



Exploring Trends and Gap in Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching Researches: A Bibliometric and Content Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the changing relationship between sociolinguistics and language education research, using bibliometric and text analysis to find trends and gaps. This study uses a vast body of literature to highlight repeating themes, trends, and prospective research routes to illuminate the dynamic nature of many fields. Careful analysis in this work illuminates sociolinguistics and language training and suggests intriguing new research options. The researchers asked five questions to examine sociolinguistics and language education trends and gaps from 2015–2023. Language, teaching, English, teachers, learning, communication, linguistics, competency, foreign language, bilingualism, sociolinguistics, and English are the most often discussed terms by scholars. They receive less attention for solutions, investigation, contributions, learning processes, perceptions, challenges, and texts. Thus, these areas offer specialized research topics for future researchers. This suggests that linguistics in language instruction has many intriguing areas to examine. The study suggests that communication skills should promote high-quality sociolinguistics and language instruction research, knowledge dissemination through several channels, and collaborations to boost influential studies.

Keywords: Trends, Sociolinguistics, Language Teaching, Bibliometric and Content Analysis.

Introduction

In teaching learning process, the discipline of sociolinguistics greatly is helpful for students of English as a Second Language (ESL). By highlighting the social dimensions of language usage, sociolinguistics adds insight to the linguistic basis (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019). The field of sociolinguistics studies language in its many social settings, taking into account things like cultural norms, interpersonal interactions, and societal standards (Meyerhoff et al., 2020). When applied to the practical aspects of foreign language especially to the English language, sociolinguistics sheds light on the complexities of human life and how students could make productive use of language.

The field of sociolinguistics is multidisciplinary and aims to understand how language impacts society. This discipline comprises a trifecta of linguistic anthropology,



sociolinguistics, and variationist sociolinguistics. The emphasis of this issue is variationist sociolinguistics, but to set the stage, we will first describe the other two subfields of the topic. In the field of linguistic anthropology, the academicians view language and speech as cultural practices and resources (Duranti, 2003). As a field, linguistic anthropology sheds light on the significance of language in comprehending society and culture (Duranti, 2003), as well as the importance of cultural and social facts in comprehending language itself (Shibamoto-Smith & Chand, 2013), through recording linguistic diversity, researching usage of language in social context, , and language use to deal with more significant anthropological issues. Priorities in ensuring the competence of the world's future teachers of foreign languages include:

- Creating new tools to help aspiring teachers of foreign languages improve their sociolinguistic competence.
- They were planning how students would work independently in and out of class.
- It is enhancing the current teacher preparation system to meet the demands of the framework (CEFR) for languages spoken worldwide.

The studies revealed that individuals with advance level of native and foreign language can experience complexities in multiculture dimensions (Derin, Nursafira, Yudar, Gowasa, & Hamuddin, 2020; Kondrateva, Madakina, Sigal, & Valeev, 2016). The explore the study in it's context, the answers of the following research questions were sought;

1. What is the publishing frequency occurrence of sociolinguistics and language teaching articles during the period of 2015 to 2023?
2. Who are the top cited authors in sociolinguistics and language teaching from 2015 to 2023?
3. The top ten countries whose authors contributed to sociolinguistics and language teaching?
4. What is year-wise citations frequency of articles in the discipline of sociolinguistics and language teaching from 2015 to 2023?
5. What is the keywords distribution in field of, "titles" and "abstract" from 2015 to 2023?
6. The authors who contributed most to the field of sociolinguistics and language teaching in co-authorship during 2015 to 2023?

Review of Related Literature

In the field of sociolinguistics, the studies focus on the unique properties of language. After that, the language courses summarize sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics for language training. Teachers and students will learn more about language's psychological and societal aspects with this comprehensive approach, improving their language skills.

Unveiling the Trends

Sociolinguistics has changed dramatically in recent decades, affecting how we teach languages. Societal change, technological advances, and pedagogical concepts shape how we teach and learn languages. Understanding these tendencies is crucial to understanding language education's evolution. Sociolinguistics emphasizes language



change and variation's social nature. Labov's 1960s research showed that language traits affect gender, race, and class. This awareness has altered language training, emphasizing the importance of borrowing from real-world sociocultural settings (Labov, 1963).

