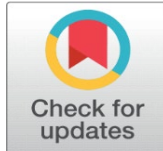
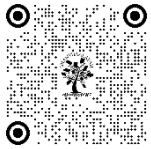


GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS AND VISUALIZATION OF RESEARCH TRENDS AND THEMES

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a bibliometric analysis of English Language Teaching (ELT), a field dedicated to the teaching and learning English by non-native speakers for communication, academic, and professional purposes. The analysis utilized Biblioshiny and VOSviewer software, with data from the Scopus bibliographic database, covering research from 1943 to 2022. The findings reveal a steady growth in ELT publications, with an exponential rise post-2010, underscoring the field's increasing global significance. Key contributors, such as Ali Al-Issa and Fan Fang, and influential journals, including the ELT Journal and Asian Englishes, were identified as shaping the discourse. A Three-Field Plot highlighted the interplay between authors, sources, and countries, with the United States, China, and Turkey emerging as major hubs for ELT research. Trend analysis revealed shifts from traditional themes like curriculum and teacher training to modern topics such as e-learning, global Englishes, and the impact of COVID-19 on teaching practices. Thematic mapping identified English as a Lingua Franca and blended learning as motor themes driving research, while foundational topics like teacher education showed potential for further development. The co-occurrence of keywords highlighted the interconnectedness of research topics, with clusters focusing on global perspectives, pedagogy, and technology integration. Moreover, the co-authorship network revealed limited international collaboration, suggesting opportunities to enhance global partnerships. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into ELT's intellectual structure, research gaps, and practical implications, aiding future advancements in this dynamic field.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Bibliometric Analysis, Biblioshiny, VOSviewer

1. INTRODUCTION

English Language Teaching (ELT) is a dynamic and evolving field that plays a crucial role in fostering global communication, cultural exchange, and academic advancement (D'Arcy Nell, 2017; Khansir & Pakdel, 2018). As English continues to dominate as the world's lingua franca, teaching the language effectively has become a priority for educators and policymakers worldwide (Al-Issa, 2021). The field encompasses diverse methodologies and approaches tailored to cater to learners of various backgrounds, age groups, and proficiency levels (Alimi, 2011). ELT also serves as a bridge for individuals to access better opportunities in education, employment, and international collaboration (Alnajjar & Brick, 2017).

One of the central focuses of ELT is understanding the learner's needs and context. English language learners (ELLs) may vary from young children learning the basics of phonics to adult professionals seeking advanced communication skills (Anwar, 2015). As such, ELT methodologies have evolved from traditional grammar-translation methods to modern approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL) (Bhuvaneswari, 2016). Technology has further transformed the landscape of ELT by providing tools like virtual classrooms, language apps, and AI-driven learning platforms, allowing for greater flexibility and interactivity (Alnajjar & Brick, 2017; Campoy-Cubillo et al., 2010).

Another key aspect of ELT is its emphasis on cultural sensitivity and inclusivity (Mahmoud, 2015; Xiong et al., 2022). Language is inherently tied to culture, and teaching English involves introducing learners to the cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and societal norms of English-speaking communities (Krasner, 1999; Mahmoud, 2015). Simultaneously, effective ELT respects and incorporates learners' native languages and cultural backgrounds to create a more inclusive learning environment (Kovács, 2017). This dual focus not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters intercultural competence, a vital skill in today's interconnected world (Cruz, 2010; Kostikova et al., 2018).

English Language Teaching is more than just imparting linguistic knowledge—it is about empowering individuals to navigate the globalized world with confidence and competence (Hazaea et al., 2021; Li & Li, 2014). With the growing demand for English proficiency across various domains, ELT professionals are continually innovating to make learning more engaging, equitable, and accessible (Ekstam & Sarvandy, 2017; Ghosh, 2022). By integrating technology, embracing cultural diversity, and adapting to learners' needs, ELT continues to contribute significantly to personal and societal development (Nguyen, 2021; R'Boul, 2021).

Bibliometric analysis has emerged as a powerful tool for understanding trends, patterns, and developments within academic disciplines, including English Language Teaching (ELT) (Agbo et al., 2021; Aristovnik et al., 2020). With the proliferation of research in ELT, analyzing scholarly output through bibliometric techniques offers valuable insights into the intellectual structure, influential studies, and emerging themes in the field (Aristovnik et al., 2020; Bota-Avram, 2023). By leveraging tools like Biblioshiny, an R-based application, and VOSviewer, a visualization software, researchers can systematically explore the evolution of ELT research and its key contributors, journals, and geographic hubs (Guleria & Kaur, 2021; Huang et al., 2021; Waghmare, 2021). This analysis helps educators, scholars, and policymakers identify knowledge gaps and prioritize areas for future research (Husain & Mustafa, 2023).

