Learning skills in english using the RTI method

Competencias de aprendizaje en inglés desde el método RTI

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this literature review article is to analyse the identity of teachers and its impact on English language teaching. Through a systematic review of 25 research studies published between 2009 and 2024, four fundamental dimensions are examined: the processes of identity construction, the contextual factors that shape it, the intercultural perspectives inherent to language teaching, and its impact on educational practice. Teaching identity emerges from the interaction between personal experiences, academic training and institutional contexts, manifesting itself in concrete pedagogical decisions that determine the quality of the training processes. It is evident that teachers with consolidated professional identities implement more coherent, adaptive and innovative practices. The identity of the teacher has a decisive impact on the teaching of English by configuring essential curricular components: methodological approaches, curricular adaptations, scaffolding strategies, selection of teaching resources, assessment practices, intercultural mediations and learning environments.

Descriptors: relevance of education; curriculum evaluation; curriculum research; language teaching. (Source: UNESCO Thesaurus).

RESUMEN

Este artículo de revisión documental tiene por objetivo analizar la identidad del docente y su impacto en la enseñanza del inglés. Mediante una revisión sistemática de 25 investigaciones publicadas entre 2009-2024, se examinan cuatro dimensiones fundamentales: los procesos de construcción identitaria, los factores contextuales que la configuran, las perspectivas interculturales inherentes a la enseñanza de lenguas, y su impacto en la práctica educativa. La identidad docente emerge de la interacción entre experiencias personales, formación académica y contextos institucionales, manifestándose en decisiones pedagógicas concretas que determinan la calidad de los procesos formativos. Se evidencia que docentes con identidades profesionales consolidadas implementan prácticas más coherentes, adaptativas e innovadoras. La identidad del docente impacta decisivamente en la enseñanza del inglés al configurar componentes curriculares esenciales: enfoques metodológicos, adaptaciones curriculares, estrategias de andamiaje, selección de recursos didácticos, prácticas evaluativas, mediaciones interculturales y ambientes de aprendizaje.

Descriptores: pertinencia de la educación; evaluación del currículo; investigación sobre el currículo; enseñanza de idiomas. (Fuente: Tesauro UNESCO).

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of English as a foreign language is a pedagogical challenge of growing relevance in the contemporary global educational context. Therefore, the effective development of this language demands the construction of diverse competences that transcend mere linguistic appropriation, encompassing communicative, cognitive, sociocultural and metacognitive dimensions. In this pedagogical scenario, the Response to Intervention (RTI) model emerges as a promising didactic paradigm for structuring and enhancing the mediation of these competences in a systematic and differentiated way.

The RTI model, originally conceived as a system for the early detection of and support for learners with learning difficulties, has evolved into a comprehensive framework for educational transformation. As Jiménez (2010) argues, this model constitutes a promising pedagogical alternative that transcends its initial diagnostic function to become a comprehensive system of educational scaffolding. Its multilevel architecture allows it to address the diversity of trajectories present in the classroom, offering a continuum of pedagogical mediations that are intensified according to the specific needs of each learning trajectory.

The didactic transposition of the RTI model to the specific field of English teaching and learning has gained significant relevance in recent educational praxis; in this sense, Brown & Sanford (2011), base the importance of implementing instruments of authentic evaluation and formative monitoring of progress to enhance the learning achievements of English students, this pedagogical perspective emphasises the need to develop systematic diagnostic and formative assessment processes that make it possible to accurately identify the specific needs of each student and design teaching sequences tailored to those needs.

In the Latin American context, the implementation of the RTI model for the development of communicative competence in English takes on particular pedagogical nuances, in this context, Illescas & Pacheco (2023) analyse specific teaching strategies to mediate communicative competences in English learning in Ecuadorian infants, highlighting the importance of contextualising pedagogical interventions according to the sociocultural and linguistic characteristics of the educational environment, this curricular contextualisation is essential to guarantee the relevance and significance of educational practices.

The digital dimension is an increasingly relevant mediating component in the construction of competences for learning English; therefore, Zamora (2020) examines the digital competence of university students for learning English in contexts of remote education, highlighting how technological skills have become essential mediators of the process of linguistic construction. this perspective is particularly relevant in the framework of the RTI model, where virtual learning environments can significantly enhance differentiated interventions at different levels of pedagogical mediation.