Communicative language teaching (CLT) revolutionized language instruction in the 1970s. Communicative language therapy (CLT) emphasizes functional language use over grammatical correctness (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). This strategy follows sociolinguistic principles while acknowledging language's constant change and social significance. Language learning has changed drastically due to modern technology. CALL technologies include adaptive feedback systems, virtual communication platforms, and interactive multimedia resources (Chapelle, 2001). These technological advances have increased language education access and cross-cultural communication due to the globalization of language teaching methods.

The growing recognition of multilingualism and language variety has also affected language education methods. García and Li Wei (2014) say translanguaging instruction encourages students to employ all their language talents in conversation, transcending conventional language constraints. This strategy promotes multilingualism and equips pupils for success in various linguistic environments. Finally, new advances in sociolinguistics and language training show how language, culture, and schooling are dynamic. Sociolinguistic insights can help teachers prepare students for today's globalized society. Language learners will become inclusive, effective communicators.

Content Analysis of Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching

Sociolinguistics, the study of language in its social context, greatly aids in understanding language teaching strategies and their effectiveness. Scholars have long used in-depth content analyses to shed light on the complex interplay between sociolinguistics and language education. Reading this review in chronological order will help readers better understand the important studies in this field and the results and consequences of these studies for language classroom practices.

After the turn of the century, researchers like Hymes (1971) introduced the idea of communicative competence, which would later become the cornerstone of sociolinguistic study. According to Hymes, being fluent in a language involves more than just knowing how to utilize grammar rules; it also means knowing how to effectively use language in different social situations. Integrating sociolinguistic ideas into language education curricula was emphasized in this groundbreaking effort.

The next step was a content study by Canagarajah (1999) that looked at World English's function in teacher training languages. His main point was that non-native English speakers should be welcomed and valued in the classroom alongside native speakers. With the use of sociolinguistic research, teachers can build classrooms where all children feel safe expressing themselves verbally and in writing.

Norton (2000) also investigated the relationship between identity and language acquisition. According to her, a student's sense of identity and belonging has a significant impact on their motivation and achievement in language learning. Language



acquisition can flourish in classrooms where teachers value and respect their pupils' unique cultural and linguistic identities.

According to Li's (2013) content analysis, language instructors are increasingly looking at ways to include computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools in their lessons. Recognizing the impact of digital platforms on language use and communication patterns, this study highlighted the importance of sociolinguistics. Teachers can help their students develop their intercultural communication skills and proficiency in real-world language use by making use of CLMS resources.

Changes brought about by globalization in language pedagogy have been the subject of several recent content analyses. An increasingly interdependent globe was the subject of an investigation by Byram and Feng (2018), who investigated the idea of intercultural communicative competency (ICC). Their research demonstrated that in order to assist students in effectively communicating in a variety of cultural settings, language programs should incorporate sociolinguistic principles into their lessons.

Bridging Research and Practice

The relationship of linguistic variation and social conditions revealed that sociolinguistics is a subfield that employs empirical and quantitative approaches, drawing inspiration from the work of linguistic anthropologists and sociologists of language (Irimiea, 2018) for sociolinguistics and language teaching. Those who adhere to sociolinguistics understand the categorical and variable aspects of language (Beaulieu, Woll, French & Duchemin, 2018). The ability to express the same idea in multiple ways is made possible by sociolinguistic factors at all linguistic levels. These variations are identical in reference or truth value, but opposed in their societal and stylistic significance. The general framework can be applied to multilingual communities because of bilingual and monolingual speakers face ongoing decisions about which linguistic forms to use in different contexts with the same referential meaning and functions (Poplack, Zentz & Dion, 2012). The sociolinguistic variations froms and reflects social organization. The alteration between variations is also thoughts to represent the beginning point of diachronic change in the language. Due to their internal dynamics, interactions with different linguistic varieties, and connections to social organization—dynamic, complex, and multi-layered—languages are seen from this angle as heterogeneous and developing systems (Laks, 2013).

To better understand speaking courses and the contextualised use of language, students might benefit from having a foundational understanding of language and society through the essential subtopics of sociolinguistics. According to Nasution, Rahmadeny, & Jazzawi (2019) teaching students the proper rules for speaking and writing and increasing their understanding of sociolinguistics is crucial to applying sociolinguistics to language instruction. In addition to speaking classes, it helps students through the fifth-semester Cross-Cultural Understanding course. The relationship between language and culture, the value of comprehending a foreign language when learning a second language, cultural anthropology, multiculturalism and diversity are all covered in this discipline (Nirwana & Darmadali 2021).



