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Historical thinking and territorial justice in the context of citizenship education: a scoping review

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Support - ANID.

Review Stage at time of this submission - Preliminary searches.

Conflicts of interest - None declared.

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Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 30 June 2026 and was last updated on 12 August 2026.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective Review Question: How do strategies and programs reported in specialized pedagogical literature promote the development of critical historical thinking and its articulation with civic competencies and Human Rights in secondary education students?

General Objective: Analyze the scientific production that promotes the development of (critical) historical thinking and its articulation with civic competencies and Human Rights.

Background Traditional history teaching focused on factual memorization often fails to prepare students for active democratic participation. Educational research advocates transitioning to historical thinking models, emphasizing second-order concepts or metaconcepts (historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, perspective, and the ethical dimension) to cultivate critical cognitive skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013; Wineburg, 2001).

Concurrently, critical social sciences reframe geographical space and territory not as passive containers but as dynamic social products shaped by power asymmetries and socio-environmental tensions. When integrated into citizenship education, space becomes a locus of rights and civic responsibilities through the lens of spatial, territorial, and environmental justice. While curriculums progressively emphasize historical consciousness and temporal orientation toward democratic futures, a critical line of inquiry explores how these theoretical models are operationalized when addressing contemporary socio-territorial conflicts (Chávez-Preisler & Pagès, 2020; Giroux, 2022).

Rationale Traditional history teaching focused on factual transmission has been criticized for its insufficiency in preparing students for active citizenship. Recent curricular transformations prioritize historical thinking dimensions (second-order concepts) to foster higher-order cognitive skills. However, a significant line of inquiry revolves around how these theoretical models are operationalized and integrated regarding

contemporary socio-environmental and territorial conflicts within citizenship education settings. This scoping review aims to map international evidence to clarify the state of the art and identify critical disciplinary gaps.

METHODS

Strategy of data synthesis English Search (WoS / Scopus / EBSCO / Taylor & Francis / Sage / ERIH PLUS):

("historical thinking" OR "historical consciousness") AND "critical thinking" AND "human rights" AND ("secondary education" OR "secondary school" OR "high school")

Spanish Search (EBSCO / ERIH PLUS / Dialnet / SciELO):

("pensamiento histórico" OR "conciencia histórica") AND "pensamiento crítico" AND "derechos humanos" AND ("educación secundaria" OR "enseñanza media" OR "bachillerato").

Eligibility criteria PICOS / PCC Framework:

P (Population): Secondary education students (aged 12–18) and/or secondary school teachers who teach History and/or Social Sciences didactics.

I (Intervention): Didactic strategies, classroom programs, methodological units, and source analysis oriented toward historical thinking in the History and/or Social Sciences subject.

C (Comparator): No comparator required (both single-group/qualitative empirical designs and comparative studies are accepted if available).

O (Outcomes): Development of analytical skills regarding historical thinking, civic-citizenship competencies, and the promotion of Human Rights.

S (Setting / Study Design): Empirical primary research (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods). Book reviews, editorials, and brief conference proceedings are excluded.

Source of evidence screening and selection

The selection process will follow the PRISMA-ScR guidelines across distinct stages. First, search results from Web of Science and Scopus will be exported as RIS files and uploaded to the Rayyan platform for management. Second, an automated duplicate removal process will be performed. Third, two independent reviewers will conduct a blind screening of all titles and abstracts based on pre-established inclusion and exclusion criteria (PCC framework). Studies deemed potentially eligible will progress to full-text review. Fourth, the same two reviewers will independently assess the

full-text articles to determine final eligibility. Any disagreements or discrepancies between the reviewers at either the abstract or full-text screening stages will be resolved through discussion and consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, a third senior reviewer (adviser) will arbitrate the final decision. The final selection results, including reasons for full-text exclusion, will be fully documented and displayed using a PRISMA flow diagram.

Data management Document citation data will be exported as RIS files and uploaded to the Rayyan platform. Two independent reviewers will screen titles and abstracts in a blind process to resolve discrepancies by consensus. Full-text screening will follow to extract descriptive variables and analytical themes.

Reporting results / Analysis of the evidence

Data analysis will follow a narrative synthesis approach, combining descriptive and thematic charting. A standardized data extraction form will be utilized to compile key characteristics from each included study, such as author, year of publication, geographical location, educational level (with emphasis on secondary education), methodological design (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods), and specific pedagogical strategies. Concurrently, a thematic analysis will be executed to map how second-order historical thinking concepts (the Big Six) converge with critical territorial justice elements (power relations, subaltern visibility, and socio-environmental controversies). Additionally, the methodological quality of the included empirical studies will be evaluated using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) to ensure transparency and systematic categorization of evidence.

Presentation of the results The presentation of results will feature visual and tabular aids to ensure clear evidence mapping. A formal PRISMA 2020 flowchart will illustrate the screening, exclusion, and final study inclusion progression. Descriptive findings will be organized into summary tables detailing the study metadata, geographic distribution of authorship, and research methodologies. The core conceptual findings will be presented via an integrated analytical matrix. This matrix will cross-reference the six historical thinking metaconcepts against the identified dimensions of spatial and environmental justice, accompanied by narrative thematic descriptions highlighting pedagogical convergence axes, current trends, and existing literature gaps.

Language restriction The search will be limited to articles published in English and Spanish, as they represent the primary vehicular languages for scientific literature within this specific didactic field.

Country(ies) involved The scoping review is being carried out entirely in Chile, conducted by an author affiliated with the Universidad de Concepción.

Keywords Citizenship Education; History Teaching; Territorial Justice; Metaconcepts; Historical Thinking.

Dissemination plans The findings will be disseminated through three main channels. First, the scoping review will be submitted for publication as an open-access article in a high-impact, peer-reviewed international journal indexed in Web of Science (WoS), EBSCO and Scopus (such as *Panta Rei*). Second, preliminary and final results will be presented at national and international conferences specializing in history and social sciences didactics. Third, this review will constitute the first foundational chapter of a doctoral thesis by compendium, serving as the theoretical and empirical baseline to inform subsequent empirical research and feedback within the regional educational community.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Fabián García - Conceptualized the scoping review, developed the search strategy, drafted the study protocol, and will lead the data synthesis and final manuscript writing.

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Author 2 - Carlos Muñoz - Contributed to the methodology design, will participate in the independent double-blind screening of sources using Rayyan, and critically reviewed the protocol.

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Author 3 - Carolina Chávez Preisler - Provided conceptual supervision, will act as a third reviewer to resolve screening disagreements, and contributed to the critical revision of the protocol.

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