Biblioshiny and VOSviewer complement each other in performing bibliometric analyses by offering unique features tailored to different aspects of the research process (Kumar et al., 2023). Biblioshiny provides a user-friendly interface for conducting descriptive analyses, such as identifying publication trends, prolific authors, and frequently cited works (Guleria & Kaur, 2021; Racine, 2012; Waghmare, 2021). Meanwhile, VOSviewer specializes in creating visual networks, such as co-citation, co-authorship, and keyword co-occurrence maps, which reveal relationships between concepts and contributors in ELT research (McAllister et al., 2022; Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). Together, these tools enable researchers to examine the field's dynamics and its interdisciplinary connections, particularly as ELT intersects with technology, linguistics, and education.

Through bibliometric analysis, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the factors driving the growth of ELT scholarship, including global shifts in language education priorities, technological advancements, and the increasing demand for English proficiency. This approach not only highlights the contributions of influential authors and institutions but also uncovers underrepresented areas, such as the role of non-native English-speaking countries in shaping ELT discourse. As bibliometric studies continue to grow in importance, they provide a robust foundation for advancing ELT by aligning academic inquiry with practical needs in an ever-evolving global context.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

We collected scientific publications related to the investigation from the Scopus database (Archambault et al., 2009; Harzing & Alakangas, 2016; Kawuki et al., 2020). We retrieve bibliographic data using a search query such as TITLE-ABS-KEY ("english language teaching"). The search was not restricted to any particular language, and the data included articles from peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and conference papers. We collected 924 articles from 1998

different sources, spanning 1943 to 2022. To ensure accuracy, we screened the Scopus records to remove any duplicates. The results were saved as a "CSV" file, and we performed bibliometric analysis on the data using VOSviewer and Bibloshiny software.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

3.1. Main Information of the investigation

Table 1 provides an extensive overview of the bibliometric analysis of English Language Teaching (ELT) research, spanning from 1943 to 2022, highlights a significant and steadily growing body of work, with an annual growth rate of 7.89% and 2,998 documents sourced from 924 unique journals, books, and other publications. The dataset reflects an average document age of 8.26 years and an impressive average of 11.87 citations per document, emphasizing the field's academic relevance and impact. Contributions from 4,326 authors showcase a mix of individual and collaborative efforts, with 1,450 single-authored documents and an average of 1.85 authors per paper, though international co-authorships remain relatively low at 11.14%. The majority of publications are journal articles (2,335), complemented by book chapters (443) and conference papers (220). The thematic diversity is enriched by 1,587 machine-generated keywords and 5,879 author-provided keywords, underlining the broad scope of topics in ELT research. With 97,265 references, this analysis underscores the depth and diversity of the field, while also suggesting opportunities for greater global collaboration and innovation.

Table 1. Main information of the investigation

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1943:2022
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	924
Documents	2998
Annual Growth Rate %	7.89
Document Average Age	8.26
Average citations per doc	11.87
References	97265
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1587
Author's Keywords (DE)	5879
AUTHORS	
Authors	4326
Authors of single-authored docs	1185
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	1450
Co-Authors per Doc	1.85
International co-authorships %	11.14
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	2335
book chapter	443
conference paper	220

3.2. Annual Scientific Productions

Figure 1 highlights the annual scientific production in English Language Teaching (ELT) research, which shows a gradual and sporadic start from 1943 to the late 1970s, with only a few publications each year. Significant growth begins in the 1980s, with a gradual rise in outputs, culminating in consistent double-digit publications by the early 2000s. The field experiences a rapid surge from 2010 onwards, with annual publication numbers surpassing 100 by 2011 and reaching

254 in 2018. The most dramatic growth occurs from 2019 to 2022, with publications climbing from 294 in 2019 to a record 402 in 2022. This exponential increase reflects the growing global demand for ELT research, fueled by advancements in education technology and the prominence of English as a global language, marking ELT as a vibrant and expanding academic field.