Methods and Procedures

To find out what the trend is in sociolinguistics and language teaching research from 2015 to 2023, the study used VOSviewer-based bibliometric analysis, Nvivo content analysis, and descriptive analysis, a quantitative research method. It includes bibliometric studies of the keyword network, author network, and network clusters to help academics detect current and emerging research trends in a subject (Mou et al., 2019). This study also employed bibliometric mapping to evaluate sociolinguistics and language teaching keywords and find the most prolific authors, titles, and abstract keywords. Bibliometric mapping identifies field trends (Goksu, 2021).

Bibliometric mapping turns publication metadata into maps, or visual representations, for scientists and the public. These maps are easy to handle and analyze, providing insights. These can visualize keywords and discover field-specific research themes or clusters. Bibliometric mapping can also show a journal's global spread by mapping author affiliations. To understand the mapping's relationship to linguistics, the researcher searches for sociolinguistics and language teaching articles. The researchers found all related articles for the duration of nine years (2015 to 2023). The frequency with which two terms appear in the same article indicates their link (Eck & Waltman, 2010), and keywords interact to grow them.

Bibliometrics (scientometrics) can examine literature. The quantitative analysis of bibliographic analysis evaluates the literature. Citations indicate that these journals chose significant research results well. Based on bibliometric analysis, just a few popular US radiology journal research results need to be mentioned after ten years. Mohsen (2021) contemplated the bibliometric qualities of applied linguistics research output. Content analysis can provide useful information after reviewing printed or digital materials (Bowen, 2009). This study uses Google Scholar-indexed articles. Research data was collected using Zotero, a free and open-source software that manages bibliographic data and study resources, including PDF and ePUB files. The compiled research articles and research procedure diagram are as follows:

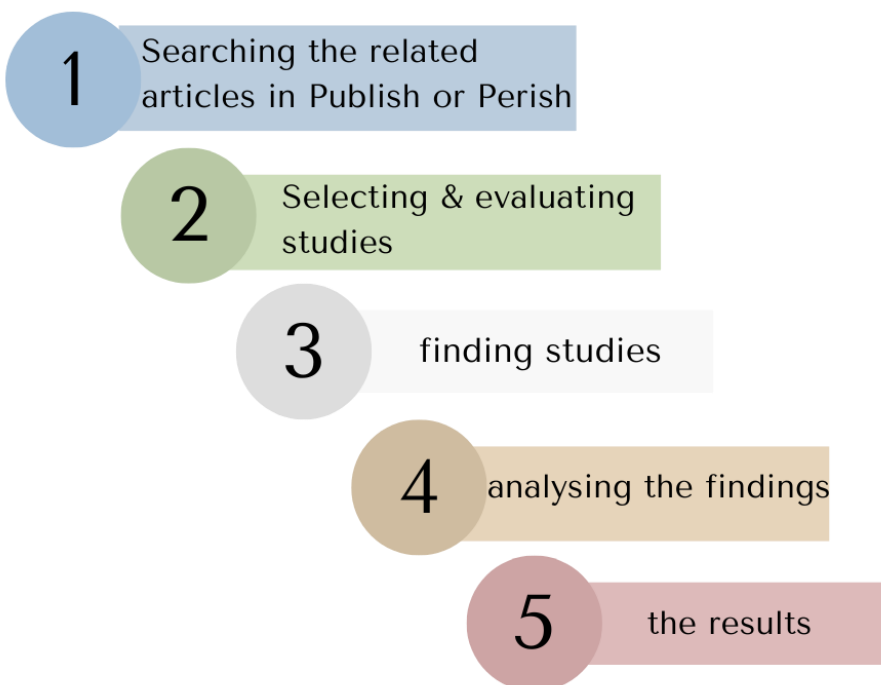


Figure 1 *the research process*

VOSviewer, a bibliometric tool, was employed in this study and it supports more complete publication map displays. It also displays bibliometric visual map data. Using VOSviewer can simplify large bibliometric maps (Eck & Waltman, 2010). Zotero data was imported into VosViewer for citation and co-occurrence analyses. VosViewer graphically represents bibliometric networks well, according to Eck and Waltman (2010). Co-occurrence analysis shows how the field has evolved, according to Zhao (2017). It is concur that beginner researchers need citation analysis to compare significant countries, institutions, and writers. It helps identify renowned scholars and current and future research directions and methods (Wheeler, 2022).

