

**A Literature-Based Study on English Learning in Rural Contexts:
The Case of UNAD Students in Sácama, Casanare**

Jennifer Andrea Sepúlveda Poblador

Assessor

Dina Esperanza Bonilla Gómez

Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia – UNAD

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Dedication

First and foremost, I want to thank God for his faithfulness and compassion shown in this work. He is the fountain of wisdom, knowledge, and strength I need to get through the ups and downs of this career. I would not be standing here now without these characteristics.

To my loving, persistent, and dedicated my dear mother, whose unwavering support helped me through my studies, and who is my most excellent model of love.

She was my first teacher; my first love for teaching came from her love for her rural children.

Even though she is my mom, she was also like a mom to a lot of farmers' children, most of whom are now professionals, because she showed them how to move forward and work hard.

To my sister, for always being my supporter, always looking for me, and cheering me on for everything I do. To my father, who wanted to have a daughter see graduate from university.

Thank you for believing in me, supporting me with everything, and teaching me to forgive.

Today I have graduated and show you that I have learned and grown as a person from my mistakes.

To my lover, with whom I crossed paths on this adventure, and who is now my emotional anchor, who is always encouraging me to keep going no matter what. At last, to my dear hometown of Sácama, where mountains, quiet, and optimism abounded. This town has always inspired me to get up and keep going in the face of challenges. This achievement is as much yours as it is mine.

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To every person that supported me from afar - thank you for being part of this dream. It is and is not just my achievement, it is the success of the many of that had the courage to believe that you can't put borders learning.

Specialized Analytical Summary

Title	A Literature-Based Study on English Learning in Rural Contexts: The Case of UNAD Students in Sácama, Casanare
Author(s)	Jennifer Andrea Sepulveda Poblador
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Keywords	Rural Education, English Language Teaching, Virtual Learning, Digital Competencies, Sociocultural Theory.
Description	Monograph
Sources	Primary Sources:23 Secondary Sources: 11 Tertiary Sources:0
Contents	<p>Este estudio analiza los desafíos y oportunidades del aprendizaje del idioma inglés en contextos rurales, con un enfoque particular en el caso de los estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD) que residen en el municipio de Sácama, Casanare. La investigación se desarrolló mediante un diseño cualitativo de tipo documental, que consistió en una revisión sistemática y crítica de literatura académica reciente, informes oficiales y documentos institucionales relacionados con la educación rural, el acceso digital y la enseñanza del inglés en Colombia y América Latina.</p> <p>El análisis identificó barreras clave que afectan el aprendizaje efectivo del inglés, entre las que se incluyen la limitada conectividad a internet, la</p>

escasez de recursos digitales, la insuficiente formación docente en competencias digitales y la ausencia de metodologías pedagógicas adaptadas a las realidades rurales. Asimismo, se encontraron factores sociales como el aislamiento geográfico, la baja exposición al idioma y las difíciles condiciones laborales de los docentes, que repercuten en la motivación estudiantil, la permanencia del profesorado y los resultados académicos.

No obstante, los hallazgos también resaltan elementos positivos como la resiliencia de maestros y estudiantes, el sentido de pertenencia a la comunidad y el impacto favorable de la participación comunitaria en los procesos educativos. Se identificó que estrategias flexibles, como el aprendizaje basado en proyectos con contenido local, el uso de recursos multimodales de bajo costo, los modelos híbridos de enseñanza y la incorporación de enfoques interculturales en la formación docente, resultan efectivas para motivar a los estudiantes y fortalecer su identidad lingüística. El estudio concluye que es necesario implementar programas de formación docente descentralizados, contextualizados y continuos, que integren dimensiones pedagógicas, lingüísticas, digitales e interculturales. Además, recomienda fortalecer las redes de colaboración entre docentes y promover políticas educativas inclusivas y descentralizadas que garanticen la equidad en el acceso a recursos tecnológicos, la capacitación del profesorado y el apoyo pedagógico. Estas propuestas buscan mejorar la pertinencia, la equidad y la sostenibilidad del aprendizaje del inglés en comunidades rurales como Sácama, y servir como modelo para contextos similares.

	<p><i>Palabras clave:</i> Educación rural, enseñanza del inglés, aprendizaje virtual, competencias digitales, formación docente, motivación, UNAD, Casanare.</p>
<p>Research Line</p>	<p>This research is part of ECEDU's research line <i>Education, Pedagogy, and Didactics</i>, under the subline <i>Pedagogical Practices and Foreign Language Teaching</i>. The study employed a qualitative documentary design, consisting of a systematic and critical review of recent academic literature, official reports, and institutional documents related to English language learning in rural contexts, with a focus on the case of UNAD students in Sácama, Casanare. Data collection involved identifying, selecting, and analyzing relevant sources from academic databases and institutional repositories. The findings were organized thematically to address technological, social, and pedagogical barriers; methodological approaches and didactic resources; and teacher training strategies. This design allowed the study to generate evidence-based recommendations for contextualized and sustainable English teaching practices in rural areas.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The findings of this work outline that the outcomes of English learning in rural settings like Sácama, Casanare, are determined by limits in technology, society, and pedagogy. Connectivity and digital resources are low-functioning, which limits interactive, multimodal methodologies. The professional development of teachers concerning digital competences is Limited, which prevents the conscious praxis of using ICT effectively in the classroom.</p>

	<p>The geographic context limits students' exposure to English, which plays a role in students' motivation. Difficult working conditions have consequences for teacher retention and teaching quality. Even considering these many issues, resilience from both teachers and students, and the sense of belonging to a community support establishing innovative practices that are more in line with local realities.</p> <p>Project-based methodologies incorporating contextual content and communicative approaches combined with low-cost multimodal resources and hybrid teaching models have been shown to motivate learners and build their linguistic identity. High quality teacher education for English learning needs to be decentralized, contextualized, and ongoing professional training that interweaves teaching pedagogies, languages, technologies, and interculturality.</p> <p>In conclusion, this study identifies that context-appropriate strategies are required to deal with the challenges of English learning but to build and capitalize on the opportunities in rural communities, such as Sácama.</p>
Advisor	Dina Esperanza Bonilla Gómez

Abstract

This research explores the challenges and opportunities associated with learning English in rural settings, focusing specifically on UNAD students in Sácama, Casanare. The study adopts a qualitative, documentary approach, systematically reviewing two main areas.

