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In Pursuit of Translanguaging from 2010 to 2024: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

In this study, academic studies on translanguaging conducted from 2010 to March 2024 were examined using the bibliometric analysis method, one of the quantitative research methods. The aim of the study is to determine the numerical distribution of publications in this field, the most frequently cited articles, leading authors, publishers and the most influential journals. In addition, the most frequently used keywords and research topics in the articles, the distribution of publications by year, collaboration networks between authors and citation analyses are also within the scope of our study. The data were taken from the international scientific database Web Of Science Core Collection, only from SSCI (Social Science Citation Index) indexed publications and English was selected as the language, and analyzed using the Vosviewer software tool. As a result of the analysis, the development of the subject of translanguaging over the years, its place in English language teaching, the aspects in which this subject has received more attention and the academic effects in this field were tried to be determined. This study is a resource for researchers working in the fields of linguistics, applied linguistics and language education.

Key words: Translanguaging, Bibliometric Analysis, Applied Linguistics, ELT

Introduction

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With the globalization and the internationalization (Xinm vd., 2024), we have been the residents of the world in need of continual social interaction who can not resist any more to the use of many languages, resources and techniques available (Ocampo, 2018) which has brought the search for reconceptualization of ever-lasting language phenomenon. Thus, translanguaging first coined by the Welsh educationist Cen Williams (Williams, 1994) as a term, which means the deliberate usage of two languages in classrooms signifying a teaching method consisting the intentional exchange of two languages, emerged out of this search (García & Wei, 2014). The original Welsh word "trawsieithu" was later translated into English as "translanguaging" meaning " the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages (Baker, 2011). Translanguaging implies that people who speak more than one language have a large linguistic library that encompasses all the languages they speak, and they can draw from any of them at will (*Translanguaging. - EBSCO*, t.y.). Translanguaging discussed to be an inclusive locution substituting the terms such as code-meshing, code-switching, crossing and code-mixing (Wei, 2018) can also be defined as a pedagogical, sociocultural practice in which teachers and pupils profit by their entire semiotic repertoire. It means when the students need to use the languages in their repertory, they take advantage of it (Altun, 2021). In other words, they would rather have communication by attaining whatever exists in their communicative repertoire, which also is a proof of the use of translanguaging (Erdin & Salı, 2020). Therefore translanguaging approach is a unitary view (Otheguy vd., 2019). It is quite explicit that translanguaging pedagogy provides students with different corners to build their competency of the weaker language by using their knowledge of the predominant one (Yuvayapan, 2019). As a critical sociolinguistic theory, translanguaging has had the most application in language education, especially in the education of language-minoritized students and in bilingual education and increasingly in what are considered foreign language programs.(García & Wei, 2018).

Translanguaging is a rising pedagogy in bilingual education (Kopuz et al., 2026), beneficial for both bilingual students and teachers as it combines multiple languages in a single curriculum (Lisaitė & Smits, 2022). Thus in language teaching and learning it has a vital role to support the standardization of bilingual language applications and to induce new pedagogies in the language classroom (Prada & Turnbull, 2018). Translanguaging offers a practical theory of language that bridges sociocultural and and cognitive approaches (Kartal & Doğan, 2026), promoting fluid and dynamic practices in multilingual social interactions (Wei, 2018).

Translanguaging is not only about linguistics but also a combination of efficient use of language and gestures for communication (Garcia & Otheguy, 2020). Translanguaging is a mirror to codeswitching (Canagarajah, 2011) and a variable sort of multilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). For content and learning language, translanguaging has a transformating role for the student, for the educator, and for education itself, and especially for bilingual education (Öztüfekçi, 2023). Translanguaging assists educators and pupils in addressing challenges related to subject content learning in EMI classrooms (Moore, 2016). Translanguaging in the classroom is not only a way of building meaning of content and learning language but also a justified instrument of fulfilling aspired identifications (Sayer, 2013). The concept of translanguaging is about the fluid and flexible use of the various languages that make up multilingual students' full linguistic repertoire (Lewis vd., 2012; Prilutskaya, 2021). In short the goal of translanguaging approaches is to let language learners feel free of the restrictions of needing to comply with the standard of an idealized, native-like user of the language, allowing them to have the advantage of their linguistic abilities.