Methodological, conceptual, and results-based examination of 200 field articles (covering sociolinguistics and language training) from 2015 to 2023. Writers evaluate articles separately. They reanalyzed the disagreeable articles and electronically entered the data into the DCF to find out what codes and themes were used in the papers. Once they entered all the article data, the writers double-checked. After fixing inconsistencies, reporting can commence. Back then, journalists and communication experts loved content analysis in the social sciences and psychology. This strategy is useful for public opinion, market, and political orientation research (Krippendorff, 2018). Texts with specified themes were examined using conceptual content analysis (Christie & Fleischer, 2010). Frequency (f) and percentage (%) charts and tables were utilized to visualize conceptual content analysis results.

Data Analysis and Interpretation



On the basis of the secondary data, the following analysis is presented and interpreted; Graph 1 presents the findings of the results of research articles publication frequency during 2015 to 2023 in the field of sociolinguistics and language teaching. Maximum research articles (34) published in the year of 2018 and the minimum research articles (3) were published in the year 2023.

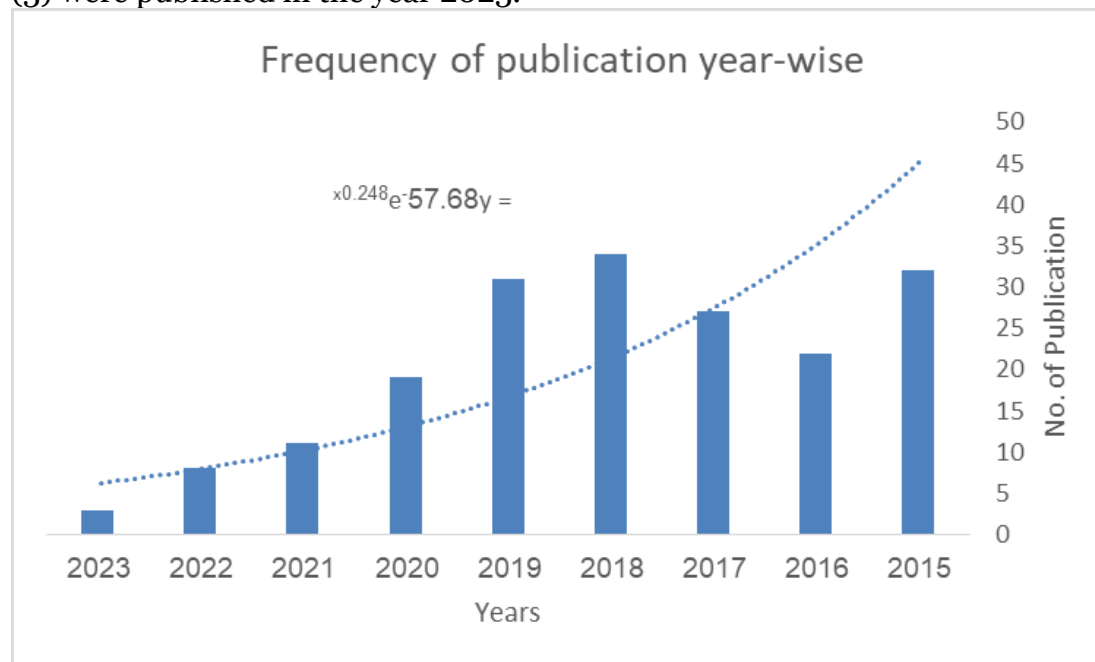


Figure 1 Frequency of publication year-wise

Table 1: Top cited papers in the field of sociolinguistics and language teaching

Rank	Title	Cititations	References	Country
1	Principles of communicative competence and its practical reflection on homework	639	Kakhramonovich, A. A. (2021)	Uzbekistan
2	Research methods in TEFL studies: Descriptive research, case study, error analysis, and R & D	598	Atmowardoyo, H. (2018)	Indonesia
3	Language teacher cognition in applied linguistics research: revisiting the territory, redrawing the boundaries, reclaiming the relevance	438	Kubanyiova, M., & Feryok, A. (2015).	New Zealand
4	Translanguaging in mainstream education: A sociocultural approach	275	Duarte, J. (2019).	Netherland
5	Translanguaging in Chinese foreign language classrooms:	212	Wang, D. (2019).	Auckland