Literature Review: This section encompasses both foundational and recent academic studies on rural education, alongside research and institutional reports examining the intersections of digital access, learning processes, rural schooling, and bilingual instruction in Colombia and Latin America.

The study further considers policy documents and reports addressing rural education and schooling. The analysis identifies several barriers to effective English language learning in rural schools, including:

- **Internet Connectivity:** Limited and unreliable access to the internet
- **Digital Resources:** A scarcity of online and technological learning materials
- **Teacher Training:** Insufficient preparation of teachers in digital competencies
- **Pedagogical Methodologies:** Teaching practices that fail to reflect the realities of rural education.
- **Social Factors:** Geographic isolation, limited exposure to English, and precarious working conditions that undermine students' motivation, retention, and overall learning outcomes.

Despite these constraints, the findings underscore the resilience and adaptability of rural teachers and students. Community participation emerges as a positive factor, as does the implementation of contextsensitive pedagogical strategies such as project-based learning grounded in local content, the use of low-cost multilevel resources, hybrid teaching models, and

intercultural approaches to teacher development. The study concludes with recommendations aimed at enhancing teacher professionalism, fostering collaborative learning networks, and advancing decentralized educational policies that promote inclusion. Ultimately, it seeks to contribute to a framework that prioritizes relevance, equity, and sustainability in English language learning within rural contexts such as Sácama, with implications for similar regions across Latin America.

Keywords: Rural education, english language teaching, virtual learning, digital competencies, sociocultural theory.

Table of Content

Introduction	13
Justification.....	15
Objectives	16
General Objective.....	16
Specific Objectives.....	16
Literature Review	17
Rural Education and Inequalities in Colombia.....	17
Characteristics of Rurality in Colombia and Latin America.....	17
Educational Gaps & infrastructural limitations.....	18
English Language Learning in Rural Contexts: Global and National Insights	18
Global Perspectives on Rural English Language Learning.....	18
Theoretical Approaches and Pedagogical Strategies for English Learning in Rural Contexts.....	19
Theoretical Foundations of Bilingual Education in Colombia	19
Pedagogical Strategies: Project-Based Learning in Rural EFL Contexts	20
Teacher Agency and Policy Appropriation in Rural Contexts	20
Systematic Analysis of Bilingual Programs Across Colombia	21
Challenges in Rural English Learning.....	21
Reluctance of Teachers and Working Conditions in Rural Areas	21
Perceptions of Local Stakeholders and Resource Limitations.....	22
Professional Identity and Tensions with Policy	22
Interconnected Challenges and Teacher Resilience	23
The Digital Divide and Technological Access in Rural English Education	23
Digital Inequality in Rural Education in Colombia	23
Effects of Geographic Isolation on Student Performance	24

Pandemic Responses: Hybrid Media Strategies.....	24
Multimedia Materials in Rural Classrooms	25
Innovations to Bridge the Digital Divide	25
Motivation, Autonomy, and Resilience in Rural English Learners	25
Motivation in Rural English Learning	25
Learner Autonomy in Limited-Resource Settings.....	26
Resilience in Rural Learners	26
Teacher Role in Motivation and Autonomy	27
Community Involvement and Motivation.....	27
Pedagogical Innovations for Rural English Learning.....	28
Context-Adapted Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).....	28
Task-Based Learning with Local Content.....	28
Multimodal Resources without Internet Dependency.....	29
Peer Teaching and Cross-Grade Collaboration	29
Blended Learning with Offline Platforms.....	30
Teacher Training and Professional Development in Rural EFL Contexts	30
Limited Access to Formal Training Programs	30
Teacher Preparedness and Language Proficiency Gaps.....	31
Peer Mentoring and Collaborative Networks.....	31
Continuous Professional Development through Microlearning.....	32
Culturally Responsive Teacher Training.....	32
Methodology.....	33
Research Approach and Type	33
Method and Population	33
Data Collection Protocol	34

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	34
Inclusion criteria:	34
Exclusion criteria:	35
Data Analysis.....	35
Phases of the Research Process	35
Ethical Considerations	36
Results and Discussion	37
Conclusions	40
Recommendations.....	42
References	43

Introduction

Learning English in rural areas presents significant challenges due to various geographical, social, and technological factors inherent to these regions. Issues such as limited internet connectivity, a lack of educational resources, and insufficient specialized teacher training hinder access to quality education for students in rural communities. These barriers not only restrict worldclass educational outcomes but also diminish student motivation and academic performance (Monroy Ramírez & Patiño-Agudelo, 2022; Pirela-Espina, 2023)

In Colombia, these challenges are particularly evident in municipalities like Sácama, Casanare, where there is a notable gap in digital and educational resources (García Botero & Reyes-Galeano, 2022; Rincón & Martínez, 2022).

This study seeks to address the following research question:

Which pedagogical and teacher-training strategies, informed by academic literature, can be effectively adapted to sustainably improve English language learning in rural contexts such as Sácama, Casanare?

To tackle this question, it is essential to consider the lack of teacher preparation, the limited inclusive and flexible education policies, and the minimal use of technological tools. These factors necessitate the development of alternative methods that can effectively meet the unique needs of rural settings (Guzmán Murillo et al., 2024; Hoyos-Pipicano, 2024; Pirela-Espina, 2023).