Despite the increasing interest in the field, limited bibliometric works in this domain have been the driving force of this study which aims to shed light onto the field and tries to find answers to the following research questions:

1-What are the notable documents, organizations, trends and themes in translanguaging research?
2-Which are the most influential resources and authors?
3-What are the future research directions in translanguaging research?

Methodology

In this study, the data were sourced and downloaded from a considerable academic database: Web of Science Core Collection (WoS), which has been widely used in over 200 disciplines (Liu, 2019) including comprehensively high-quality academic publications from various fields and also known as one of the most widely used library sources (Roemer & Borchardt, 2015). First of all, for the retrieval of the documents, between the years 2010 and March, 2024 as the publication years and the search keyword "translanguaging" were written on the "Topic" part through which 1862 documents were obtained. When "Article" as the document type and "English" as the language were chosen, the results decreased and 1610 results remained. On the Web Of Science categories section "Linguistics", "Education Educational Research",

"Language Linguistics", "Education Scientific Disciplines", "Literature" were refined and 1509 results were yielded. Next, applying the refinement of SSCI indexed journals, which have high quality academic standards and crucial impact within the social sciences disciplines and , on the Web of Science Index resulted in 940 articles which were added to the marked list for a further singly manual sifting process (Hernández-Vásquez & Rosselli, 2017). During manual elimination process, article titles, their abstracts, research questions were reviewed. When there were doubt or indecision about the article to be chosen or not, it was meticulously scanned, read and examined and furthermore, a colleague was asked for a revision. In the end, with the exclusion of 316 articles, 624 articles fitting the research topic remained to be analysed in VOSviewer.

Bibliometric analysis

Bibliometric analysis is a famous and meticulous method for examining and analyzing broad ranged volumes of scientific data. It allows us to unlock the historical evolution of a specific field, while illuminating the rising areas in that field (Donthu vd., 2021). It is a quantitative and longtitude analysis and a kind of bibliographic statistics using citation networks. Bibliometrics can be enunciative showing the number of articles the organizations produce and issue, or gaging, giving citation analysis to show the influence of the articles on the following studies by others (McBurney & Novak, 2002). Bibliometric analysis is a sturdy and adept methodology to have the evaluation of scientific literature. It supplies a utility understanding of the entire influence of scientific appendage in different disciplines. Bibliometrics is a method for analysis, sight and evaluation of the scientific outputs (Gumpenberger vd., 2012).

Although various researchers yielded about translanguaging especially in applied linguistics and language education, the rarity of bibliometric analyses on this subject gave a start to the present study.

Figure 1 is the workflow diagram of how this study has been carried out, data selection and analysis processes.