	students and teachers' attitudes and practices			
6	Intercultural citizenship in the (foreign) language classroom	209	Porto, M., Houghton, S. A., & Byram, M. (2018)	Argentina
7	The integration of technology into foreign language teaching	202	Altun, M. (2015).	Iraq
8	Teachers' code-switching in bilingual classrooms: exploring pedagogical and sociocultural functions	199	Cahyani, H., de Courcy, M., & Barnett, J. (2018)	Indonesia
9	Global Englishes and language teaching: A review of pedagogical research	165	Rose, H., McKinley, J., & Galloway, N. (2021).	United Kingdom
10	Problematizing linguistic integration of migrants: The role of translanguaging and language teachers	150	García, O. (2017).	United States

Source: <https://scholar.google.com/>

Table 1 interpret the findings of the results of researchers top cited papers in the filed of sociolinguistics and language teaching. The research article entitled, " Principles of communicative competence and its practical reflection on homework" by Kakhramonovich, A. A. (2021) has maximum google scholar citations (639). Rank order showed that the work of García (2017) have ben cited one hundred and fifty times in the related literature of sociolinguistics and language teaching.

In the following figure, the results showed that how many times the research articles in sociolinguistics and language teaching be cited in the other researches year-wise, the maximum number of citations (2512) in the year 2018 whereas as minimum number of citations (112) were found in the year 2023.

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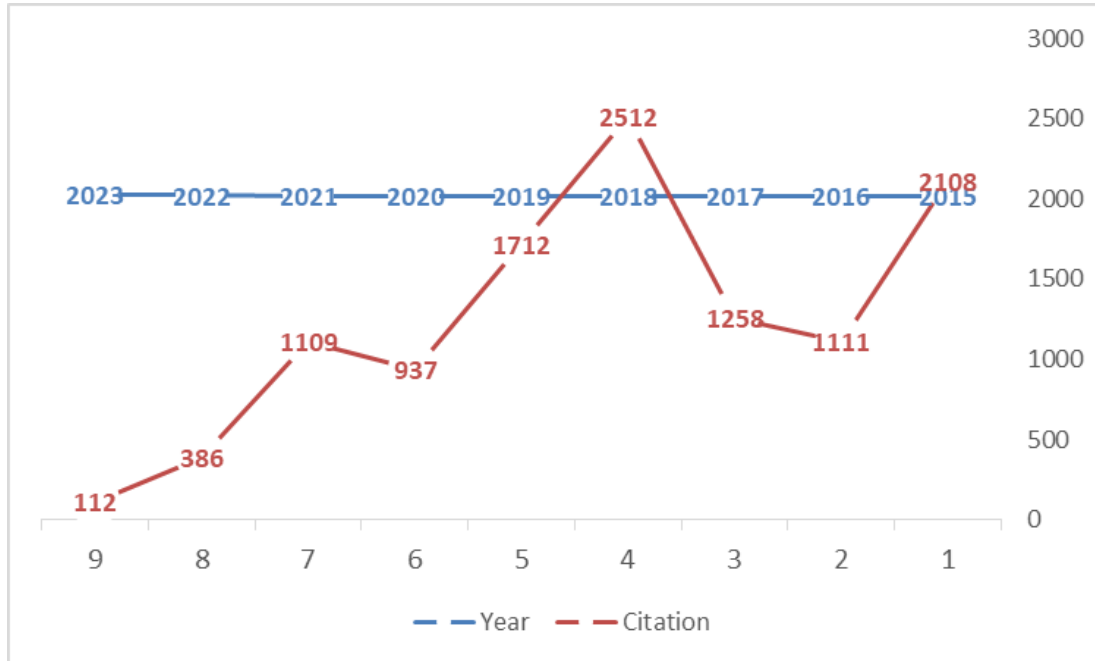


Figure 2 Number of citations year-wise

Figure 3 depicts the frequently used words in titles and abstracts of related researches in the field of sociolinguistics and language teaching. This word cloud was generated in Nvivo 14 to find the most frequent word list in the collected secondary data, so the top most frequently used words enlisted as; language, teaching, english, teachers, learning, communicative, education, study, competence, foreign.