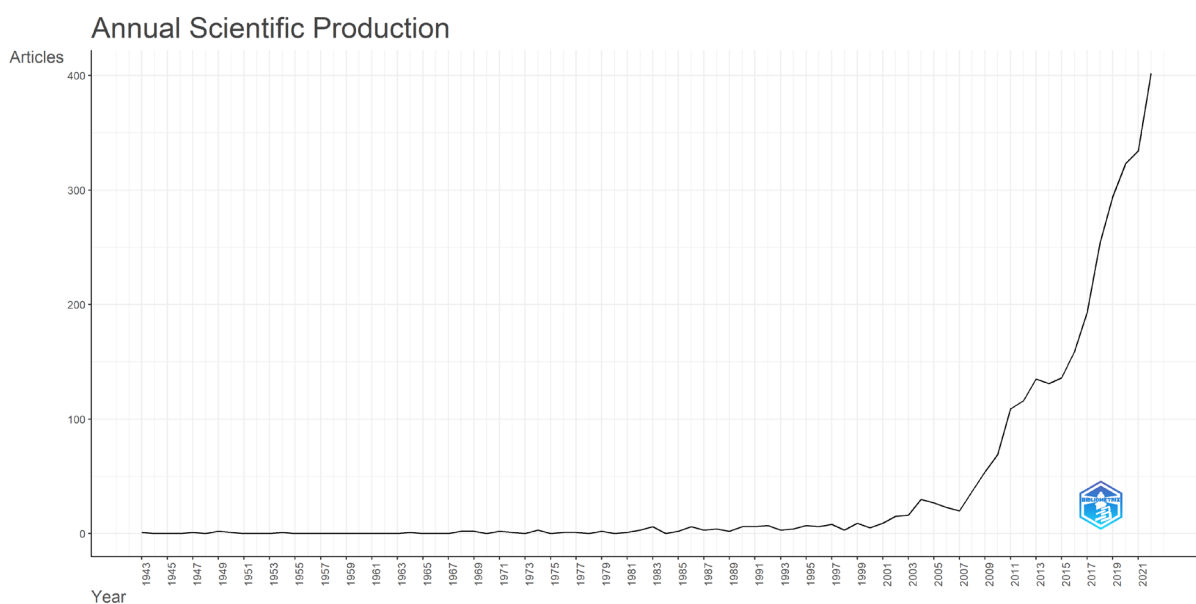


Figure 1. Annual scientific production

3.3. Most Relevant Authors

Figure 2 illustrates the most relevant authors in English Language Teaching (ELT) research based on the number of documents they have contributed. The chart highlights that Ali Al-Issa and Fan Fang are the leading contributors, each with 15 documents. Following them, Reza Pishghadam has authored 12 documents, and Xuesong Gao and Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini each have 11 publications. Murni Mahmud has contributed 10 documents, while Will Baker, Darío Luis Banegas, Yusop Boonsuk, and Guangwei Hu each have 9 documents to their credit. This visualization underscores the key contributors to ELT research, with a focus on those who have consistently produced a significant number of scholarly works. It reflects the prominence of these authors in shaping the discourse and advancing knowledge in the field. The distribution of documents suggests a relatively small group of researchers leading the contributions, which can provide direction for identifying influential studies and collaboration opportunities within the ELT academic community.