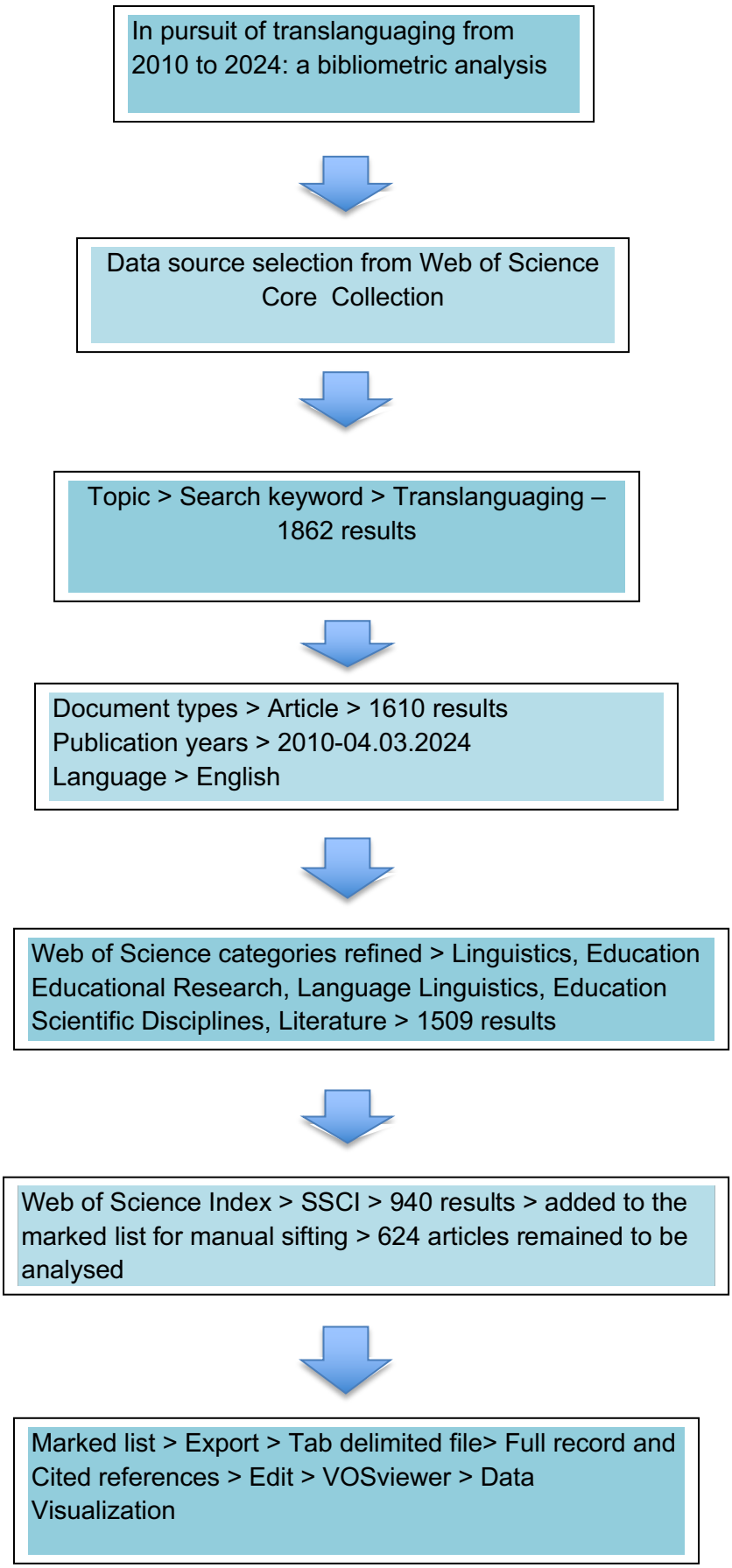


FIGURE 1. Workflow (Flowchart) diagram for document selection of the bibliometric study

Findings

In order to address the research questions, the bibliometric dataset consisting of 624 SSCI-indexed articles published between 2010 and March 2024 was analyzed using VOSviewer.

Figure 2 is an explicit depiction of the development in the domain providing the number of publications over time with their citations.