Figure 3 Frequently used words in titles and abstracts

Table 2: List of top ten words used in title and abstract

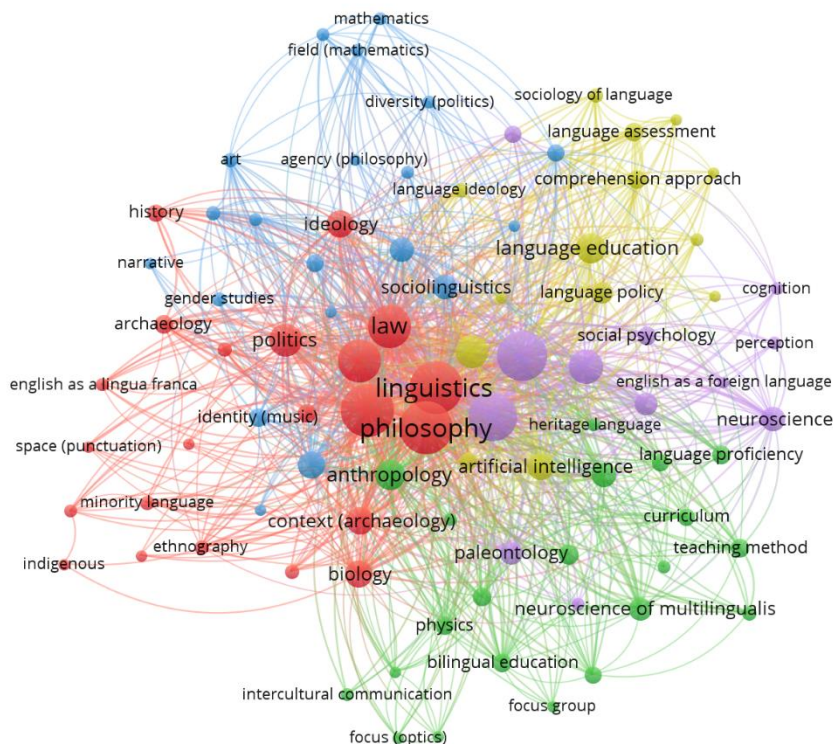
Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
language	8	5266	5.84
teaching	8	2236	2.48
english	7	2230	2.47
teachers	8	1172	1.30
learning	8	1148	1.27
communicative	13	908	1.01
education	9	770	0.85
study	5	754	0.84
competence	10	714	0.79
foreign	7	674	0.75

Table 2 interprets the results of top ten words used in the researches' titles and abstracts; the top word, "language" having the specifications i.e. (word length = 6; word counts = 5266; weighted percentage = 5.84%) while the sixth word in the list, "communicative" having the specification i.e. (word length = 13; word counts = 908;



weighted percentage = 1.01%) and the tenth word in the list, "foreign" having specification i.e. (word length = 7; word counts = 674; weighted percentage = 0.75%).

Bibliographic Data Analysis



VOSviewer

Figure 4 The network visualisation of sociolinguistics and language teaching

Figure 4 informed us that system selected 89 items and these items were distributed in 5 clusters and these have 29080 links and the total link strengths exist among them was 6624. Furthermore, it also represents the occurrence of concept keyword from data, the minimum number of occurrences of concept was 3 times and of the total 293 keywords, 89 meets the threshold and system selected the 89 keywords. Data retrieved all these from the duration (2015 to 2023), the keywords most frequently used in the data were; philosophy, linguistics, sociology, pedagogy, psychology, law, political science, computer science, politics and mathematics were linked to the sociolinguistics and language teaching.

