



The Gap of Social-Emotional Learning in Bilingual Contexts: A Literature Review

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Abstract

An interest for incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) into classrooms across PreK-12 has been on the rise. However, there are concerns as to whether it is “anchored in the notion of justice-oriented citizenship, with issues of culture, identity, agency, belonging, and engagement” (Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning, 2020). The aim of this systematic literature review is to examine the landscape of SEL in the United States—particularly with a bilingual education lens. To understand the breadth and scope of the literature, a search for peer-reviewed articles using a variety of keywords, Boolean operators, and databases was conducted. Findings point to gaps in taking bilingual contexts into consideration for SEL purposes. The lead researcher’s positionality and lived experience as a Chicana and future bilingual teacher parallels implications for this work.

Keywords: Social-emotional learning; Bilingual education; Self-regulation; Transformation; Culturally relevant.

1. Introduction

An interest for incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) into classrooms across PreK-12 has been on the rise. This is not a surprise given “more than two decades of research demonstrates that education promoting social and emotional learning... gets results” (Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning, 2020) such as improved academic outcomes, behaviors, economic mobility, and lifetime outcomes. Interestingly, “although much is known about the influences and impacts of SEL efforts, there are still substantial gaps in our understanding of whether and in what ways SEL program and approaches can best advance optimal academic, social, and emotional competence development of all children, youth, and adults” (Jagers *et al.*, 2019, p. 162). Meaning there is much to learn about how and if SEL contributes to equity with racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students in mind.

1.1. Purpose

Although there are several paths to explore, the present study aims to examine the landscape of SEL in the United States with a bilingual education lens. Pertinent key terms and definitions that further describe the topic of investigation are addressed in Table 1 (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 29). The terms *bilingual education* and *social emotional learning*, however, merit explicit discussion since these concepts are the central piece to this literature review.

First, it was a challenge to locate a definition for *bilingual education* suggesting there is a lack of consensus on what is meant by it. None of the five relevant articles defined the term, searching through the National Association of Bilingual Educators (NABE) and U.S. Department of Education websites yielded no results, and the landmark definition provided through the Bilingual Education Act of 1974 is inaccessible given digital text is not available (Congress, n.d). Secondly, though the U.S. Department of Education website did not offer a definition, it did (1) catalyze a successful search within ERIC and (2) reaffirm the intentional use of *bilingual education* versus *dual language* or *dual immersion*. This second point speaks to the researcher’s positionality which is influenced highly by the work of Ofelia García, a leading scholar in the field. She discusses the silencing of the word *bilingual* through a historical presentation of state propositions, analysis of usage across time, and most notably name changes to the federal office now known as Office of English Language Acquisition versus Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (García, 2009, pp. 183-185). The federal office name was observed in searching for an “authoritative definition” (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 54) through educational government materials.

Of equal importance to the term bilingual education is SEL. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is recognized as the leading source for SEL. Thus, it is no surprise their definition was cited by Barnes (2019) in a systematic review of SEL interventions. This author goes beyond this definition to describe what they coin as *culturally responsive social emotional learning*. Though this particular form of SEL is not the central topic of investigation, it does guide research intentions as the ultimate practical aim is to “utiliz[e] the lived experiences and frames of reference of students to reinforce and teach SEL competencies (McCallops *et al.*, 2019)” (Barnes, 2019, p. 600).

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Table-1. Key Terms and Definitions Related to Social-Emotional Learning

| Key Term | Definition and Source(s) |
|---|---|
| bilingual education | “Encouragement of bilingualism through the teaching of regular school courses in both the national language and a second language” (ERIC, 1968). |
| culturally responsive social emotional learning | “Utilizing the lived experiences and frames of reference of students to reinforce and teach SEL [social emotional learning] competencies (McCallops et al., 2019)” (Barnes, 2019, p. 600). |
| language | “A broad construct that comprises a constellation of skills...often grouped into four categories: phonology (the sounds in speech); semantics (the meaning of words, or vocabulary knowledge); morphosyntax (how words and parts of words fit together); and pragmatics (the social norms of language use, or communicative competence)” (Hanno and Surrain, 2019, p. 76). |
| self-regulation | “An umbrella term for an array of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes, including planning, working memory, and persistence” (Hanno and Surrain, 2019, p. 77). |
| social emotional learning | “The process used by individuals to acquire and successfully apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support the understanding and management of emotions; set and achieve constructive goals; be empathetic towards others; establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions (Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning, 2016)” (Barnes, 2019, p. 600). |
| transformative social emotional learning | “A means to better articulate the potential of SEL to mitigate the educational, social, and economic inequities that derive from the interrelated legacies of racialized cultural oppression in the United States and globally” (Jagers et al., 2019, p. 163). |