Therefore, addressing specific educational needs in the context of English acquisition represents another crucial aspect in pedagogical praxis, therefore, Kovaleski et al. (2022) delve deeper into the RTI approach for the assessment of learning difficulties, providing a conceptual and methodological framework that allows for the differentiation between the difficulties inherent to the process of second language acquisition and those that require specific pedagogical mediations. This differentiation is fundamental to avoid both the pathologisation and the invisibilisation of educational needs in the teaching-learning process.

Therefore, the aim of this review article is to analyse English learning skills from the RTI method.

METHOD

This research is based on a qualitative paradigm with a descriptive-documentary design, aimed at the comprehensive analysis of the educational phenomenon through the systematic review of literature. The choice of this approach responds to the nature of the object of study, allowing the construction of an interpretative framework on learning competences in English from the RTI method based on the critical analysis of scientific productions in this field.

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The corpus analysed comprises 26 academic publications, selected according to criteria of scientific relevance and thematic pertinence, the typological distribution includes:

a) 17 scientific articles in indexed journals.

b) 04 peer-reviewed monographic works.

c) 03 doctoral theses.

d) 02 book chapters.

The time frame of the corpus covers the period from 2005 to 2024, with a predominance of publications from the last five years, guaranteeing the relevance of the theoretical and methodological references. The geographical diversity of the sources includes North American, European and Latin American productions, allowing a contextualised approach to the object of study from various academic traditions. The analysis of the documentary corpus was carried out using a systematic procedure structured in five phases:

1. Heuristic phase: Identification and localisation of potentially relevant sources through systematic searches in specialised databases (ERIC, Scopus, Web of Science, Scielo, Redalyc), using specific descriptors and Boolean operators.

2. Selective phase: Application of inclusion/exclusion criteria to shape the final corpus, by reviewing paratextual elements (titles, abstracts, keywords) and assessing their relevance.

3. Analytical phase: Reflective reading of the selected documents, applying content analysis techniques to identify units of meaning, conceptual patterns and theoretical relationships.

4. Taxonomic phase: Categorisation of the information using a system of conceptual categories and subcategories, establishing hierarchical and transversal relationships between the elements identified.

5. Hermeneutic phase: Construction of an integrative interpretative framework that synthesises the various perspectives analysed and proposes new understandings of the object of study.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The analysis of the literature on the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model in the context of English language learning highlights important pedagogical considerations for the systematic development of specific language skills, particularly in students who face additional challenges in their language acquisition process.

Development of communicative skills through differentiated levels of intervention

The RTI model, with its pedagogical architecture of tiered interventions, constitutes an ideal didactic scaffolding for the progressive construction of communicative competences in English. In this order, Albers & Martínez (2015) explain how this multilevel structure allows for authentic pedagogical differentiation, adapting teaching mediation to the zones of proximal development of each student. In this way, the levels of the RTI model are presented:

a) At Level 1 (universal instruction), all students participate in high-quality learning experiences that integrate the four macro-linguistic skills (listening comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension and written expression) through communicative and functional methodologies.

b) At Level 2 (focussed intervention), learners who show gaps in their progress receive specific scaffolding in small learning communities, with greater instructional intensity and formative feedback.

c) Level 3 (intensive intervention) provides highly personalised mediation with greater frequency, duration and precision for students with more complex needs.

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This pedagogical gradation is particularly powerful for developing communicative competences in contexts of linguistic diversity, as demonstrated by the studies of Arriaza & Rodas de Ruiz (2015) with minority language groups, in that the flexibility of the model allows for attending to the needs of both discursive fluency and emergent literacy, adapting to the different psycholinguistic profiles of the learners.

Language competences and continuous formative assessment

A fundamental pillar of the RTI method is systematic formative assessment, an element that significantly enhances the construction of specific linguistic competences, as Healy et al. (2005) show how this pedagogical monitoring makes it possible to identify precisely which linguistic components (phonological awareness, lexical repertoire, morphosyntactic structures) require greater mediation in each learning trajectory.