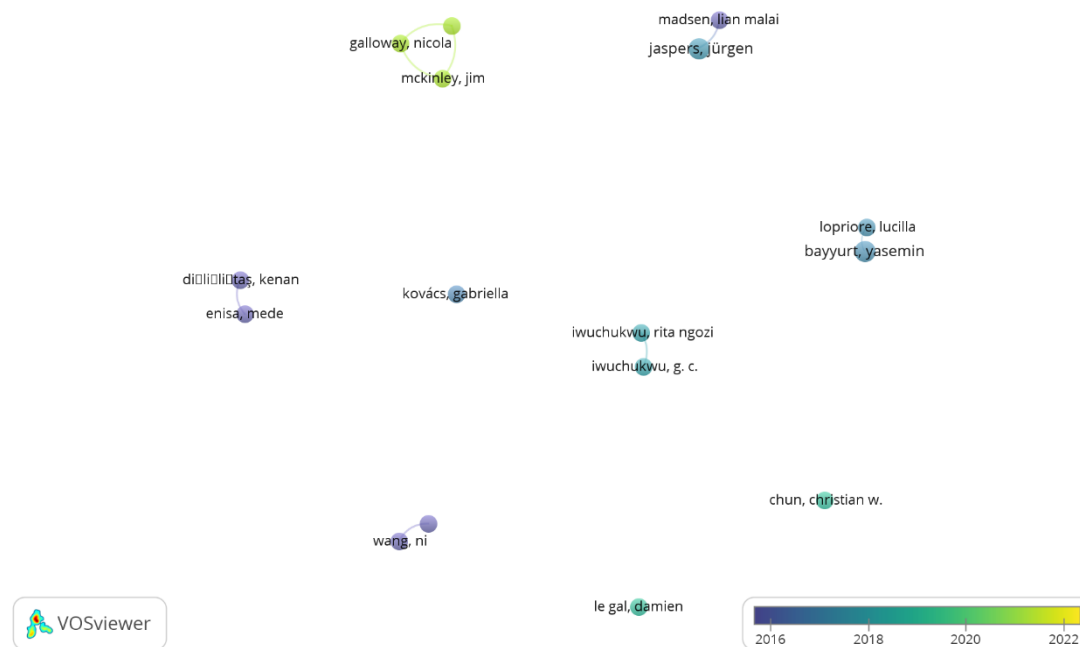


Figure 5 *The network visualisation of co-authorship in sociolinguistics and language teaching*

Based on above mentioned figure, the network of co-authorship in sociolinguistics and language teaching separated into nine clusters;

- Cluster 1 which is the parrot colour has 9 items; Galloway, Nicola; mckinley, jim; rose, heath.
- Cluster 2 which is the colour has 2 items; Dililitas, kenan; enisa, mede.
- Cluster 3 which is the colour has also 2 items; iwuchukwu, g. c.; iwuchukwu, rita ngozi.
- Cluster 4 which is the colour has 2 items; jaspers, jurgen and madsen, lian malai.
- Cluster 5 which is the colour has 2 items; bayyurt, yasemin and lopriore, lucilla.
- Cluster 6 which is the colour has 2 items; wang, ni and zhang, hongmei.
- Cluster 7 which is the colour has 1 item; chun, christian w.
- Cluster 8 which is the colour has 1 item; kovacs, gabriella.
- Cluster 9 which is the colour has 1 item; le gal, damien.

Coauthorship among authors revealed in the above figure. It fulfil the condition that an author has minimum 3 document on his/her credit to meet the criteria, so out of 341 author 16 authors meet the threshold and system selected 16 authors. The mentioned authors collaborated in between the years from 2016 to 2022. There were 9 clusters having 8 links whereas the total link strength was 22.