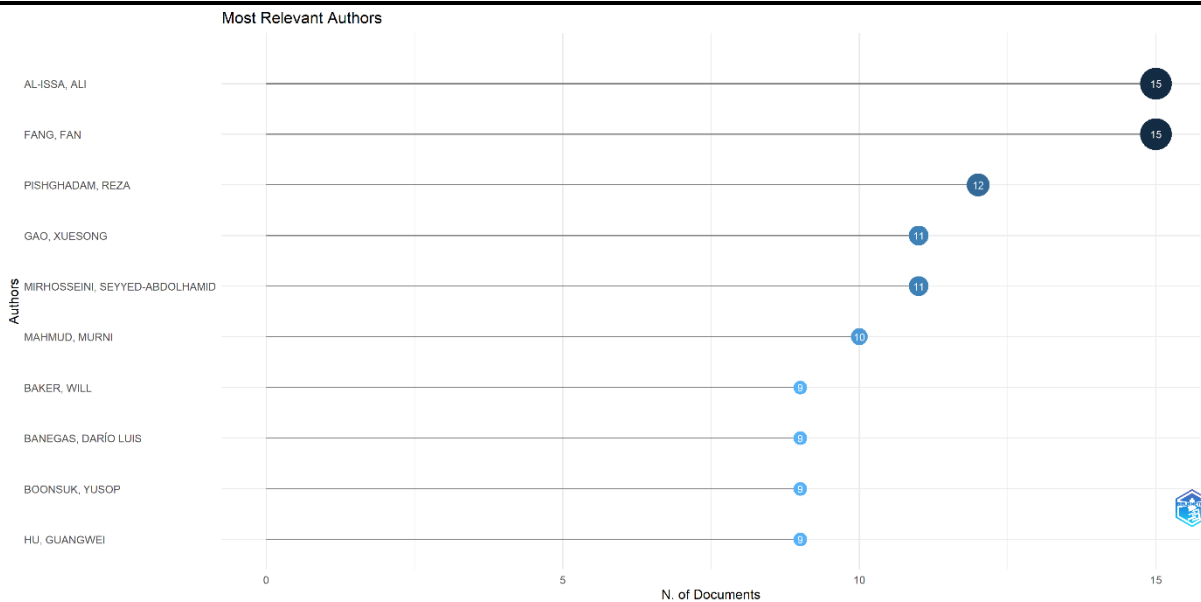


Figure 2. Most relevant authors

3.4. Most relevant sources

Table 2 lists the most relevant sources based on the number of articles published. The ELT Journal leads with 54 articles, followed closely by Asian Englishes with 51 articles and System with 48 articles, highlighting these as key journals in the field. Other prominent sources include the RELC Journal (47 articles), TESOL Quarterly (46 articles), and the Asian EFL Journal and English Language Teaching, each contributing 43 articles. The Springer International Handbooks of Education (34 articles) reflects the interdisciplinary nature of ELT research. The Journal of Language Teaching and Research (32 articles) and the Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (31 articles) are notable contributors. This distribution underscores the dominance of specialized ELT journals and interdisciplinary publications, offering a broad platform for disseminating research in language education.

Table 2. Most relevant sources

Sources	Articles
ELT JOURNAL	54
ASIAN ENGLISHES	51
SYSTEM	48
RELC JOURNAL	47
TESOL QUARTERLY	46
ASIAN EFL JOURNAL	43
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING	43
SPRINGER INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOKS OF EDUCATION	34
JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH	32
INDONESIAN JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS	31

3.5. Three-Field Plot

Figure 3 presents a Three-Field Plot that illustrates the relationships between publication sources (SO), authors (AU), and their affiliated countries (AU_CO) in English Language Teaching (ELT) research. On the left, the publication sources, such as the Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Asian Englishes, and TESOL Quarterly, are connected to their contributing authors in the middle section. Notable authors, such as Selamat Ali, Reza Pishghadam, Fan Fang, and Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini, are prominently linked to multiple sources, demonstrating their influence across various platforms. The right section links these authors to their affiliated countries, showcasing a global distribution of ELT research. Key contributing countries include Malaysia, Iran, China, Indonesia, and the United Kingdom, reflecting a strong

presence of ELT scholarship in Asia and other regions. For instance, Selamat Ali is associated with Malaysia, while Reza Pishghadam is linked to Iran, and Fan Fang to China. This visualization highlights the interplay between academic journals, prolific authors, and their geographic affiliations, emphasizing the international and interdisciplinary nature of ELT research. It underscores the collaboration across diverse regions and the significant contributions of certain countries and authors in shaping the field.

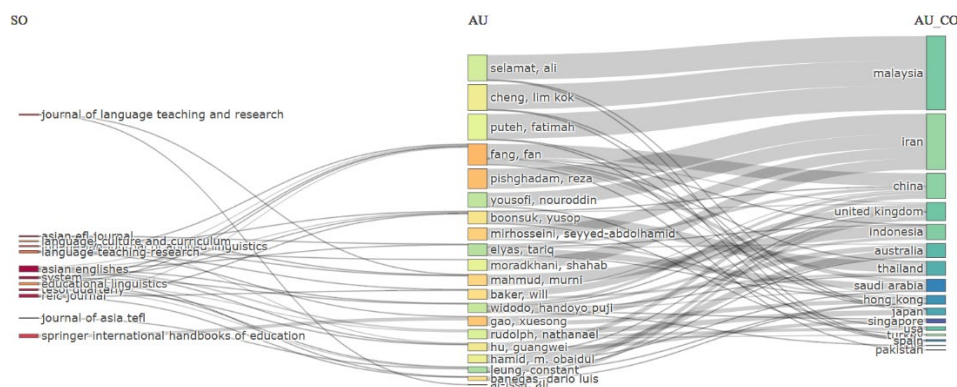


Figure 3. Three-Field Plot highlighting the relationships between authors, publication sources, and countries.