Moreover, discussions around management should be encouraged to promote equitable bilingual education in these rural contexts (Hoyos-Pipicano, 2024; Gómez Sará, 2017). This research is crucial as it sheds light on the realities and challenges of learning English in rural areas, contributing to a more cohesive understanding of bilingual education in Colombia.

Additionally, it offers a comprehensive analysis that can inform teachers, educational managers, and policymakers in crafting more relevant and effective strategies (García Botero & Reyes-Galeano, 2022; Bolaños Sáenz et al., 2018).

The monograph aims to significantly impact the local community of Sácama by providing pedagogical alternatives tailored to its specific characteristics. This approach seeks to advance an educational and social development agenda, using English as a tool for inclusion and opportunity (Castell-Britton, 2024; Hernández Arboleda, 2023)

What sets this monograph apart from previous studies is its rigorous compilation and analysis of evidence, experiences, and specific proposals that address the unique context of Sácama. Its primary contribution lies in integrating pedagogical approaches that consider the technological and cultural limitations of the area. This is closely followed by the emphasis on innovative training strategies for both teachers and students (Guzmán Murillo, Torres Ortega, & Martínez Medrano, 2024; Pacheco, 2022; Benavides Bonilla, 2024).

Thus, this research offers a contextualized and pragmatic perspective that could serve as a replicable model for other rural regions with similar social characteristics, in this light, this work aspires to be a source of critical reflection on studies and teaching proposals related to English learning in rural contexts. It aims to uncover relevant and alternative methods that are adapted to the realities of Sácama, Casanare, thereby contributing to the development of more contextualized and sustainable educational practices.

To achieve this, a documentary review was conducted, drawing on academic and current bibliographic sources, alongside a systematic process of collection, selection, and analysis, this perspective aims to synthesize the existing body of knowledge and highlight best practices and recommendations tailored to the rural context under study.

Justification

Learning English in the rural areas of Colombia, such as Sácama in Casanare, presents a unique set of challenges. With limited internet access, a shortage of educational resources, and insufficient teacher training, the situation can be quite tough. These issues create a significant gap in learning opportunities compared to urban settings, which can seriously affect students' academic progress, motivation, and future prospects.

This study is driven by the pressing need to pinpoint context-sensitive strategies that can enhance English teaching and learning in rural areas. By exploring existing literature, policy documents, and institutional reports, this research uncovers both the challenges and opportunities in rural education. A deeper understanding of these dynamics empowers educators, policymakers, and institutions to develop more effective teaching strategies, support the professional growth of teachers, and ensure equitable access to digital and educational resources.

Additionally, the research highlights the persistence and flexibility of rural teachers and students, as well as possible advantages of community involvement and hybrid teaching methods. The findings seek to contribute to a framework for sustainable, inclusive, and context-aware English language learning in rural contexts, while providing valuable lessons for use in other rural contexts for the country of Colombia and Latin America as a whole.

Objectives

General Objective

To conduct a thorough analysis of technological, pedagogical, and social research, as well as educational proposals related to English learning in rural contexts, in order to identify contextualized and sustainable strategies specifically tailored for the community of Sácama, Casanare.

Specific Objectives

To identify the technological, social, and pedagogical barriers that affect English learning within the rural educational community in Colombia.

To examine methodological approaches and didactic resources that have demonstrated effectiveness in similar rural contexts.

To evaluate teacher training strategies designed to improve English teaching and learning in rural settings.

To formulate recommendations derived from the literature review for the implementation of contextualized and sustainable pedagogical practices in Sácama, Casanare.

Literature Review

The structured approach of this review not only sheds light on the current landscape of English language teaching in rural areas of Colombia but also highlights the opportunities and challenges that inform the educational framework of this monograph.

By doing so, it establishes a robust foundation that contextualizes the research and directs the development of relevant, tailored strategies for English learning within these rural communities.

Rural Education and Inequalities in Colombia

Characteristics of Rurality in Colombia and Latin America

According to Bonilla and Londoño (2021), several key factors define rurality in Colombia. These include a significant level of population displacement, inadequate school infrastructure, and limited access to specialized instructors. Unfortunately, these challenges are not exclusive to Colombia; rural education across Latin America faces similar issues. However, Bonilla and Londoño (2021) highlight that Colombia's rural-urban divide is more pronounced than the regional average.

In rural areas, students often encounter obstacles such as insufficient school transportation, limited digital connectivity, and barriers that hinder a complete educational journey. These factors collectively diminish the quality of learning in these settings.

Contribution to the monograph: This source offers valuable context and a statistical framework that situates the case of Sácama within a broader structural issue regarding rural education in both Colombia and the region. Bonilla and Londoño (2021) present a crucial dataset that supports the overall rationale of this study. It emphasizes that the delivery of English

instruction in rural environments cannot be fully understood without considering the unique physical and logistical challenges these areas face.

Educational Gaps & infrastructural limitations

Recent studies indicate that the gap in average scores on the Saber 11 standardized tests between rural and urban students has been widening. Factors such as disparities in school infrastructure, internet access, and the specialized training of teachers (Bonilla-Mejía & Londoño-Ortega, 2021; García Botero & Reyes Galeano, 2022) appear to play a significant role in this growing divide.

Academics have established a clear link between the persistent widening of the educational gap and the material and human conditions present in rural areas. These conditions not only affect overall educational quality but also hinder the effectiveness of English language learning.

This academic evidence sheds light on the situation in Sácama, highlighting the substantial limitations in both infrastructure and teacher training. These elements are crucial in shaping the quality of English instruction.