2. Methods

To understand the breadth and scope of the literature, a search for peer-reviewed articles using the keywords and Boolean operators “social-emotional learning” AND “literature review” was first conducted (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, pp. 34-35). WorldCat was selected given its expansive reach as it “searches a virtual database consisting of the catalogues of about 72,000 libraries in 170 countries and territories” (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 20). Parameters were set to include the following: documents held by the TAMIU Killam Library, article format type, peer-reviewed content, and publications from January 2015 to May 2020. Note parameter selections were kept for subsequent searches via WorldCat. Sources located were then sorted by title (A-Z) to remove duplicates for a total of 21 unique results (see Table 2). From scanning the literature, geographical diversity became apparent. Studies that were conducted outside the United States or those that included samples from other countries were consequently eliminated to uphold the intended context of this investigation. Next, remaining article titles and abstracts were reviewed; the researcher excluded studies that did not include SEL within either. Doing so eliminated articles centered around faintly related concepts such as emotional disorders, emotional wellbeing, prosocial behaviors, mindfulness-based interventions, and social confidence. A few articles ($n= 3$) met all other inclusion criteria yet authors focused on how findings might provide information on/for SEL but did not study SEL interventions themselves. Therefore, only one article was identified to be relevant.

A second search was then conducted to re-center the focus on whose lives we want to consider, which is why “bilingual education” replaced “literature review” as the second key phrase (DeZouche, 2019). Interestingly, only one article was retrieved. Relevancy of this article prompted a pivot so that “self-regulation” was used for future searches as opposed to the broader concept of “social-emotional learning.” In turn, the third search yielded 30 unique articles. Studies eligible for review were those that (a) investigated bilingual students in PreK-12 schools within the United States and (b) included self-regulation within the article title or abstract. Careful examination gave rise to one new relevant article for a total of a mere three to this point. Therefore, the fourth search was strategically conducted using ERIC (EBSCO), which is a core education database, to drop *education* from the key phrase so that it reads: “self-regulation” AND “bilingual.” The intent was also to cast a wider net. For this reason, dates reviewed were additionally expanded to include January 2010 to May 2020. An advanced search in Boolean/phrase mode limited to peer-reviewed article publication type generated 21 unique articles—two of which met the criteria for relevancy, bringing the total uniquely relevant sources up to five.

Lastly, considering there were limited articles located throughout the search process the dates reviewed expanded once more for the fifth search via ERIC (EBSCO) to begin January 1974. This year is significant in bilingual education due to the U.S. Supreme Court case ruling in *Lau vs. Nichols* that indicated “educating English language learners in a language they did not understand was not equal educational opportunity and that something had to be done about the language of instruction” (García, 2009, p. 87). Unfortunately, no new relevant sources were located despite this effort—further indicating a gap in the literature.

Table-2. Audit Trail of Database Searches

| Databases Searched | Dates Reviewed | Search Terms with Boolean Operators | Sources Located | Relevant Sources ¹ | Author and Year |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------|-------------------------------|---|
| WorldCat | January 2015 to May 2020 | “social-emotional learning” AND “literature review” | 21 | 1/1 | (Barnes, 2019) |
| WorldCat | January 2015 to May 2020 | “social-emotional learning” AND “bilingual education” | 1 | 1/1 | (Hanno and Surrain, 2019) |
| WorldCat | January 2015 to May 2020 | “self-regulation” AND “bilingual education” | 30 | 1/2 | (Bohlmann <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Hanno and Surrain, 2019) |
| ERIC (EBSCO) | January 2010 to May 2020 | “self-regulation” AND “bilingual” | 21 | 2/3 | (Bohlmann <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Guirguis and Antigua, 2017) |
| ERIC (EBSCO) | January 1974 to May 2020 | “self-regulation” AND “bilingual” | 26 | 0/3 | (Bohlmann <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Guirguis and Antigua, 2017; Palermo <i>et al.</i> , 2017) |

Note: 1. The relevant sources column is formatted to indicate new relevant articles out of all relevant articles identified. In other words, some relevant articles appeared more than once throughout the different searches.