3.6. Trend Topics

Figure 4 illustrates the trending topics, represented by key terms and their frequencies. The size of the circles indicates term frequency, with larger circles signifying greater prominence in the research. The timeline demonstrates the evolution of these topics, highlighting their emergence, growth, and continued relevance in the field. Earlier topics, such as curriculum, syllabus, language teaching, and teacher training, dominated research before 2010. Around 2010, themes like e-learning, cultural diversity, and distance education began to emerge, reflecting a growing interest in technology-driven and inclusive approaches. Post-2015, newer topics such as globalization, translanguaging, multimodality, and COVID-19 gained traction, indicating a shift toward global and pandemic-driven educational challenges. Recent years show significant growth in terms like technology, professional development, and global Englishes, underscoring their critical importance in modern ELT contexts. Topics like higher education, teacher education, and language policy also remain highly relevant, reflecting their persistent role in shaping the field. Overall, the figure highlights the dynamic nature of ELT research, with evolving priorities influenced by technological advancements, global trends, and emerging educational needs.

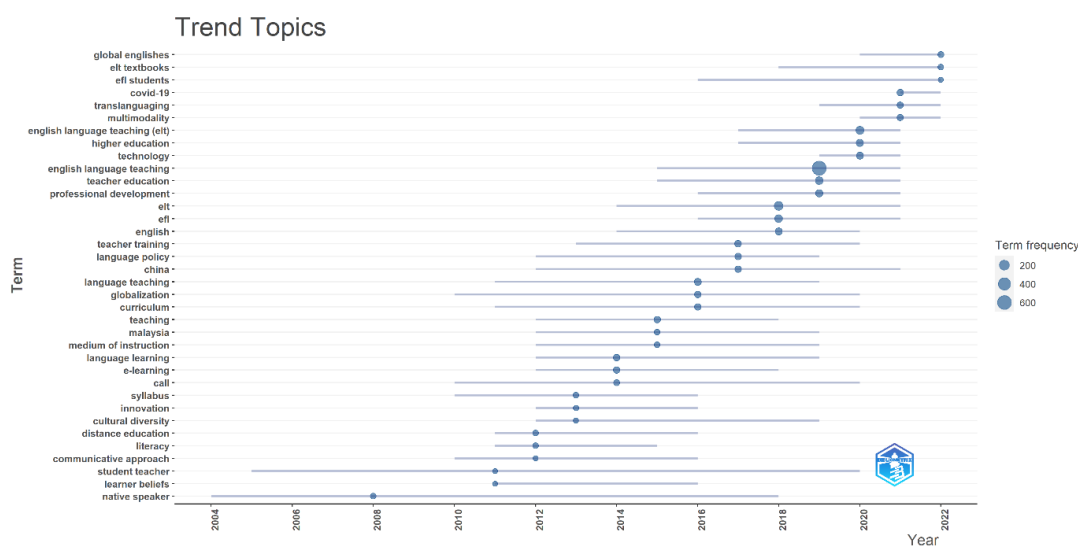


Figure 4. Trending topics in the realm of research

3.7. Thematic Map

Figure 5 illustrates the thematic map of English Language Teaching (ELT) research, categorizing topics based on their centrality (relevance) and density (development). In the Motor Themes quadrant, which represents topics with high centrality and density, themes like English as a Lingua Franca, World Englishes, and Culture dominate. These themes are well-developed and pivotal to advancing ELT research, indicating their strong connections to other areas and their role in driving the field forward. They reflect the growing emphasis on global perspectives in ELT, addressing the linguistic diversity and cultural inclusivity brought by the global spread of English.

The Basic Themes quadrant, comprising topics with high centrality but lower density, includes foundational topics such as English Language Teaching, Teacher Education, Professional Development, EFL, and Curriculum. These themes are critical for the field and have broad relevance across different contexts, but they are less developed than motor themes, indicating potential for deeper exploration and innovation. For example, teacher education and professional development are essential for equipping educators with the skills to meet evolving ELT challenges, while curriculum design remains central to ensuring effective language instruction.

The Niche Themes quadrant features topics like Critical Discourse Analysis, Neoliberalism, and Academic Writing, which are well-developed but have limited broader connections within the field. These specialized areas provide valuable insights but may not influence the larger ELT research framework. In contrast, themes in the Emerging or Declining Themes quadrant, such as EFL Learners and English Language Teaching and Learning, are characterized by low centrality and density, suggesting either underdevelopment or a waning focus. These areas might require revitalization or may be evolving into new directions. Overall, the thematic map provides a comprehensive view of ELT research, highlighting strengths, opportunities for growth, and areas for further investigation.

