inquire about their teammates' cultures, allowing them to challenge their initial assumptions and encouraging them to learn about different cultures. To answer the third research question regarding the insights learners have gained from telecollaboration, data show that differences in time zones and problems related to vocabulary use were challenging for the Taiwanese learners.
Conclusion (For theoretical papers) new perspectives, re-definitions, new challenges, etc.	The results of this study confirm that telecollaboration activities provide valuable opportunities to interact with people from different linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds, who at first seem "different" from themselves mostly based on the understanding of culture that is bound to national identity. Through participating in the "third space", learners were able to discover similar cultural norms and practices despite the differences in their nationalities. Moreover, as EFL and CFL learners interacted and gained intercultural experiences on an equal basis and were introduced to each other's sociocultural norms and practices, the deeply held notion of Western cultural imperialism underlying internationalization was countered. Overall, the study validates that telecollaboration activities suitable serve the goal of language learning which is to be able to use it to achieve one's communication purposes in real life settings. Thus, it extends knowledge transmission that is traditionally limited to the classroom instruction and use of coursebooks. Despite the time differences and preferred communicative styles infused with different accents, participants learnt to become more flexible and autonomous as they developed strategies to overcome challenges in communication.
Suggested further research	Firstly, future studies might investigate how similar projects conducted over a longer period of time might impact learners' learning outcomes and experiences. Secondly, their scope might be expanded to include foreign language learners in a variety of other countries and at different ages. Lastly, considering that technological development is an ongoing process, future studies may be focused on different modes and designs of telecollaborative spaces using advanced communicative tools for learners to come together from diverse backgrounds to engage in intercultural exchanges, of academic, scientific or recreational nature.

Table 2
Categories of the Emergent Topics in the Corpus

Conceptual issues	Cultural essentialization
	Culture as an evolving concept
	Communities of practice
	Intercultural understanding
	Intercultural communication
	Identity
	Cultural awareness
	Critical language awareness
Pedagogical issues	Intercultural education
	Intercultural language teaching
	Affordable methodologies
	Teacher education
Technological developments	Online communication
	Digital tools

depth in *the third phase* which yielded categories to allow more insight into the data and to map out the recurring themes and trends on a yearly basis, helping track down the changes and developments in the field of interculturality in language education. During this phase, each descriptive review was treated as a unit of analysis and coded with reference to models/theories addressed and/or adopted, schools of thought/paradigms, data collection and analysis procedures employed in methodology, key ideas and perspectives, simultaneously or sequentially, and then tabulated in the form of tables according to these codes. The following figures (Figure 3 and Figure 4) illustrate two types of tabulation of the studies in the years 2018 and 2019 respectively. The tabulated studies were then sorted into a chronological list and organized into two major periods, 2012-2016 (n= 184 articles, 13 books, and 7 chapters) and 2017-2022 (n= 131 articles, 24 books and 3 chapters), to be able to track down the evolution and/or stability in the identified areas.

Figure 3
A Sample Tabulation and Coding-1

Key Categories of Analysis (Year 2018)	Book 14	Chapter 11	Article No 195	Article No 196	Article No 197	Article No 198	Article No 199
Major models/theories	a different approach to the theoretical rational and methodological designs typically used to investigate cultural understanding in reading, in particular foreign language reading models, and approaches, which have emerged from „dialogic relationships between theory and practice, between teaching and learning, and between teacher and student".	Transcultural strategies for teaching English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP)writing, research design, and resistance to epistemic erasure	Interculturality, which has become very important to research on education over the past few decades, refers to interaction between representatives of different cultures rather than just learning about other cultures.	community-based service-learning for promoting interculturality	intercultural education is to attain a developing and sustainable way of living together in multicultural societies through the development of respect and dialogue between different cultural groups (UNESCO, 2006), and intersubjectivity refers to the ability to adopt the perspective of others which is different from one's own.	classroom is seen as a privileged space where GCE can be promoted as it has the potential to foster "intercultural communication among citizens in multicultural societies and in a global world"	(CLIL), has the development of interculturalism included in its theoretical background. This is in line with initiatives that are based on the internationalization of education, 21st century educational goals, and educational policies at supra-national levels (Knight, 2003), that promote intercultural education (IE) and incorporation of its principles in the curriculum.
Prominent authors (recurringly cited)		Pennycook (1997) Dewey's Corcoran and Englander (2016)	(Abdallah-Pretceille 2013; Holliday 2010).(Bauman and Raud 2015, pp. 9–10(Passarelli and Kolb 2012, p. 139).	(Byram, 1997) (Kramsch, 1998, p. 81)(Gorski, 2008; Porto & Byram, 2015), (Smolcic & Katurnich, 2017) (Dervin & Machart, 2015).	(Rommetveit, 1985)	(Evans, 2016) (Guilherme, 2002, p. 166).(Jordão & Fogaça, 2008; Nakamura, 2002; Porto, 2014; Tarasheva, 2008).	(Méndez-García, 2013; Sudhoff, 2010).Byram's (1997) Bouchard's (2010) and Pasquale's (2015)Portera, 2008
Key ideas/concepts/terms	pedagogical approach to reading an alternative approach to reading literary texts for intercultural understanding.The various intercultural competencies required for intercultural communication; Integrated approaches to language and culture learning; The role of reflection, critical thinking, and destabilization in intercultural learning; values, beliefs, and stereotypes cultural differences	Transcultural strategies for teaching ERPP writing, research design, and resistance to epistemic erasure	Experiential learning and interculturality in teacher education process, fluidity and diversities,diverse diversities;	mediate intercultural (with others) and intracultural (with self) encounters in diverse classrooms global citizens, intercultural and mediation skills self-awareness, empathy, humility and change.	intercultural education and intersubjectivity intersubjectivity can be defined as an agreement between interlocutors entering a dialogue with different views immigrants multicultural education acceptance of diversity	"citizens of the world" diversity, equity and citizenship.	Content and Language Integrated Learning intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Figure 3
A Sample Tabulation and Coding-1