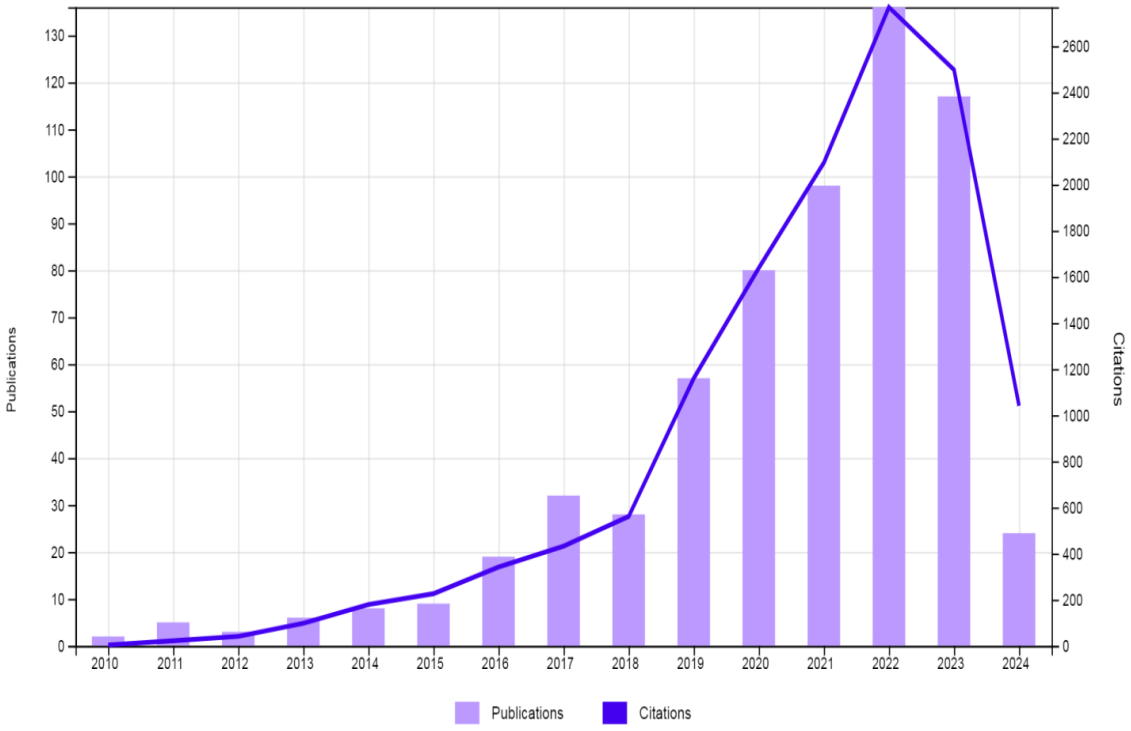


FIGURE 2. Distribution of selected papers across years

The bar chart above highlights the development of translanguaging throughout the years. From 2010 to 2015, the number of publications was relatively low and gradually increased. There has been a significant rise in publications starting from 2016, with a steep increase each year, peaking in 2021 and 2022 with 136 publications. Citations show a delayed response compared to publications, starting to rise significantly from around 2017. Citations peaked in 2022 and 2023, with the highest value slightly above 2400 citations. The data in Figure 2 indicates that translanguaging as a research topic gained substantial interest starting around 2016, with both publications and citations experiencing significant growth. The peak in both publications and

citations in 2022 and 2023 suggests these years were particularly influential for the field. The decline in 2023 could suggest a saturation point or a shift in research interest to other emerging topics. But it is promising that the researches are to be in progress as the number of publications is 24 for the quarterly period of the year until March,2024, which is the start for our study. But it might still have a decline at the end of the year.

Figure 3 shows the most popular publication titles across the journals on the topic.