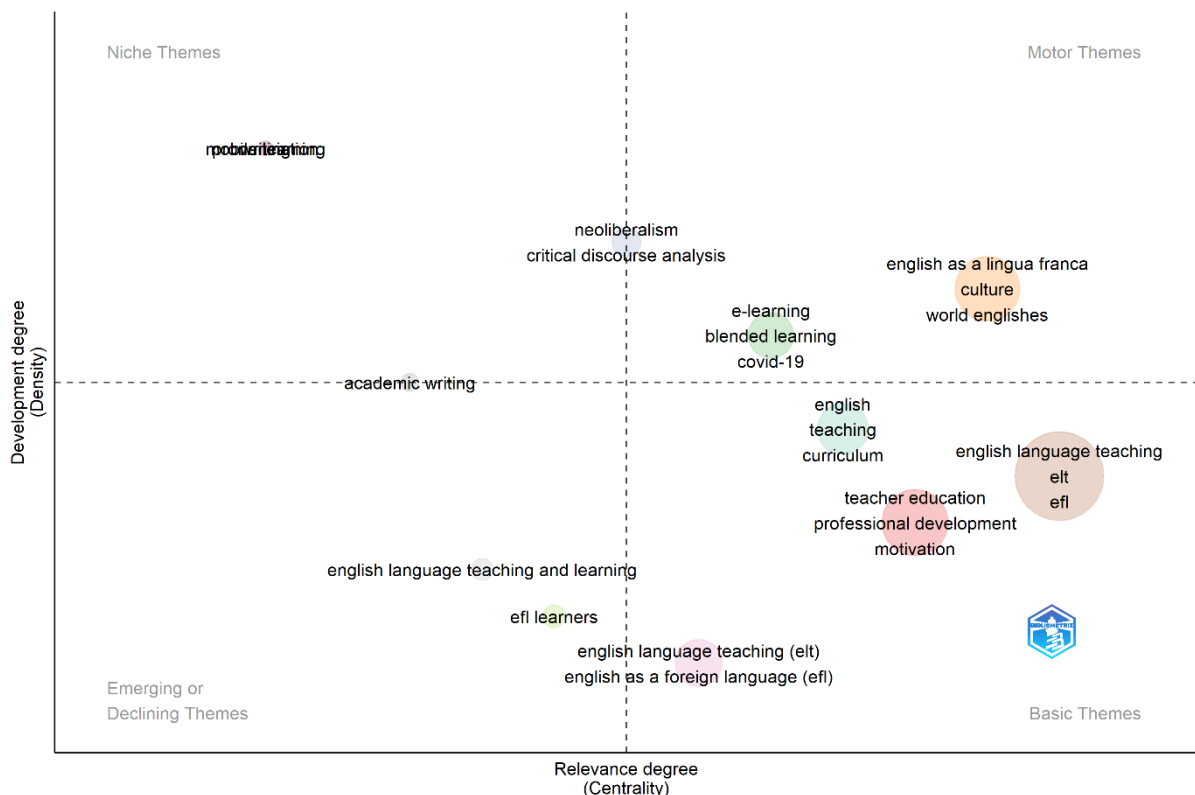


Figure 5. Thematic visualisation of author keywords

3.8. Co-occurrence of Author keywords

Figure 6 illustrates the co-occurrence network of keywords in English Language Teaching (ELT) research, based on a threshold of at least 10 keyword occurrences, resulting in 171 keywords categorized into six clusters. Cluster 1 (Red, 61 keywords) is the largest, highlighting global and contextual aspects of ELT with keywords such as English as a second

language, English as a lingua franca, and China, reflecting the internationalization of English and its diverse teaching practices. Cluster 2 (Green, 54 keywords) focuses on pedagogical dimensions, including teacher education, teacher professional development, and blended learning, emphasizing the preparation and adaptability of educators in modern teaching contexts.

Cluster 3 (Blue, 26 keywords) centers on instructional strategies, featuring terms like teaching, classroom teaching, and e-learning, showcasing the integration of technology in ELT. Cluster 4 (Purple, 17 keywords) shifts to the human element, with keywords such as motivation, student, and teacher, focusing on learner-teacher dynamics and personal engagement. Cluster 5 (Yellow, 12 keywords) includes keywords like teaching model and surveys, highlighting methodological approaches and classroom applications, while Cluster 6 (Light Blue, 1 keyword) represents a peripheral or emerging theme. The map demonstrates a vibrant and interconnected research landscape, emphasizing the interplay of global perspectives, technological innovation, and teacher-learner development as the core drivers of ELT scholarship.