3. Analysis

3.1. Results

Most of the studies retrieved ($n = 3$ out of 5) were classified as quantitative research utilizing the features outlined by Galvan and Galvan (2017, pp. 65-66). For example, all of those identified to be quantitative in nature had a large sample size ranging from 63 participants to 381 and “use[d]...measures that can be scored objectively” (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 65). Results were additionally presented using statistics (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 66). It became apparent that there is limited qualitative research available to understand the landscape of SEL in the United States within a bilingual context.

Since “different research methods can result in differences in the outcomes of studies” and demographic variables are key to any study, Table 3 was crafted to visualize such information more clearly (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 89). This summary of results consists of all available demographics, measures utilized, methodology highlights, and key findings. Mining valuable information like this lays the foundation for a deep analysis of the articles; that is because methodological strengths and weaknesses can be taken into consideration, relationships can be noted, and additional gaps may be uncovered (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, pp. 58-61). All relevant articles were intended to be included in Table 3 despite being classified as quantitative or qualitative; however, the two qualitative articles retrieved were literature reviews without much of the needed information to fit the framework. Thus, the following sections provide an analysis by research approach.

Table-3. Summary of Results

| Authors and Publication Year | Participants, Region, and Demographics | Detailed Methodology | Key Findings |
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| (Bohlmann <i>et al.</i> , 2015) | <p>Participants: The initial, larger study included typically developing preschoolers; $n = 381$ children (192 girls and 189 boys) “From this full sample, two of the four children in each classroom were randomly selected (one boy and one girl per classroom when possible) to participate in direct assessment” (p. 1099). A subset was ultimately used from “the larger sample of children who were administered direct assessments...[to include] 250 monolingual ($n = 73$) and DLL ($n = 177$)” (p. 1099).</p> <p>Regional Setting: Public and private schools from a large urban area in the Western United States – Los</p> | <p>Quantitative Measures: <i>Demographics</i> – Parent Survey <i>Language</i> – Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody (TVIP), English and Spanish versions of the Woodcock-Johnson/ Woodcock-Muñoz Picture Vocabulary sub-test <i>Self-Regulation</i> – Pencil Tap and Toy Sort from Preschool Self-Regulation Assessment (PSRA)</p> <p>Procedural Highlights: “Using a cross-lagged design, the...study first tested bidirectionality between children’s English expressive vocabulary and self-regulation skills” (p. 1098). “Data collectors completed 2 full days of training on</p> | <p>“Expressive vocabulary and compliance/executive control are significantly and positively correlated with one another at each time point” (p. 1102). “Child age and family income-to-needs ratio are positively associated with all outcomes at the three time points” (p. 1102). “Comparison of fit indices and chi-square difference tests across the four models (no coupling, bidirectional coupling, and the two unidirectional coupling models) suggested that the bidirectional model has the best fit” (p. 1102). “Significant concurrent association at T1 between expressive vocabulary and</p> |