	TOPICS	CONCEPTS/MODELS	CONTEXTS	PARTICIPANTS	RESEARCH DESIGN	DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	DATA ANALYSIS
C14	Intercultural Competence	Deardoff's Model of IC	Higher education	Chinese learners of Italian	Mixed Methods	Survey, Reflections & Obersvations	Descriptive analysis & thematic analysis
B18	Glocal Languages & Critical Intercultural Awareness	Guilherme's Glocademics model & Byram's model of CIA	Higher education in Brazil with a focus on Portuguese, Spanish, English and Indigenous languages as glocal languages	N/A	N/A	Review of teaching & research projects, curricular analysis, theoretical analysis, discourse analysis, review of research and state-of-the-art	N/A
B19	Intercultural Competence	It links the existing literature to practical skills by converting models and cultural knowledge into practical skills with a focus on the concept of culture, cultural identity, cultural models and theories, intercultural communication and cultural conflicts,					
A239	Intercultural Citizenship		Study abroad: EMI in international higher education in UK	Postgraduate Chinese students	Mixed Methods	Questionnaire, Interviews & Focus groups	Descriptive analysis & thematic analysis
A240	ELF users/speakers in the context of Multilingualism & Transnationalism	Jenkins' ELF theory	Gymanisum in Berlin	five German-Turkish high school students	Qualitative: linguistic ethnographic study	semi-structured interview	local, translocal, and transnational scales as an analytical tool
A241	Plurilingualism and Translanguaging Practices		High school in Colombia	1 EFL teacher	Case study: classroom experience informed by a social-justice approach to teaching English	Not specified	Not specified
A242	Transcultural Approach to ELT	Byram	Internationalisation at Home (IAH)- secondary school- Spain & Poland	ninety-five learners of English who stayed in touch throughout the project through Computer-Mediated Communication	Mixed Methods	Semantic Differential Test (SDT), writing tasks	Thematic analysis & SPSS
A243	Intercultural Bilingual Education		Higher education in Colombia	two groups of teachers, five from a BA program in Bilingual Education from a private university in Bogota, and four from an indigenous school located on a reservation in Puerto Gaitan, Meta (Colombia)	Qualitative	focal groups, semi-structured interviews, and videos.	Taylor and Bogdan (1990): discover, codify, and revitalize.
A244	Intercultural Education & child language brokering (CLB)		Primary education in Spain: multicultural classes including immigrant students	30 teachers	Qualitative	Surveys and semi-structured interviews	Not specified

In the *fourth* and final *phase*, drawing on the results of the first two, the descriptive reviews, and when necessary, the original studies, were read thoroughly or selectively once again for narrative synthesis of the findings of the analysis. The aim was to identify the interpretable trends or draw overall conclusions about the existing conceptualizations, methods and findings, which then resulted in the descriptive mapping of the field along these lines. The trends in these areas were coded according to the scheme of key theories and concepts, research methodologies and emergent perspectives and insights. In doing so, a representation of the state-of-the-art within the interculturality-language education nexus from 2012 to 2022 was achieved. The results of the analysis and synthesis across the two periods are presented in the next section.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to describe methodology utilized for conducting a literature review in the field of interculturality in language education. The approach is meticulously designed to construct a comprehensive corpus, with clear inclusion criteria and a structured four-stage analysis process to ensure a thorough

examination of the literature from 2012 to 2022. It has emphasized the importance of systematicity and depth in reviewing literature to understand the evolving landscapes of theoretical, conceptual, and methodological trends in interculturality within language education.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

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