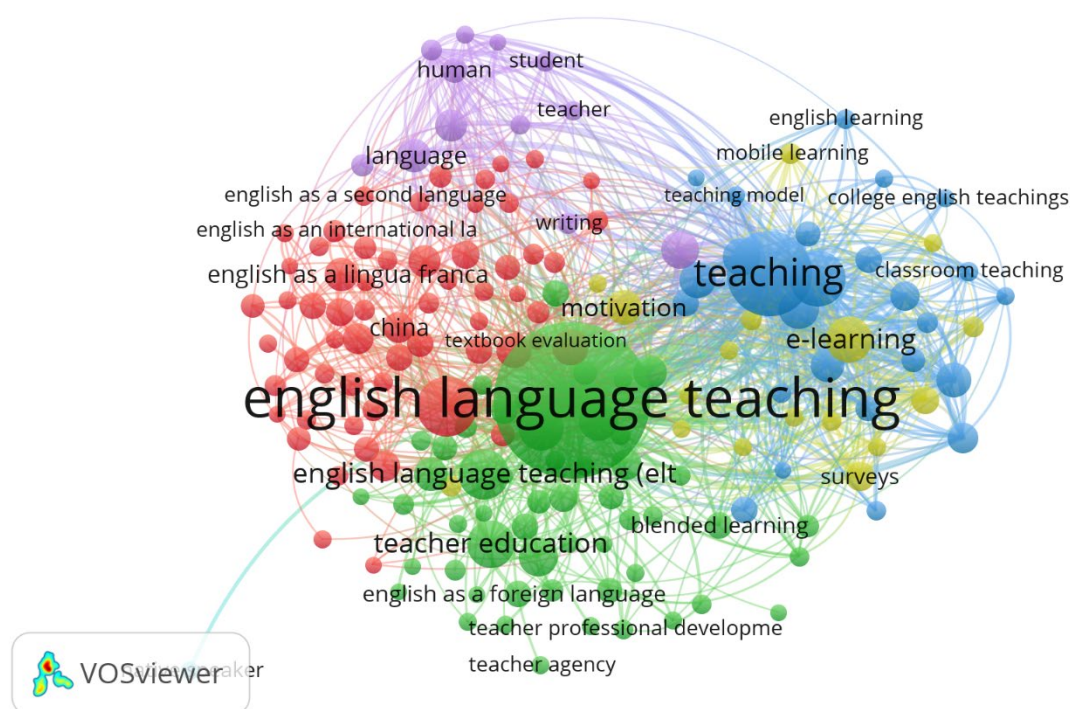


Figure 6. Co-occurrence of author keywords

3.9. Countries Collaborations

Figure 7 visualizes the co-authorship network of countries, highlighting collaboration patterns based on shared publications. The nodes represent countries, and their sizes correspond to the number of publications. The connecting lines indicate collaborative links, with thicker lines representing stronger co-authorship ties. Countries are grouped into clusters, represented by distinct colors, reflecting regional research collaboration trends. Prominent countries like the United States, China, and Turkey have large nodes, indicating their significant contributions to ELT research. These countries also display extensive collaboration with other nations, such as the United Kingdom, India, and Indonesia, underscoring their central role in international research networks. Regional clusters are evident, such as collaborations among China, Taiwan, and Vietnam in Asia, and between Germany, Austria, and France in Europe. Emerging contributors like Iran, Thailand, and South Korea are linked to multiple collaborators, suggesting increasing integration into the global research community. This network reflects a diverse and interconnected landscape of ELT research, driven by international collaborations. Countries with strong academic infrastructure, such as the United States, often serve as hubs, fostering partnerships across regions. Simultaneously, collaborations within specific regions, like Asia and Europe, highlight localized efforts to address language teaching challenges relevant to their contexts. This co-authorship map provides insights into the global dynamics of ELT research and the potential for fostering new collaborations to enhance the field further.