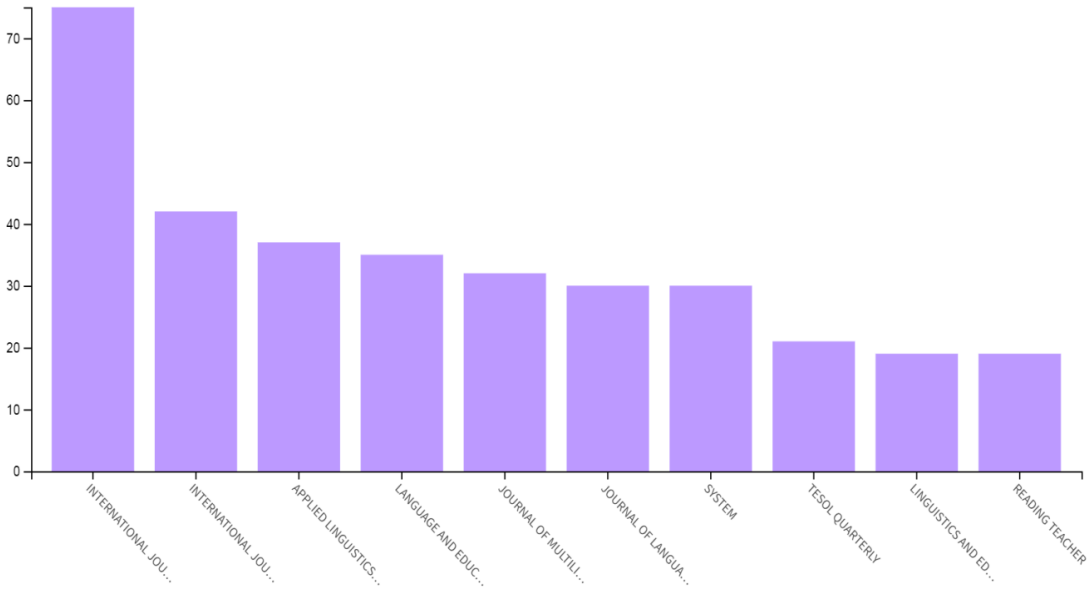


FIGURE 3. Distribution of publication titles across the journals

Figure 3 shows the distribution of publication titles across various journals including the first ten. According to the chart, the " International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism" is the most prominent and has the highest number of publications, with over 70 titles. This indicates it is a leading platform and a key outlet for search in this area. The second and the third journals respectively are "International Journal of Multilingualism" and "Applied Linguistics Review", each with around 40-50 publications. "Language and Education", "Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development" and "Journal of Language Identity and Education" also have considerable numbers, each contributing approximately 30-35 publications. "System" is next with around 30 publications. "Tesol Quarterly" and "Linguistics and Education" each have about 20-25 publications. "Reading Teacher" rounds out the list with around 20 publications. The chart underlines the journals that are central to the dissemination of research on translanguaging, providing a comprehension into where researchers publish their work and which journals are pivotal in this academic domain.

Figure 4 below displays a representative map of the rising trends and topics in the study domain with both simple and derivative words, phrases and terms. The network shows the relations and linkages between the variety of terms.

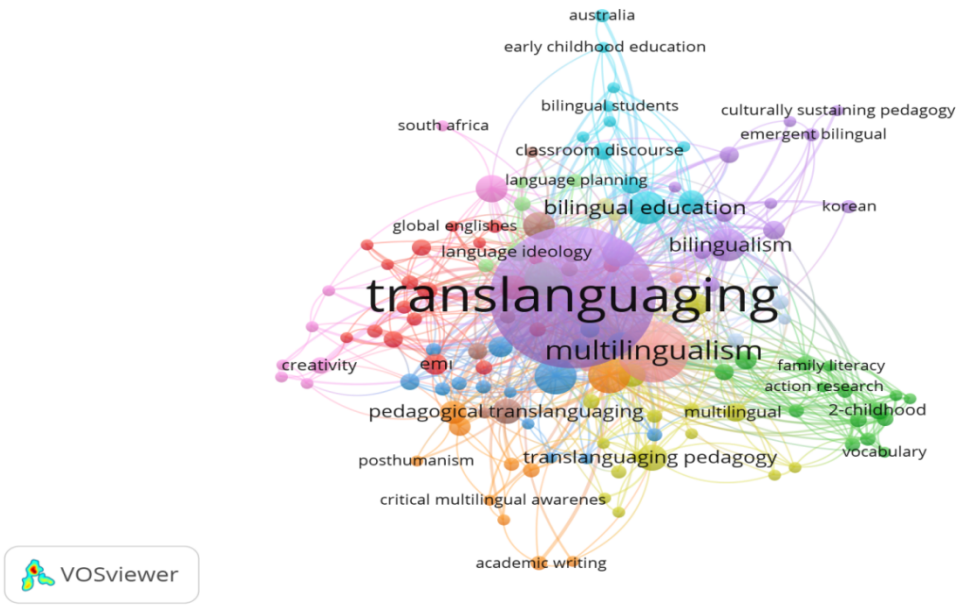


FIGURE 4. Themes and trends: Network visualisation of cooccurrence of author keywords