Research by Arias-Gundín & García Llamazares (2021) on the effectiveness of the RTI model in addressing learning difficulties in reading shows that this approach allows the development of specific language skills through targeted teaching interventions. For English learners, this means being able to accurately address aspects such as phonemic discrimination, lexical breadth or inferential comprehension, which are essential components of comprehensive communicative competence. In this respect, authentic and contextualised assessment within the RTI model transcends the traditional view of summative assessment, becoming a continuous process that informs pedagogical decision-making and allows for the adjustment of teaching sequences according to the emerging needs of learners.

Metacognitive competences and self-regulation of learning

The RTI method, by incorporating cycles of assessment-intervention-reevaluation and systematic feedback, fosters the development of metacognitive skills crucial for second language acquisition. As de-Haan's (2021) work with adolescent readers shows, this approach promotes self-regulation and metacognitive awareness of the process of building linguistic knowledge. For English learners, these metacognitive competences constitute a valuable cognitive framework, as they enable them to develop self-monitoring processes, set contextualised learning goals and select effective cognitive and socio-affective strategies for their linguistic progression.

In addition, the study by Castillo (2022) on the autonomous development of communicative skills in English reinforces this conceptualisation, highlighting how autonomy enhances meaningful language acquisition through self-regulation processes. On the other hand, teacher mediation within the RTI model should be explicitly aimed at developing these metacognitive skills, progressively moving from intensive scaffolding towards self-management of learning, thus fostering the construction of strategic and autonomous learners.

Digital competences as mediators of language learning

Recent pedagogical literature shows a growing integration between digital literacy and English acquisition within the RTI framework. In view of this, Ramírez et al. (2020) explain how virtual learning environments can enhance differentiated interventions at different levels of the RTI model, offering adaptive learning experiences according to the specific needs of each educational pathway.

On the other hand, Parra-Diettes (2022) demonstrates that the creation of virtual learning objects within an RTI framework allows for the simultaneous development of linguistic and technological competences through multimodal mediation processes. This integration is particularly relevant in the contemporary educational context, where digital competences constitute both a means for learning and an end in itself, preparing learners for authentic communicative interactions in globalised digital environments. Likewise, the incorporation of technological tools in the RTI model must transcend instrumental use to become true cognitive mediators that enhance the development of communicative competences through situated and meaningful learning experiences.

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Intercultural competences in pedagogical mediation

A fundamental aspect of second language teaching is the development of intercultural competences within the RTI model. The work of Choi et al. (2012) and Thorius & Sullivan (2013) supports the importance of incorporating the sociocultural dimension into pedagogical interventions for students of English as a second language. Therefore, the RTI model, when implemented with cultural relevance, can promote not only linguistic but also intercultural competences, preparing students for effective communicative interactions in multicultural contexts. this is particularly relevant in diverse educational environments, where the recognition and appreciation of different cultural repertoires enriches the process of constructing meanings in the target language, with the mediation of teachers being important. Teachers must explicitly incorporate elements of intercultural awareness, sociocultural pragmatics and contextualised discursive competence, transcending the merely linguistic approach to address the sociocultural dimension inherent in any communicative process.

Socio-educational contextualisation of linguistic competences

Research by Rodríguez-Garcés (2015) on the influence of the socio-educational context on the development of communicative competences in English indicates the need to contextualise the curriculum and pedagogical practices according to the specific realities of each educational community. In this context, the RTI model offers the necessary flexibility for this contextualisation, allowing the teaching sequences to be adjusted according to the sociocultural particularities and the emerging needs of each context. In Latin American environments, as Auquilla & Fernández (2017) show in their study with rural Ecuadorian students, priority skills can vary significantly according to the communicative demands of the context. Therefore, the RTI method allows for the identification and development of those skills that are most relevant to each socio-educational reality, thus maximising the relevance and significance of English learning. this contextualisation involves a process of didactic transposition that adapts both the content and the methodologies to the specific characteristics of each educational community, recognising the diversity of trajectories, cultural capital and communicative needs.