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| | <p>Angeles Demographics: In the larger sample, “English was spoken in the majority of homes (61%), but Spanish was also a commonly used home language (65%)” (p. 1099). In the analytic sample, “ages ranged from 35 months to 63 months” (p. 1099). 69% Hispanic or Latino 15% White 14% Other Ethnicities 2% Unknown Additional demographic information such as maternal education and socioeconomic status was collected. Overall, “maternal education was 12.75 years (<i>SD</i> = 3.13)...[and] Forty-five percent of parents reported a family income that fell below the poverty line” (p. 1099).</p> | <p>administration of the direct child assessment followed by an additional day of supervised live practice” (p. 1099). “At each time point children were brought to a quiet, private area and administered a direct assessment battery lasting approximately 40 min.” (p. 1099). “Bilingual data collectors were assigned to classrooms with children identified as Spanish speaking” (p. 1099). In order to determine language to be used for self-regulation assessments for DLLs, “age-equivalent ceiling sets were compared across the PPVT and TVIP” (p. 1099). “Children’s expressive vocabulary skills were directly assessed in English with the Picture Vocabulary subtest of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement” (p. 11000). DLLs additionally were assessed using the Spanish version. “To examine the association between language competence in English and self-regulation in the DLL group while also accounting for language abilities in Spanish, [they] ran the four autoregressive crossed lag models on only the DLL sample while controlling for the effect of expressive vocabulary scores in Spanish” (p. 1102).</p> | <p>compliance/executive control ($r = .28, p < .001$), indicating that at the beginning of the study children with higher expressive vocabulary scores tended to have higher compliance/executive control scores” (p. 1102). A chi-square difference test...indicated that the fully constrained model had better fit than the model with the paths unconstrained” (p. 1102). “When examining the bidirectional model for the full sample as compared to a bidirectional model conducted on the DLL sample only while controlling for Spanish at all time points, there is consistency between the two” (p. 1104). “The results were supportive of [their] hypothesis, yielding evidence for bidirectionality between self-regulation and English expressive vocabulary skills in both monolinguals and DLLs” (p. 1105). “The results provide strong empirical support for vocabulary as a leading indicator of self-regulation skills in preschool” (p. 1108).</p> |
| <p>(Guirguis and Antigua, 2017)</p> | <p>Participants: 63 preschool students Regional Setting: Diverse, low SES public school districts in New York Demographics: Ages ranges between 4.0 and 4.9 year olds 32 DLL (Spanish and English) 31 English-Speaking Only “There were 38 male students and 25 female students” (p. 6).</p> | <p>Quantitative Measures: <i>Language</i> – Parent and Teacher Survey, Pre-Idea Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT) <i>Self-Regulation</i> – Preschool Self-Regulation Assessment (PSRA) Procedural Highlights: “The language survey was taken from Tabors and Snow (1994) framework” (p. 6). “In addition to the language surveys, students were given an oral language assessment” (p. 6). “Raw scores [of the Pre-IPT] were converted to categories: Non-Limited, or Fluent/Competent” (p. 6). “After language determination, participants were given a self-regulatory assessment in either English or Spanish” (p. 6). “Assessments were chosen based on the validity and reliability coefficient, the</p> | <p>“The independent between-groups ANOVA yielded a statistically significant effect” (p. 8). “The effects support that with regard to self-regulation, there is a difference in these learned skills based on whether early childhood students are classified as DLL or non-DLL” (p. 8). “12.3% of the variance was accounted for based on group membership” (p.8). “The results suggest that while the ability to speak more than one language should support the development of self-regulation in students who attend preschool, there is a larger external factor that needs to be examined” (p. 8). “Students who are</p> |

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| | | <p>development appropriateness in early childhood, and whether the assessment was offered in both English and Spanish” (p. 6).</p> <p>“The PSRA is a battery of self-regulatory tasks that were adapted from Murray and Kochanska’s (2002) rigorous control tasks and executive control tasks” (p. 7).</p> <p>To examine the research question, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine statistically significant differences in the dependent variable by the independent variable, specifically, self-regulation and being a DLL or non-DLL” (p. 8).</p> | <p>developing a second language, and are not allowed to or encouraged to speak in their native language, experience a delay in language acquisition. . . in both academic and social language” (pp. 8-9).</p> |
| <p>(Palermo <i>et al.</i>, 2017)</p> | <p>Participants: <i>n</i> = 117 Spanish-speaking children</p> <p>Regional Setting: Head Start preschools from a Southwestern Metropolitan Area in the United States</p> <p>Demographics: Ages ranged from 43 to 60 months 95% Mexican American 2% Central/South American 3% Unknown 91% born in the United States 57% boys “The majority lived in two parent households (70%), with most mothers (84%) and fathers (88%) born outside of the United States” (p. 211). “Parents reported living in the United States an average of 13 years (<i>SD</i> = 6.39 years, range = 2-33 years)” (p. 211). “41% of the parents reported that they had not completed high school, 27% had completed high school, 22% had spent some time in college, and 10% had completed a college degree” (p. 212). Parents reported annual earnings < \$30K = 86% \$30-40K = 7% \$40-50K = 3% > \$50K = 4% “40% of the parents reported speaking only Spanish at home, 51% used more Spanish than English, and 9% used more English than Spanish” (p. 212).</p> | <p>Quantitative Measures: <i>Demographics</i> – Parent Survey <i>Language</i> – Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody (TVIP), English and Spanish versions of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement Picture Vocabulary subscale and Letter-Word Identification subscale, Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test <i>Self-Regulation</i> – Day-Night Stroop task for EF inhibitory control and Inhibitory Control, Attention Focusing, and Attention Shifting Subscale for EC</p> <p>Procedural Highlights: “Bilingual research assistance (three females, one male) assessed children’s EF abilities...[and] nonverbal cognitive ability in the fall and their English and Spanish skills in the spring” (p. 212). “To control for order effects, the language of the first assessment was randomly chosen for each child” (p. 212). “To minimize practice effects across the English and Spanish versions, at least 2 weeks were allowed to pass between administrations” (p. 212). While completing the Day-Night Stroop task, “the children were allowed to respond in either language” (p. 212). “Lead teachers completed questionnaires on children’s EC abilities” (p. 212). “Children’s vocabulary skills in English and Spanish were assessed using the Peabody</p> | <p>“The children in the high-balanced bilingual (<i>M</i> = 9.35, <i>SD</i> = 3.86) and English-dominant (<i>M</i> = 9.20, <i>SD</i> = 4.41) clusters exhibited greater nonverbal cognitive ability in the fall of preschool than the children in the Spanish dominant cluster (<i>M</i> = 6.23, <i>SD</i> = 4.09)” (p. 215). “The majority (74%) of the children in the Spanish-dominant cluster lived with parents who used only Spanish, whereas the majorities of the children in the English-dominant (76%) and high-balanced bilingual (57%) clusters lived with parents who used more Spanish than English” (p. 215). Results “suggested that the children in the high-balanced bilingual cluster exhibited greater gains in EF ability” (p. 216). “The effects of parents’ language use and Time × Parents’ Language Use were nonsignificant, suggesting that children’s EF abilities and their gains in those abilities did not vary by parents’ use of one or two languages at home” p. 216). “Children’s EF abilities at the start or end of preschool did not associate with their English vocabulary and letter-word knowledge” (p. 219). “The extent to which EC abilities associated with</p> |