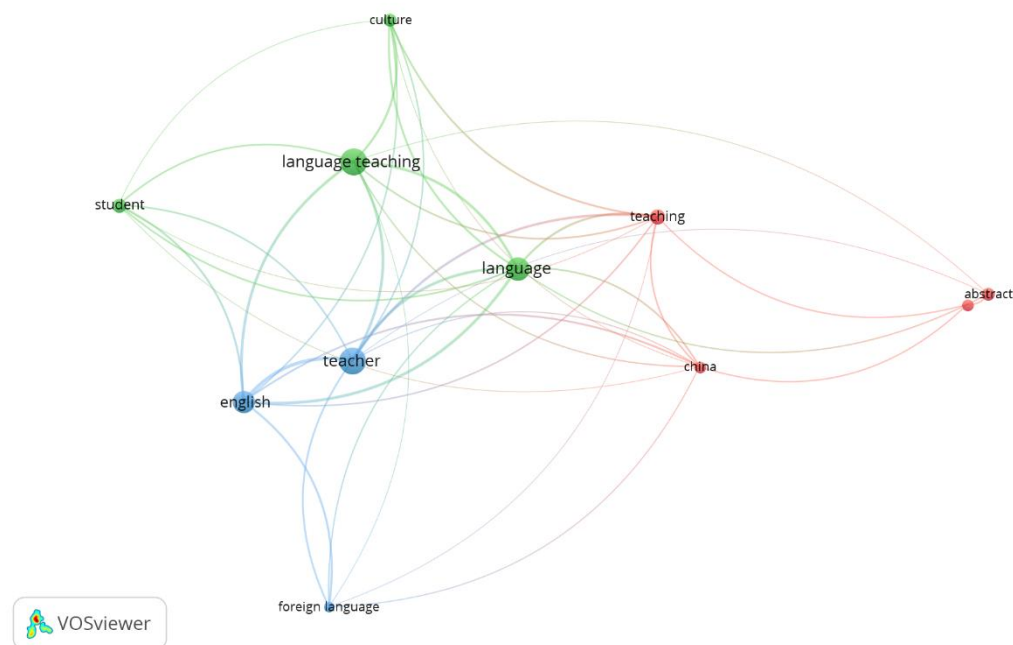


Figure 6 Network visualization of keyword occurrence in abstract and title field (10 Times)

Figure 6 represents the occurrences of keyword from the field of title and abstract, the minimum number of occurrences of term was 10 times of the total 1191 keywords, 18 meet the threshold and system selected the 11 terms because of the default choice is to select the 60% most relevant terms from the system. These 11 terms divided among three clusters;

- Cluster 1 which is the red colour has 4 items; abstract, china, sociolinguistics and teaching.
- Cluster 2 which is the green colour has 4 items; culture, language, language teaching and student.
- Cluster 3 which is the blue colour has 3 items; english, foreign language and teacher.

The total link strength of all the three clusters were 224 while the total link strength of cluster 1 was 42; total link strength of cluster 2 was 62 and similarly cluster 3 has the total link strength 74.

Findings and conclusion

The topic for sociolinguistics and language teaching provides insights that are beneficial to enrich the research area in investigating the scope of sociolinguistics in language teaching. It prepares the future researchers with a certain trends and gaps in sociolinguistics and language teaching. Research in sociolinguistics and language instruction has been thoroughly examined, and some significant findings have been



extracted. Bibliometric and content analysis, when applied to the fields of sociolinguistics and language teaching reveals some important patterns and knowledge gaps. The investigation looked at the international distribution of publications, citations, keywords, co-authorship networks, and bibliographic coupling in detail. After reviewing the findings, we have come to the following conclusions: From 2015 to 2023, the frequency of research paper publishing shows that output fluctuates, with 2018 being the high and 2023 being the year with the most notable fall. Research trends, funding, and academic interest are just a few variables that could shape the field's ever-changing landscape.

The impact of specific significant works on sociolinguistics and language instruction can be better understood by looking at the most-cited papers. The high number of citations on Google Scholar for the study article by Kakhramonovich (2021) on communicative skills stands out. This provides evidence of the long-lasting influence of individual investigations on future research efforts. The countries i.e. Uzbekistan, Indonesia and New Zealand are top in the list whose authors contributed in sociolinguistics and language teaching in a perspective of higher the citation score.

Examining the most common terms in articles titles and abstracts might reveal prevailing topics and research interests in a particular subject. This technique is called keyword analysis. Throughout the academic discourse, words like "language," "teaching," and "communicative" keep popping up, demonstrating how important they are.

By visualizing the interconnections between different nodes in a network, researchers and governments can better understand the dynamics of their collaboration. The worldwide research community's collaboration behaviours and knowledge exchange can be better understood by analyzing co-authorship networks and bibliographic coupling.

Using cluster analysis, thematic concentrations and collaborative groupings within the field can be further defined by grouping keywords and authors. Cluster analysis provides a more nuanced picture of the theoretical frameworks, collaboration networks, and research issues that are influencing the field of sociolinguistics and the study of language instruction.

The study concluded that there were fluctuations in the frequency of research paper publishing from 2015 to 2023. While 2018 was a peak year, 2023 was a notable decline. This suggests that factors like research trends, funding, and academic interest are influencing the ever-changing field. In addition, the current research interests and dynamics in sociolinguistics and language education can be better understood by examining the most-cited publications, keyword trends, collaboration networks, and topic concentrations. In order to better comprehend the intricacies of the area, these results provide a thorough resource for directing future research projects and interdisciplinary collaborations. A thorough examination of the data reveals the intricate nature of research in sociolinguistics and language education, with its ever-shifting publication patterns, critical scholarship, thematic clusters, and interdependent networks of experts. These valuable findings can guide future research endeavours and interdisciplinary collaborations, which also add to our grasp of the field's terrain.



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