Articulation of competences for diverse educational needs

A significant strength of the RTI method is its ability to articulate the development of language skills with attention to diversity in the classroom, as Maki et al. (2020), Suárez-Rodríguez et al. (2022) explain how this model makes it possible to differentiate between difficulties inherent in the process of acquiring a second language and specific educational needs. This pedagogical differentiation is crucial for the effective development of competences, avoiding both the pathologisation of normal language acquisition processes and the invisibility of specific educational needs. For students who learn English and have diverse educational needs, the RTI model offers a framework that allows both dimensions to be addressed in an integrated manner through processes of curricular and methodological differentiation, insofar as teaching mediation must be based on a precise pedagogical diagnosis that allows the nature of the difficulties to be identified and specific interventions to be designed that respond to the particular needs of each student, recognising the complexity of the language acquisition processes.

Teacher professional development for effective mediation

A critical element for the effective implementation of the RTI method in the development of English skills is the pedagogical training of educators, as Alshahrani (2021) argues the importance of developing specific teaching skills for the application of the RTI model with English learners, while Polirstok & Hogan (2024) highlight the need for a deep understanding of the theoretical-methodological foundations of the model by all educational actors. This specialised training should include not only technical aspects of the RTI model, but also specific pedagogical competences to mediate the development of the various linguistic, metacognitive, digital and intercultural dimensions that make up a comprehensive communicative competence in English. In this sense, professional teacher development should be conceived as a continuous process of action research that allows educators to reflect critically on their practices, ground them theoretically and adjust them according to the learning evidence of their students.

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Perspectives of curricular integration and methodological adaptation

The future of the development of English learning skills using the RTI method points towards models of curricular integration and methodological adaptation. Tadros AbdelMasih's research (2024) on the implementation of RTI in diverse contexts supports the need to adapt the model to different educational realities, while Reis et al. (2021) propose the articulation with other approaches such as the School Enrichment Model. These perspectives of curricular integration and methodological adaptation promise to further enhance the effectiveness of the RTI method for developing communicative competences in English, responding to the diversity of trajectories, cognitive styles and learning profiles that characterise contemporary educational environments.

The implementation of the RTI model should be conceived as a process of collaborative construction that involves all educational actors in the creation of inclusive and effective learning communities, where each student can develop their maximum communicative potential. In this sense, the RTI method offers a structured and flexible pedagogical framework for the development of communicative competences in English, allowing the specific needs of each educational trajectory to be addressed while promoting an integral development of linguistic, metacognitive, digital and intercultural skills through differentiated and contextualised mediation processes.

Didactic strategies to develop English competences in Sixth Grade students at the Trementino Arriba Rural School, Córdoba

Strategies for Level 1 (Teaching for All)

The first level of the RTI model offers quality teaching for all students in the classroom. For our specific context in Trementino Arriba, we propose:

Projects linked to rural life in Córdoba

We will develop projects that connect the rural reality of our students with learning English. These projects will allow children to value their environment while acquiring a new language. Some ideas include:

a) Creating bilingual guides on local crops and traditional agricultural practices.

b) Developing an illustrated dictionary with plants and animals from the region.

c) Design materials that promote Trementino Arriba products and handicrafts.

d) Compile community stories in bilingual format.

This strategy takes advantage of what students already know about their environment, creating meaningful bridges to English.

Daily moments of contextualised conversation

Taking advantage of our community's rich oral tradition, we will implement daily oral expression routines such as:

a) Conversation circles with everyday phrases useful in a rural context.

b) Narration of community experiences with support from basic structures.

c) Descriptions of family activities using specific vocabulary.

d) Representations of communicative situations relevant to the students.

These activities respect and value the communicative practices of our rural community while developing English skills.

Learning corners with local resources

We will organise the classroom into learning spaces that make the most of the resources available in our community:

a) Listening corner: With recordings prepared by the teacher that do not require permanent internet access.

b) Visual corner: Using photographs of the environment, printed materials and resources made with local materials.

c) Hands-on corner: Incorporating natural elements from our environment (seeds, fibres, clay) for practical activities in English.

d) Creation corner: Where students create bilingual materials about their community.

This proposal recognises the limitations of technological resources in our rural school and transforms the available elements into learning opportunities.

Language support based on local knowledge

We will structure English learning based on the knowledge that our students already have:

a) Vocabulary organised by topics relevant to the community (agriculture, livestock, crafts, traditional cuisine)

b) Grammatical structures presented through situations familiar to the students

c) Clear examples of how to describe everyday processes and activities in English

d) Visual organisers adapted to the cultural characteristics of our region

This strategy values the prior knowledge of our students as a starting point for learning.