In Figure 4, there are totally 13 clusters with 133 items. The biggest purple node "translanguaging" is located in the centre as being already the research foci and the search term of the study. Around the capital node are the other large and small nodes related with the main theme and the term "translanguaging" such as "multilingualism", "bilingualism", translanguaging pedagogy", bilingual education", "EMI" and classroom discourse. Despite not in relation with the topic directly, some research methodologies, theories or settings are noticed in the figure which provides a venerable comprehension.

Themes are seen in various clusters in different colours. The key item and the theme here is shown in purple as "translanguaging" with a total link strength of 564 and 317 occurrences while the pink cluster "multilingualism" is subsidiary with a total link strength of 171 and 68 occurrences. The other surrounding thematic terms are "pedagogical translanguaging" in yellow with a total link strength 21 and 13 occurrences, "translanguaging pedagogy" in yellow with a total link strength 23 and 14 occurrences, "bilingualism" in purple with a total strength

of 68 and 21 occurrences, “bilingual education” in blue with a total strength of 48 and 22 occurrences. These terms indicate the predominant hotspots of research in this field. Applied linguistics and pedagogy of foreign language are focused upon during translanguaging studies. The terms in different-coloured clusters such as “decolonization”, emergent bilingual”, “heritage language” and “identity construction” with almost the same occurrences and very close total link strengths also show that learning a language and using it naturally is related with building identities.

With the examination of the keywords and their frequent occurrences, a ranking in order of importance can be given as follows: translanguaging, multilingualism, teacher education, bilingualism, higher education, multilingual education, bilingual education, English medium instruction, pedagogy and language policy.

Figure 5 is the network analysis of citation of authors which exhibits the most influential and prominent researchers and scholars of the field.

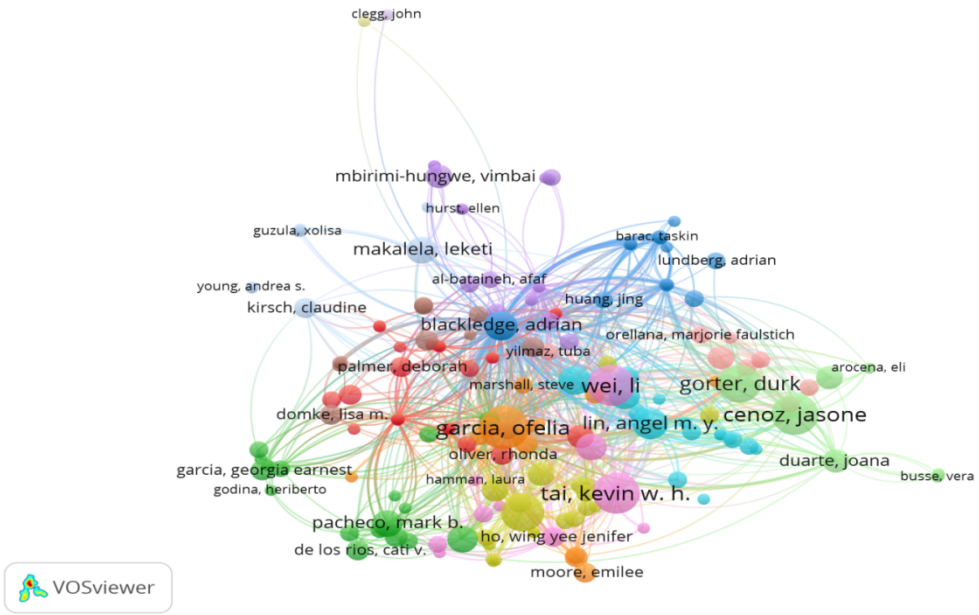


FIGURE 5. Citation author network analysis

In this figure of citation analyis, every single author is shown with their names in collaboration with other authors and researchers in their nodes or the other nodes with different colours. Minimum number of citation of an author has been chosen 20 and