English Language Learning in Rural Contexts: Global and National Insights

Global Perspectives on Rural English Language Learning

Recent studies discuss the problems encountered in the teaching and learning of English in rural schools in developing countries, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Their study indicates several issues that threaten an authentic learning of English, including not having any trained foreign language teachers, methods of study based on rote memorization, and materials not being modified adapted for rural contexts. It also indicates that, limited opportunities for meaningful English contact outside classroom time (largely due to geographical isolation, and

limited access to English language media) diminished students' motivation in English language learning. (García Botero & Reyes-Galeano, 2022; Fandiño-Parra et al., 2025; Sánchez Vargas, 2022). Contribution to the monograph: This is highly important as it will provide a complementary international comparative context to demonstrate that many of the issues highlighted, at Sácama, are global in scope. Reports such as this, highlight how simply reproducing urban models without adaptations for rural contexts, does not lead to success. It made it clear that any forms of active, interactive, and culturally relevant methods in a rural context must be normative.

Theoretical Approaches and Pedagogical Strategies for English Learning in Rural Contexts

Theoretical Foundations of Bilingual Education in Colombia

Gómez Sará (2017) offers a critical analysis of Colombia's bilingualism policies and plans from 2004 to 2016, drawing attention to a lack of continuity, the preoccupation with employability, the special status given to English, the imposition of the Common European Framework, and the exclusion of teachers' voices. Hernández Arboleda (2023), in her monograph on adaptability and inclusion in the teaching of English in rural contexts, argues for greater proximity of policy to practice, and the need to "decolonize" English language teaching by incorporating local identities and realities.

Contribution to the monograph: These works provide a theoretical basis to explain the tensions that exist between bilingual policies and classroom practice. They provide rationales as to why national policies are usually not inclusive of the rural context, how teacher-specific contexts may not be accounted for, and what local needs are overlooked, such as the ideas related to educational models centred on Sácama's context.

Pedagogical Strategies: Project-Based Learning in Rural EFL Contexts

Bolaños Sáenz et al. (2018) describe one pedagogical intervention in a rural school in Santander that developed project-based curriculum focused on the community. The authors reported on this experience through interviews and written reflections, and noted that the project-based curriculum provided opportunities for students to enhance their culturally informed English skills, while also fostering a strong cultural identity. The study; however, is not clearly defined as project-based learning. In a similar study, Peña Álvarez (2024) examined technological strategies in rural institutions and recognized project-based learning as a pedagogical approach that inserted community content and used digital tools while engaging students in meaningful learning.

Contribution to the monograph: The examples provided provide easy-to-replicate pedagogical strategies and interventions to Sácama: project-based learning with community content and technological output, engages and motivates students and develops an authentic language aspect of competence, as it strengthens cultural identity and belonging.

Teacher Agency and Policy Appropriation in Rural Contexts

Hoyos Pipicano (2024) investigates how rural teachers in Colombia understand and appropriate policy on bilingualism. In interviews, rural teachers show a disconnect between political discourse and pedagogical action: while teachers appropriate communiques in an eclectic and collective way, they are also grounded in colonial notions that may distort their practice. Benavides Bonilla's (2024) research on technological approaches for teaching English in rural Tolima accents notions of teacher agency and the appropriateness of policies to the contexts of rural teachers.

Contribution to the monograph: Both studies give a critical interpretation of teachers' identity and capacity for agency as they are uniformly receiving poorly contextualized policy. All of this support the need for proposals for Sácama where teachers are forming agency as designer agency and pedagogical designers rather than implementers of externally valued, models of practice.

Systematic Analysis of Bilingual Programs Across Colombia

Using PRISMA methodology, Castell Britton (2024) provides a systematic review of bilingual programs in Colombia over the last ten years. Through frameworks such as Cummins, Krashen and Vygotsky she discusses diversity of context, socioeconomic disadvantages, and obstacles to resources. Carvajal Cárdenas (n.d.) documents the challenges of implementing online education of English as a second language to rural primary students. The need for methodologies that are culture relevant and flexible to technological limited contexts were mentioned as critical.

Contribution to the monograph: These studies demonstrate an updated theoretical framework regarding the successes and failures of bilingual programs in the Colombian context, fundamentally rural contexts. These studies stress the importance of using contextualised strategies, training local educators in their context, and involving the community in the design of interventions in Sácama.

Challenges in Rural English Learning

Reluctance of Teachers and Working Conditions in Rural Areas

In Colombia, rural areas are marked by negative working conditions for English teachers which include inadequate infrastructure, geographic isolation, and limited professional

development opportunities. Hence, teacher mobility is high and furthering the quality of education (Cruz Arcila, 2017).

Contribution to the monograph: This research situates the inability to attract and retain teaching talent in Sácama and demonstrates that working conditions through training and coordination which lead to local acknowledgement are key to continuity and quality of English teaching.

Perceptions of Local Stakeholders and Resource Limitations

García Botero and Reyes Galeano (2022) undertook a qualitative research Project in Quindío and collected perceptions from educators, administrators, and coordinators surrounding English teaching in rural contexts. Local stakeholders' perception reflected a desire for better investment in didactic resources, continuity in pedagogical projects, and to have a voice in educational design.

Contribution to the monograph: This research takes a bottom-up approach, indicating that issues surround teacher mobility are not merely structural, but compounded by the absence of communication and in turn local stakeholders' participation. It follows that the proposal for Sácama must be articulated in conjunction with the educational community, as well as fulfill their tangible needs.

Professional Identity and Tensions with Policy

Cruz-Arcila (2020) explores how rural English teachers in Colombia develop alternative narratives of professional success that sought to escape the standardized purpose imposed by public policy as they identify success more with the appreciation of their community and the pedagogical sensibility of their context.

Contribution to the monograph: This line of inquiry shows the value of affirming the local teacher identity in Sácama. Rather than imposing models established in urban centers, a focus on how teachers perceive and conceptualize their successes in their own contexts -valuing success in order to co-construct empowering, sustainable proposals is relevant.

Interconnected Challenges and Teacher Resilience

The issues described in the previous section are interconnected as challenging working conditions limit local understanding of rural issues and teacher participation, which affects professional identity. Many rural teachers display resilience and create creative responses to the challenges they face and remain motivated to be part of their community and fulfill their commitment as a teacher despite having limited resources (Ramírez Valencia & Álvarez, 2023; Silva-Serrano and Martínez, 2024).