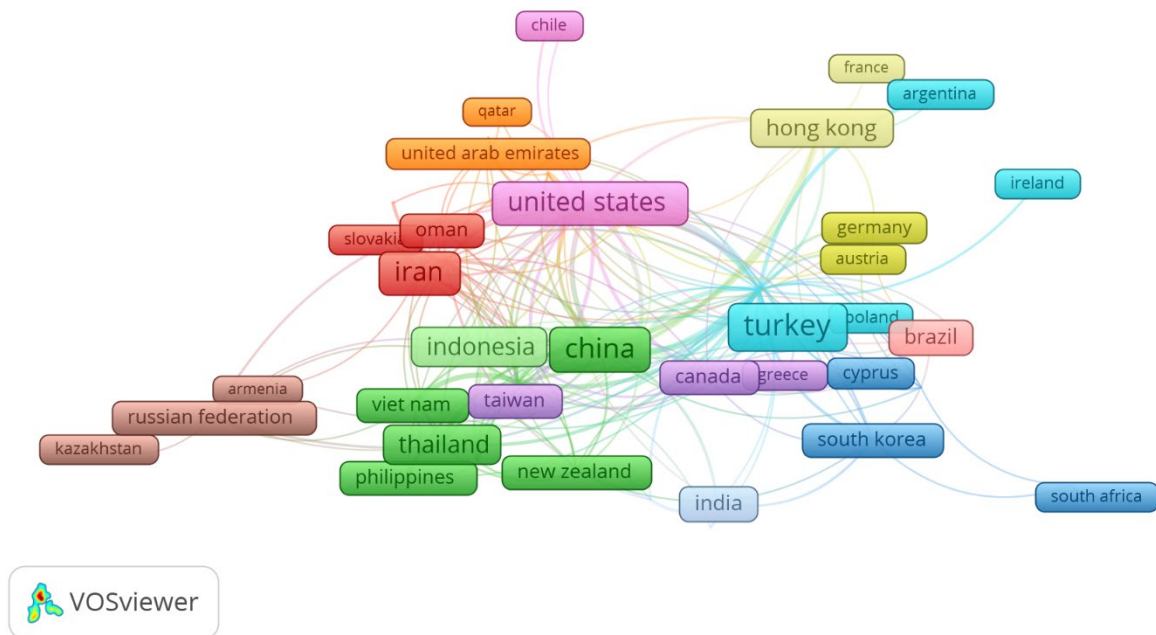


Figure 7. Countries collaborations

4. DISCUSSIONS

The bibliometric analysis of English Language Teaching (ELT) research highlights key findings that provide insights into the field's evolution, major contributors, and emerging trends. The steady increase in publications since 1943, with a notable surge from 2010 onwards, reflects the growing global importance of ELT. This growth is driven by advancements in educational technology, globalization, and the rising demand for English proficiency. However, international collaborations remain limited, with only 11.14% of co-authored works involving authors from different countries, suggesting a need for fostering greater global partnerships to address diverse language teaching challenges comprehensively.

The analysis of most relevant authors and sources reveals that a small group of researchers and specialized journals dominate the field, including Ali Al-Issa and the *ELT Journal*. While these contributors have significantly shaped ELT research, the field could benefit from encouraging diverse voices, particularly from non-native English-speaking regions, to bring varied perspectives to the discourse. Emerging themes such as e-learning, multimodality, and global Englishes underline the growing integration of technology and globalization in ELT, aligning with global educational priorities. However, foundational themes like teacher education and curriculum design remain underexplored compared to their centrality, indicating opportunities for deeper research into these areas.

The thematic map and keyword co-occurrence analysis emphasize the dynamic and interconnected nature of ELT research. Topics like English as a Lingua Franca, blended learning, and professional development are well-developed and drive advancements in the field. However, themes such as critical discourse analysis and EFL learners, though significant, are niche or emerging and require further integration into mainstream research. Practical implications of these findings include the need for ELT practitioners to adopt innovative, technology-driven teaching methods while balancing foundational pedagogical practices. Policymakers should also focus on fostering intercultural competence and professional development opportunities for educators to meet the evolving demands of ELT.

Despite its growth, the field has notable research gaps, particularly in exploring the impact of linguistic diversity and inclusivity on teaching practices. Limited studies on the collaboration between educators from diverse linguistic and

cultural backgrounds and their influence on student outcomes highlight areas for future investigation. Furthermore, while emerging topics such as COVID-19 and translanguaging reflect timely challenges, the field must continue to address long-standing issues like equitable access to ELT resources and effective policy implementation. Bridging these gaps can ensure ELT research remains relevant and contributes to a more inclusive, innovative, and globally connected educational landscape.

5. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric analysis underscores the significant growth and evolving trends in English Language Teaching (ELT) research, driven by globalization, technological advancements, and the demand for English proficiency. Key themes like **blended learning**, **global Englishes**, and **professional development** have emerged as pivotal drivers, while foundational topics like teacher education and curriculum design remain underexplored. Limited international collaboration further highlights the need for greater global partnerships, particularly involving non-native English-speaking regions. To advance ELT, fostering international research networks, prioritizing foundational pedagogical themes, and integrating innovative, technology-driven approaches such as e-learning are essential. Balancing these advancements with cultural inclusivity and linguistic diversity will enable ELT to meet the challenges of a globalized and digitally connected educational environment. This study provides actionable insights and a roadmap for strengthening ELT research and practice through collaboration, innovation, and targeted exploration of underdeveloped areas.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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None

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