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| | | <p>Picture Vocabulary Test-IV (Dunn & Dunn, 2007, $\alpha = .97$) and its Spanish version, the Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (Dunn, Lugo, Padilla, & Dunn, 1986, $\alpha = .93$)” (p. 213). “To assess children’s English and Spanish letter-word skills, [they] used the Letter-Word Identification subscale of the Woodcock–Johnson III Tests of Achievement ($\alpha = .94$; Woodcock et al., 2000) and the Bateria III ($\alpha = .95$; Woodcock et al., 2004)” (p. 213). “Children’s nonverbal cognitive ability was measured using the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, which uses matrix items of shapes and geometric designs interrelated via spatial and logical organization to gauge nonverbal cognitive abilities in a culturally neutral manner because it can be administered in English or Spanish (Naglieri, 2003” (p. 213).</p> | <p>Spanish-speaking preschoolers’ later classification as high-balanced bilinguals versus Spanish dominant varied by parents’ language use at home” (p. 217). “Findings extend... literature by suggesting that EC abilities may facilitate Spanish-speaking preschoolers’ learning of English vocabulary and letter-word skills and thereby enhance their dual language knowledge, particularly for children whose parents speak exclusively Spanish at home” (p. 218).</p> |
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Notes: DLL = Dual Language Learner; SES= Socioeconomic Status; EF = Executive Function; EC = Executive Control

3.2. Quantitative Approach

One of the three quantitative articles indicated researchers may have designed an experimental study. [Bohlmann et al. \(2015\)](#), makes it clear through their aim of “examin[ing] possible bidirectionality between children’s English language expressive vocabulary and self-regulation skills” (p. 1098). Additionally, this conclusion is based on the fact that data collectors were referred to as “experimenters” ([Bohlmann et al., 2015](#), p. 1100). It is worth noting though, while [Palermo et al. \(2017\)](#) did not conduct an experimental study nor did they randomize the children, they did randomize the language of the first assessment for each child as a consideration for order effects (p. 212). Doing so may indicate a potential strength in methodology.

Other notes regarding methodology include measures used for different aspects. [Bohlmann et al. \(2015\)](#) and [Palermo et al. \(2017\)](#), for instance, make use of similar measures for the *language* aspect to include the English and Spanish version of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and Woodcock-Johnson/Wodcock-Muñoz subtests. Another connection was observed between [Bohlmann et al. \(2015](#), p. 1100) and [Guirguis and Antigua \(2017\)](#) who both employ the Preschool Self-Regulation Assessment (PSRA) for the *self-regulation* aspect.