Contribution to the monograph: Acknowledging the educators' resilience offers a more tempered view that also focuses on the strengths of teachers as well as the difficulties they face. This is vital where policy might support existing teacher agency through community-oriented policies and local participation.

The Digital Divide and Technological Access in Rural English Education

Digital Inequality in Rural Education in Colombia

A number of studies have shown that, in rural areas in Colombia, the digital divide goes far beyond device access. It includes issues of digital competencies and connectivity: in 2020, there were only 12% of rural households that could connect to the internet (Rincón & Martínez, 2022). This inequity inhibits the regular integration of ICT in academic activity and effectively influences English teaching.

Contribution to the monograph: This study endorses that technology is not the only issue in Sácama, but rather a structural one, and therefore cannot just focus on technology access but rather should include teachers with relevant and contextualized teacher training in digital competencies that are cognizant of the role of the community.

Effects of Geographic Isolation on Student Performance

Bonilla-Mejía and Londoño Ortega (2021) employed a model based on geographic discontinuity to find that with each additional hour of distance between the rural school and the education office signage, test scores decreased significantly in the academic transition with a very strong coefficient estimate, even when controlling for socioeconomic variables.

Contribution to the monograph: This is very rigorous and strong empirical evidence to demonstrate that remoteness is very much a real barrier to learning. In Sácama further discussed how this dynamic reinforces the importance of proximity with educational strategies focused on community support combined with flexible pedagogies that are adapted to geography.

Pandemic Responses: Hybrid Media Strategies

A regional review of policies relating to education during the pandemic in Latin America found hybrid strategies involving radio, television, printed guides, or digital platforms. The review found that two key limitations for interventions being effective in rural contexts was the discontinuity of it all and a lack of local tailoring (Shi et al., 2022).

Contribution to the monograph: The evidence supports that educational continuity can be part of the overall educational picture, without the need to access ideal connectivity, through hybrid strategies. For Sácama, these strategies provide a realistic and viable way of engaging English teaching through physical media and community media resources.

Multimedia Materials in Rural Classrooms

A qualitative analysis in rural settings illustrates limitations with multimedia resources, such as blogs or digital spaces, particularly in useability. The effective use of multimedia resources is still reliant on the infrastructure, the possession of the appropriate stance toward technology, and the absence of teacher training (Pirela Espina, 2023). Contribution to the monograph: This finding reinforces the need to be concerned in proposing technological strategies that meaningfully respond to Sácama's real contexts. Recommendations should include teacher training on technology and guided digital resources that are minimal, low-resourced, and provide pedagogical support.

Innovations to Bridge the Digital Divide

A new academic study finds that the digital divide becomes even larger when examining not just the infrastructure but also the digital competencies of teachers and students. It also suggests that policies should holistically integrate both technologies and strengthening the ICT skills of teachers and students (Rincón & Martínez, 2022).

Contribution to the monograph: This report reinforces the argument for designing interventions that not only provide connectivity, but also bring together both infrastructure with training and the development of digital culture to facilitate long-term change in rural settings like Sácama.

Motivation, Autonomy, and Resilience in Rural English Learners

Motivation in Rural English Learning

Ramírez Valencia and Álvarez (2023) point out that in the context of Colombian rurality, students' motivation to learn English is largely shaped by the community in which they live, family expectations, and aspirations for social mobility. The absence of authentic exposure to the

language, given the geographical isolation and lack of consumption of English media, limits rigorous interest in the language.

Contribution to the monograph: This research emphasizes the importance of connecting the learning of English with meaningful community projects in Sácama so that students see it as a living, practical tool. Connecting the activities and projects that are socially productive, regarding local identity and socioeconomic development, facilitates the strengthening of intrinsic conditions such as motivation and sustained commitment to meaningfully engaging in the learning of English.

Learner Autonomy in Limited-Resource Settings

Bedoya (2014) provides evidence in a study with graduate students in a virtual EFL course that video exchanges and discussion forums foster autonomous learning behaviors—like self-regulation and planning for oneself—without constant access to a teacher face-to-face.

Contribution to the monograph: These examples provide evidence of the feasibility of helping promote autonomy in Sácama with simple strategies and basic digital resources that reduce reliance on or connectivity. By developing skills in self-regulation and self-management, rural students are empowered to make advances in their learning with more independence and confidence.

Resilience in Rural Learners

An analysis done in the Colombian context found that rural students who overcome economic and logistical obstacles exhibit higher levels of perseverance and compensatory strategies that favour their orientation for language learning; especially if it involves excessive overload the student may experience emotional and physical exhaustion (Silva-Serrano & Martínez, 2024; Guzmán Murillo et al., 2024; Sánchez Vargas, 2022).

Contribution to the monograph: Understanding resilience as an intrinsic quality of rural students allows for the development of policies in Sácama that can grant emotional assistance and pedagogical flexibility, both of which can support avoidance of burnout; allowing for sustainable and balanced learning in contexts of high vulnerability.

Teacher Role in Motivation and Autonomy

Ramírez (2018), in an action research results with first-semester students at Universidad del Valle, noted that promoting autonomous behaviors makes students feel more engaged, responsible for their learning of English, and showed that teachers play a vital role in promoting autonomy. Contribution to the monograph: For Sácama, this approach consists of forming teachers towards motivational strategies and educational coaching promoting students' self-regulation and autonomy, allowing teachers to move beyond the role of content transmitters to guides and coaches of learning.

Community Involvement and Motivation

Various studies suggest that the involvement of community leaders, alumni, and families in English events such as conversation clubs or in-school cultural fairs fosters school motivation and strengthens linguistic identity (Bolaños Sáenz et al., 2018; Rosales-Acosta, Vidaurre, & Dover, 2019; Ramírez Valencia & Álvarez, 2023).