Strategies for Level 2 (Additional Support)

For students who need more support after regular teaching, we propose:

Collaborative support groups

Taking advantage of the community spirit of Trementino Arriba, we will form small groups of 3-4 students where:

a) Each student has specific responsibilities according to their strengths.

b) Shared goals are worked on with clear individual responsibilities.

c) Mutual support is promoted, a fundamental value in our community.

d) Activities connect with locally valued practices.

This strategy takes advantage of the values of solidarity and working together that are characteristic of our rural community.

Teaching reading comprehension with meaningful texts

For students who need reading reinforcement, we will work with:

e) Short texts on topics familiar to our rural students.

f) Adaptations of local stories and legends in simple English.

g) Step-by-step demonstration of comprehension strategies using texts on agriculture, livestock and local traditions.

h) Guided practice with contextualised visual support to Trementino Arriba.

This proposal recognises the importance of reading materials reflecting the cultural reality of our students.

Peer support based on community practices

Inspired by the traditions of knowledge transmission in our community, we will implement a system where:

i) Students with a higher level of proficiency support classmates who need reinforcement.

j) Specific times are set aside in the school timetable for this support.

k) Clear guidelines are provided for each session.

l) This work is publicly valued, connecting it to community values.

This strategy is inspired by the traditional teaching practices of our rural community.

Reinforcement activities with simple materials

Considering our technological limitations, we will develop activities that:

m) Use cards, board games and locally made materials.

n) Incorporate songs and rhymes to reinforce specific vocabulary.

o) Use practice booklets with clear instructions.

p) Make use of natural resources in the environment for practical activities.

This proposal recognises the need to adapt the strategies to the resources available in our rural school.

Strategies for Level 3 (Intensive Support)

For students who continue to present significant difficulties after the additional support, we propose:

Pronunciation teaching adapted to our context

For students with persistent pronunciation difficulties, we will work on:

a) Identifying the specific sounds that cause the most difficulty for our students.

b) Developing systematic exercises centred on these sounds.

c) Using useful and relevant words in a rural context.

d) Incorporating rhythmic elements typical of our oral tradition.

This proposal recognises the specific characteristics of the Spanish spoken in our region.

Intensive teaching of essential vocabulary

We will focus on developing fundamental vocabulary for our students:

a) Selecting essential words linked to immediate communicative needs.

b) Teaching with multiple senses using real objects from the environment.

c) Practising daily through short but consistent routines.

d) Creating personalised dictionaries illustrated with local elements.

e) Connecting vocabulary with valued activities in our community.

This strategy prioritises the learning of words that have practical use in our students' context.

Practising everyday conversations

For students with significant difficulties in oral expression, we will work on:

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f) Identifying everyday communicative situations in our rural context.

g) Developing model dialogues for these specific situations.

h) Practising intensively through role-playing real situations.

i) Gradually incorporating variations to promote flexible application.

This proposal focuses on developing communication skills that are useful for our students' daily lives.

Personalised plan with family participation

Recognising the importance of families in our rural community, we will develop:

j) Individualised plans with clear and achievable objectives.

k) Activities that can be carried out at home with family support.

l) Simple guidelines so that families can support learning.

m) Follow-up through regular meetings with parents and carers.

n) Assessment of family knowledge as a valuable resource.

This strategy recognises the fundamental role of families in the educational process of our rural students.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of learning competences in English using the RTI method indicates a powerful pedagogical paradigm for addressing the diversity of educational trajectories in the acquisition of a second language. The multilevel structure of the model allows for the systematic development of communicative, linguistic, metacognitive, digital and intercultural competences through differentiated interventions that respond to the specific needs of each student. Socio-educational contextualisation emerges as a determining factor for the effectiveness of the model, as is evident in the proposal for the Trementino Arriba Rural School, where the strategies are adapted to the rural reality of Cordoba, taking advantage of local knowledge and community practices. This review demonstrates that the RTI model, when implemented with cultural relevance and pedagogical foundation, offers a comprehensive framework to enhance the integral development of English language skills, transcending the merely linguistic approach to address the cognitive, sociocultural and metacognitive dimensions inherent in any process of second language construction.

FINANCING

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest with people or institutions linked to the research.
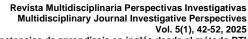
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