Last of all, the most evident differentiating factor is the extent to which demographic information was collected and reported. Such data points are crucial considering “contextual features related to socioeconomic status, immigration status, and culture have documented associations with language development among all children” ([Hanno and Surrain, 2019](#), p. 79). The difficulty in extracting detailed demographic information for the work authored by [Guirguis and Antigua \(2017\)](#) suggests these variables may not have been deliberately thought of as significant. That is because not only was there minimal information available, it was also unclear as to how the demographic data was collected since no measure such as a survey was specified.

3.3. Qualitative Approach

As briefly mentioned, the two qualitative articles retrieved were literature reviews that were published within the past year and half. Meaning they are recent. Yet, there are stark differences in methodology. [Barnes \(2019\)](#), for instance, clearly uses a purposive sample and provides a comprehensive methods section. [Galvan and Galvan \(2017\)](#), characterize a purposive sample to be “selected based on the careful judgement of the researchers regarding the types of individuals they consider to be especially good sources of data for a particular research topic” (p. 82). Except “individuals” are represented by “articles” within the context of a literature review. Furthermore, [Barnes \(2019\)](#) specifies search terms used together with inclusion criteria and the procedure for article search (p. 602). A detailed methodology like this provides transparency that builds a reader’s confidence in their findings. This is in sharp contrast to the research conducted by [Hanno and Surrain \(2019\)](#), who aimed to “review the state of research on the connection between self-regulation and language development in early childhood with a particular focus on [dual language learners]” (p. 76). Though it appears to be a literature review, their methodology is essentially nonexistent. There is no clarity on which articles were included for review, how they were retrieved.

4. Discussion

4.1. Researcher Positionality of the Lead Author

As a Chicana and future bilingual teacher, I am just one of many in this country navigating multiple realms that often do not coexist. I grew up on the Laredo border as a first-generation U.S. citizen speaking Spanish up until formal schooling. Spanish was for my family and English was for academics. I was raised to compartmentalize my emotions so that they did not interfere with my role as a student or professional. However, the more I studied emotionally intelligent leadership, the more I saw the untapped potential of social-emotional learning. In trying to have conversations with my mom, I noticed nearly all available resources were in English. It made me wonder how social-emotional learning looks in bilingual classrooms or if it even exists due to accessibility challenges. This systematic review of literature is an extension of this curiosity.

4.2. Outcomes

Two of the most significant outcomes of this systematic literature review include how bilingual students were portrayed and where the focus lies. Phrases such as “many of whom enter school having limited English proficiency (Bohlmann *et al.*, 2015, p. 1094; Hernandez *et al.*, 2007)” reveal the deficit-based mindset permeated through several of the articles. Such thinking may go hand in hand with the aim of the research, which is understanding the relation between language and self-regulation with prioritization for improved language outcomes versus understanding SEL interventions themselves. Much of this insight is based on the work of Barnes (2019), who reveals through a systemic literature review of two decades that “of the 66 articles, only seven presented information on the participants’ primary language or their English proficiency” (p. 606). Though, there are glimmers of hope that language considerations are possibly becoming part of the larger conversation. Hanno and Surrain (2019), for example, reflect and state “the intervention may have been more effective for DLLs if Spanish-dominant parents were explicitly coached on the value of Spanish language interactions” (p. 83). Having only recently discovered CASEL’s transformative framework, it is unclear what the trajectory for development of such aspirational SEL ecosystem will look like.

5. Implications and Conclusions

In this literature review, the landscape of SEL in U.S. bilingual educational settings was investigated. A systematic search was conducted initially for the most recent findings. However, this search process uncovered the first gap despite going back 46 years to expose earlier literature post *Lau vs. Nichols* ruling. It has been understood that on their own, both SEL and bilingual education yield a wealth of research. It is only when these two realms are merged that scant research exists. That is why the topic was reworked to include findings of self-regulation, one component of SEL, and bilingual education. The reoccurring theme of scarcity yet appeared once again. Three out of the five relevant articles took a quantitative approach, which only provides one piece in this larger puzzle. On top of this, the two qualitative articles were both literature reviews. Only so much of a perspective can be gained from such studies. Truly, it is truly a missed opportunity since qualitative research provides a rich insight into very much-needed perspectives for SEL in bilingual contexts as the goal is to “understand how participants perceive their own reality—not to establish a so-called objective reality” (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 81). For this reason, the value of this study as a whole comes from challenging existing paradigms in an effort to ensure SEL is accessible and relevant, but more importantly, serves *all* our students.

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