Contribution to the monograph: Bringing a element of a living English within the framework of the local culture enacted through active community engagement with Sácama, contributes to the significance of the language and helps strengthen a sense of belonging. This may allow learning to move beyond language labs or classrooms towards human and social and cultural life, integrating the academic with the more broad social and cultural contexts.

Pedagogical Innovations for Rural English Learning

Context-Adapted Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Ortiz-García and Contreras-Pinilla (2023) note the approach to communicative language teaching in rural is to streamline materials, implement topics related to local life and context as much as possible, and position local artifacts in lieu of technology like posters and role-playing game activities promote active and agentic engagement and lower language anxiety. These adaptations are necessary to develop meaningful learning experiences from rural communities, wherein technology is not present and social context requires pedagogies that are appropriate to the local context (Bonilla & Londoño, 2021; García Botero & Reyes-Galeano, 2022). In addition, Bolaños Sáenz et al. (2018) assert that collaborative learning and a focus on functional communication increases motivation and the retention of the English Language. Findings such as these reinforce the need to develop flexible methodologies, which respond to the realities of the Colombian rural context.

Contribution to the monograph: Understanding that CLT needs to be adapted to the realities of agriculture and community, can facilitate in proposing contextualized oral practice activities in Sácama that foster confidence and functional use of English that relate learning objectives to the lives and interests of students.

Task-Based Learning with Local Content

The communicative tasks designed in rural contexts have used localized topics to illustrate that when activities are relevant to students, they can more actively participate in the learning process. This is consistent with other studies, emphasizing pedagogy context based on the socioeconomic reality of rural communities, which increases the relevance and feasibility of language (Bolaños Sáenz et al., 2018; Bonilla-Mejía & Londoño-Ortega, 2021). In a similar vein,

Ballesteros Carmona (2025) and Bonilla and Londoño (2021) acknowledge that creating themes to integrate local culture and economy can motivate students and address educational barriers experienced in remote populations. The authors indicate that task-based learning can be a strategy that promotes active engagement in a rural context with limited resources.

Contribution to the monograph: Tasks around the local economy and culture in Sácama, as a simulated business selling local products or conducting a tourism guide to Sácama, can promote motivation and applicability of English and can link classrooms with the community.

Multimodal Resources without Internet Dependency

Farías and Véliz (2019) details the use of multimodal resources - like recordings on basic cell phones and community dramatizations - to promote expanded exposure to language in low-connectivity contexts with success. Bonilla and Londoño (2021) and Rincón and Martínez (2022) describe the necessity of thinking innovatively about language education, as some rural locations only have intermittent internet connectivity and educators cannot rely on broad, sophisticated digital strategies. Also, Shi, Tiramonti, and Tovar (2022) stated that the urgency for resources that are flexible and adaptable based on also precarious connections is further heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contribution to the monograph: This background supports the proposal of leveraging homemade and portable resources to overcome technical limitations to develop continuity of learning opportunities in Sácama and other rural contexts that have limited access to the internet.

Peer Teaching and Cross-Grade Collaboration

Bedoya (2014) state that peer teaching and team work with other grades have a positive influence on retention and communicative confidence in rural one-room school contexts. Bolaños Sáenz et al. (2018) help situate this collaboratively-student-led practice by noting that it

presented an aspect of horizontal learning and independence. Similarly, Carvajal Cárdenas (n.d.) assert that collaborative practices enhance rural students' school experience, generating "an ambience of communal learning" and resilience.

Contribution to the monograph: Encouraging practices of mentorship and environments of horizontal learning in the form of allowing more advanced students to assist novice learners within the form of peer teaching, can lessen the dependency on the teacher and build greater autonomy and communicative confidence.

Blended Learning with Offline Platforms

The work of Benavides Bonilla (2024) used a hybrid model in rural areas with offline platforms providing USB content for students, and being able to access materials at any time. They noted that Pirela-Espina (2023) and Bonilla and Londoño (2021) agreed on a hybrid model approach increased equity in rural contexts where connectivity was very limited, allowing students to learn asynchronously and reduce the impact of geographical isolation.

Contribution to the monograph: The hybrid model described in the previous section provides a concrete option for Sácama, emphasizing a combination of face-to-face activities with portable digital resources that allow flexible access to learning without the need for continual connection, and therefore autonomy.

Teacher Training and Professional Development in Rural EFL Contexts

Limited Access to Formal Training Programs

Hernández Arboleda (2023) underscore that most opportunities for training English teachers are centralized in urban areas. This is detrimental to rural teachers who deal with displacement and connectivity issues. Also, Bonilla and Londoño (2021) and Cruz-Arcila (2017) affirm that this centralization generates inequity in teacher training and consequently, in

educational quality in remote zones. Garcia Botero and Reyes-Galeano (2022) point out the importance of urgent contextualized and decentralized training models.

Contribution to the monograph: This finding reflects the need for a more contextualized and flexible teacher training model in Sácama that uses mobile or local face-to-face strategies to put training closer to rural teachers, therefore eliminating geographical barriers.

Teacher Preparedness and Language Proficiency Gaps

Bonilla and Londoño (2021) claimed that many teachers working in rural areas did not exhibit overlap in the required B2 level, which restricts the quality of their teaching and the use of communicative methodologies. Moreno and Castillo (2022) indicated that teachers' language skills could be strengthened through local or regionally based immersion language experiences, and peer tutoring/mentoring, which could bridge the gap between experienced and novice teachers in rural settings. Furthermore, Castell-Britton (2024) indicated that the preparation of rural teachers requires intentional, holistic approaches to teacher capacity, where technical and pedagogical are highlighted.

Contribution to the monograph: Strengthening the language capabilities and competencies of teachers in Sácama through local or regionally based immersion program and peer tutoring/mentoring will strengthen English teaching and support better learning outcomes.

Peer Mentoring and Collaborative Networks

Bonilla and Londoño (2021) have shown how teacher collaboration networks foster motivation and pedagogical innovation, even in contexts of limited technology. Cruz-Arcila (2020) shares that shared projects across teachers in remote regions opens up new paths for other teachers to create strategies for their realities in rural situations. Hernández Arboleda (2023)

notes the collaborative networks are essential for exchanging good practices and building collective knowledge, certainly as an impulse toward promising educational practices.

Contribution to the monograph: Support collaboration among teachers in Sácama to encourage the exchange of strategies and provide their collegial support to offer the potential to collectively sharpen pedagogical practice as well as their own professional motivation within a rural context.

Continuous Professional Development through Microlearning

Peña Álvarez (2024) researched short microlearning modules in the physical or portable digital format that allow teachers to always stay up to date without the need for Internet; the said research touches on the very nature of facilitating future opportunities for constant updating with no dependencies. Peña Álvarez (2024) mentions that these self-instructional materials overcome blocks for access and limitations of rural conditions; microlearning is an effective modality to address ongoing training opportunities in contexts of technicolor difficulty.

Contribution to the monograph: Microlearning modules that can be provided to teachers in accessible offline formats are a realistic viable option for ongoing teacher training in Sácama, creating viable means for real forms of professional development opportunities.

Culturally Responsive Teacher Training

According to Fandiño-Parra, Muñoz-Barriga, and Barbosa-Hernández (2025) teacher training in a rural context needs to include an intercultural dimension to take into consideration the students' identity and mother tongue; this fosters disconnection and demotivation. Hernández Arboleda (2023) also contextualizes that intercultural approaches strengthen relevance and inclusion because teachers have hopefully fostered respect for diverse ways of being and knowing, continuing student driven, motivating teaching. Gomez-Sará (2017) and Hoyos-

Pipicano (2024) point out that to ignore diversity and different cultural backgrounds could exacerbate the lack of belonging faced by rural students and deepen the educational divide. Contribution to the monograph: Integrating intercultural approaches in teacher training for developing English teaching in EC school in Sácama will support relevance, respect, and motivation, which strengthens the connections between English learning and the local community.

Methodology

This research utilized a qualitative documentary design, which involved a systematic, critical, and analytical review of literature focused on English learning in rural contexts. The primary aim of this design was to develop a thorough understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and pedagogical strategies identified in various academic and institutional sources.

Research Approach and Type

The study embraced a qualitative approach, emphasizing the interpretation and synthesis of knowledge from secondary sources rather than quantifying variables. It is classified as documentary research, as it relied on the examination of published academic literature, institutional reports, and official documents. This approach facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the topic in alignment with the research question.

Method and Population

The chosen method was a systematic literature review, which ensured rigor, transparency, and reproducibility throughout the search and analysis processes. Although there was no direct human population involved, the documentary sample comprised 33 academic and institutional sources related to English language learning in rural contexts, specifically in Colombia and Latin

America. These sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, undergraduate theses, research projects, and official educational reports published between 2015 and 2024.

Data Collection Protocol

The review adhered to a systematic search protocol conducted from February to May 2024. Searches were performed across several databases and repositories, including:

- Scopus
- ERIC
- Google Scholar
- ResearchGate
- Redalyc
- Dialnet
- UNAD Institutional Repository

The search terms were carefully structured using Boolean operators (AND / OR) and included the following combinations:

- “English language teaching” AND “rural education”
- “digital competencies” OR “ICT” AND “Colombia”
- “teacher training” AND “rural schools”
- “virtual learning environments” AND “Latin America”

Each document retrieved was organized in an Excel matrix that included fields such as author, year, country, research method, focus, key findings, and thematic category.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria:

- Studies published between 2015 and 2024 to ensure the evidence is current.

- Peer-reviewed journal articles, graduate theses, or official institutional reports.
- Research addressing English learning or bilingual education in rural contexts, particularly in Colombia and Latin America.
- Publications available in English or Spanish.

Exclusion criteria:

- Duplicated or incomplete records.
- Studies focused solely on urban or non-school contexts.
- Opinion essays or non-academic reflections lacking theoretical or methodological support.

Data Analysis

The analysis was guided by the thematic analysis model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This framework involved several steps:

- Familiarization with the selected sources through detailed reading.
- Generation of initial codes to identify recurring ideas and concepts (e.g., “teacher training,” “digital divide,” “community involvement”).
- Organization of these codes into themes aligned with the study objectives.
- Review and synthesis of the findings to ensure consistency and coherence.

For managing bibliographic sources, Zotero software was utilized, while Microsoft Excel was employed to systematize the information, create analytical matrices, and classify documents according to the thematic categories derived from the literature.

Phases of the Research Process

- Planning Phase: Definition of objectives, research question, and search strategy.

- Data Collection Phase: Systematic search and selection of documents from the specified databases.
- Organization and Coding Phase: Classification and categorization of information using Excel.
- Analysis and Interpretation Phase: Thematic synthesis and triangulation of findings in relation to the research objectives.
- Validation Phase: Review of results by the research advisor to ensure methodological coherence.

Ethical Considerations

Although this research did not involve human participants, it adhered to ethical standards in academic research by:

- Respecting intellectual property and citation norms (APA 7th edition).
- Utilizing officially published and publicly available sources.
- Ensuring academic integrity through proper paraphrasing and referencing.

All information was used exclusively for educational and research purposes, in accordance with UNAD's ethical guidelines.

Results and Discussion

The literature review analysis unveiled a number of barriers to English learning in rural scenarios like Sácama, Casanare. In relation to Objective 1, the analysis highlighted significant technological challenges. These include poor internet connectivity and limited access to digital devices. Furthermore, many teachers lack training in digital competencies, and there are few technological resources tailored to the local context (Rincón & Martínez, 2022; Pirela Espina, 2023). Such limitations hinder the effective use of ICT tools and disrupt the continuity of English instruction.

Social barriers also play a crucial role. Due to the geographical isolation of rural areas, students have minimal exposure to English, which diminishes their motivation and reduces their interaction with the culture associated with the language (Ramírez Valencia & Álvarez, 2023). Additionally, rural teachers often face precarious working conditions, including limited opportunities for professional development, challenges in mobility, and insufficient institutional support. These factors negatively affect teacher retention and the overall quality of education (Cruz Arcila, 2017; García Botero & Reyes Galeano, 2022).

Despite these challenges, the resilience of teachers and the involvement of the community emerged as vital strengths. These elements help sustain commitment and encourage innovative practices that are well-suited to the local context (Ramírez Valencia & Álvarez, 2023; Silva-Serrano & Martínez, 2024).

In addressing Objective 2, the analysis found that methodological approaches combining project-based learning with communicative language teaching adapted to local culture and resources are effective in motivating students and enhancing their linguistic identity (Bolaños Sáenz et al., 2018; Bonilla & Londoño, 2021). The incorporation of multimodal, low-tech

resources, hybrid learning models, and offline digital materials offers practical solutions to infrastructure challenges and promotes learner autonomy (Pirela-Espina, 2023; Peña Álvarez, 2024).

These adaptable methodologies align well with the specific needs of students in Sácama.

Improving the quality of English teaching hinges on effective teacher training and professional development opportunities. Evidence indicates that decentralized, context-sensitive training is more impactful, addressing not only language proficiency but also pedagogy and digital literacy (Bonilla & Londoño, 2021; Castell Britton, 2024). Communities of practice and micro-learning initiatives can provide ongoing support for rural teachers. Culturally responsive training that affirms local identities and promotes intercultural approaches enhances relevance and engagement among both teachers and students (Hernández Arboleda, 2023; Gómez Sará, 2017).

In summary, the findings underscore the necessity for integrated interventions in Sácama that address technological, social, pedagogical, and policy dimensions. The study recommends:

- Implementing flexible and community-oriented pedagogies.
- Strengthening teacher agency through professional development tailored to rural contexts.
- Promoting low-cost technological tools to foster sustainable and inclusive English learning environments.

These findings provide a solid foundation for designing educational approaches that respond to the unique challenges faced in rural Colombia and may be applicable in similar contexts.

This documentary approach allows for the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences drawn from the literature, focusing specifically on the realities of Sácama, Casanare. It aims to generate contextualized and sustainable recommendations that can benefit teachers, educational managers, and policymakers involved in bilingual education in rural settings.

Conclusions

In addressing Objective 1, this study reveals that English language learning in rural areas, such as Sácama, Casanare, faces numerous technological, social, and pedagogical challenges, limited connectivity and a scarcity of digital resources significantly hinder opportunities for interactive and multimedia learning experiences. Furthermore, the lack of training for teachers in digital competencies restricts the effective integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the classroom.

Geographical isolation also plays a crucial role, as it diminishes students' exposure to the English language, adversely affecting their motivation. Additionally, the challenging working conditions faced by rural teachers impact both retention rates and the overall quality of pedagogy, however, it is essential to consider key factors such as teacher resilience and a sense of community belonging, which can foster innovative practices tailored to local contexts.

Project-based methodologies that incorporate contextual content and communicative approaches, adapted to the resources available, have proven effective in motivating students and enhancing their linguistic identity. Utilizing low-cost multimodal resources and hybrid teaching models offers practical solutions to infrastructural limitations while promoting learner autonomy.

In direct response to the research question, the findings suggest that the most applicable and sustainable pedagogical strategies for English learning in Sácama are those that integrate contextualized project-based learning, community participation, and flexible technology use. These strategies are most effective when they connect classroom activities with students' local experiences, rural identities, and socio-cultural realities.

From the perspective of teacher training, the evidence indicates that continuous professional development programs grounded in intercultural, collaborative, and reflective

approaches are vital for ensuring long-term sustainability. Such training should extend beyond mere linguistic enhancement to encompass digital literacy, pedagogical innovation, and community-based practices.

Ultimately, a decentralized, contextualized, and ongoing approach to English teacher training encompassing pedagogical, linguistic, and digital dimensions—is essential for improving the quality of English learning in rural areas. Incorporating intercultural and collaborative approaches into teacher training not only enhances its relevance but also boosts motivation among both teachers and students.

Therefore, this monograph illustrates that sustainable improvements in rural English education hinge on the alignment of teacher development, community involvement, and technological adaptability. This conclusion not only addresses the research question but also offers a replicable framework for other rural municipalities with similar characteristics, demonstrating that English learning can serve as a catalyst for inclusion, opportunity, and local empowerment.

Recommendations

Given the limited connectivity and access to digital resources in Sácama, it is essential to design and implement training programs for teachers. These programs should focus on developing digital competencies, flexible pedagogies, and intercultural understanding, utilizing both face-to-face and virtual formats tailored to the rural context.

Research indicates that project-based learning, local content integration, and the use of lowcost multimodal resources significantly enhance student motivation and autonomy. Therefore, it is crucial to develop flexible pedagogical strategies that incorporate these approaches alongside hybrid teaching models.

Active community engagement plays a vital role in enhancing cultural identity and the social relevance of learning English. To support the design and implementation of educational projects, it is important to promote pedagogies that involve teachers, students, families, and community leaders.

In light of centralized education policies that often overlook equitable access to resources in rural areas, there is a pressing need to advocate for inclusive and decentralized policies. Such policies would ensure equal access to technological tools, teacher training, and pedagogical support.

Furthermore, teacher collaboration networks and continuous learning modalities, such as microlearning, have shown positive outcomes in rural contexts. Strengthening these collaboration networks, creating peer tutoring initiatives, and sharing effective practices are vital steps to promote teacher agency and enhance educational quality.

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