minimum number of documents of an author has been chosen 1 and 93 author names out of 784 have met the threshold. Garcia Ofelia, Jasone Cenoz, Adrian Blackledge, Leketi Makalela, Ricardo Otheguy, Li Wei are the most cited ones with big nodes and central positions which means their contribution is noticable. The clusters with the same colour express the frequent citation among the researchers. While Garcia Ofelia has 570 citations, R. Otheguy follows her with 315 citations and then comes J. Cenoz with 308. The most documents with a number of 12 have been produced by Kevin Tai with a citation of 170. Although there are a lot of names in the figure above on the map, the featured and the most prolific authors are not more than six. This result shows that the authors who represent the field are rare and the ones that are not mentioned have just one or two documents.

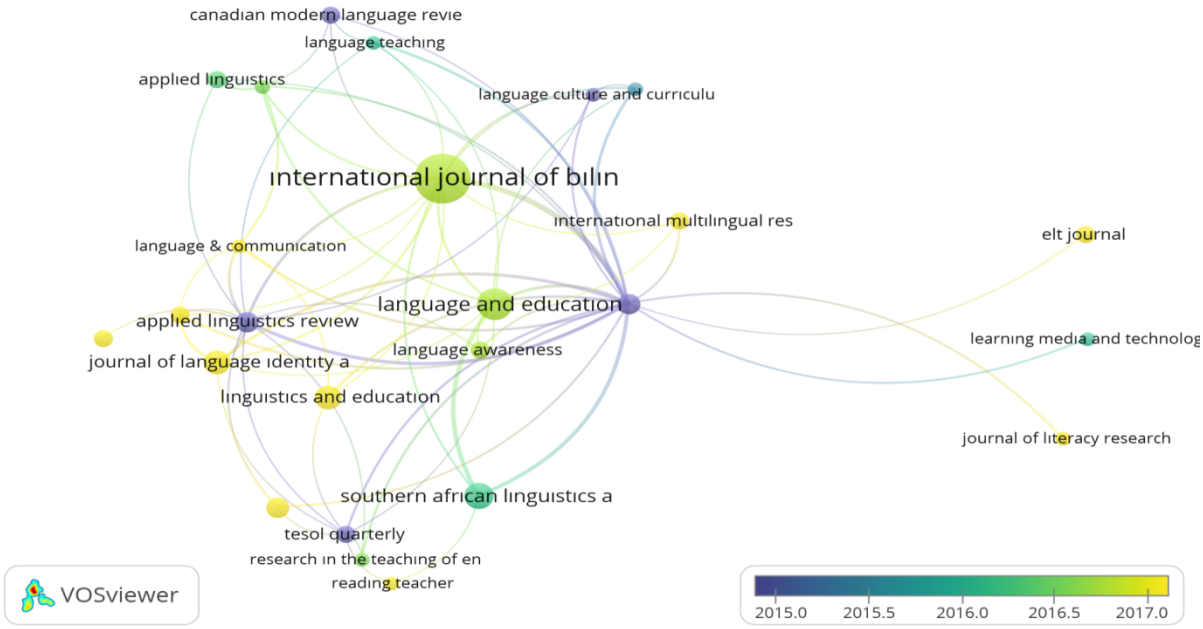


FIGURE 6. Citation analysis of sources overlay visualization

Out of 49 sources, 26 has met the threshold when minimum number of documents of a source is selected 26 and 25 items in 8 clusters have emerged. After the second half of 2016, “International Journal of Bilingualism” with 20 documents, 1031 citations and a total link strength of 37 ranked first among the others and are followed by “Language and Education”, “Language Awareness”. After 2017, “Linguistics and Education”, “Journal of Language Identity”, “Applied Linguistics Review” have gained importance.

The citation analysis of organizations shown in Figure 7 below is a depiction of the most prolific affiliations throughout years.

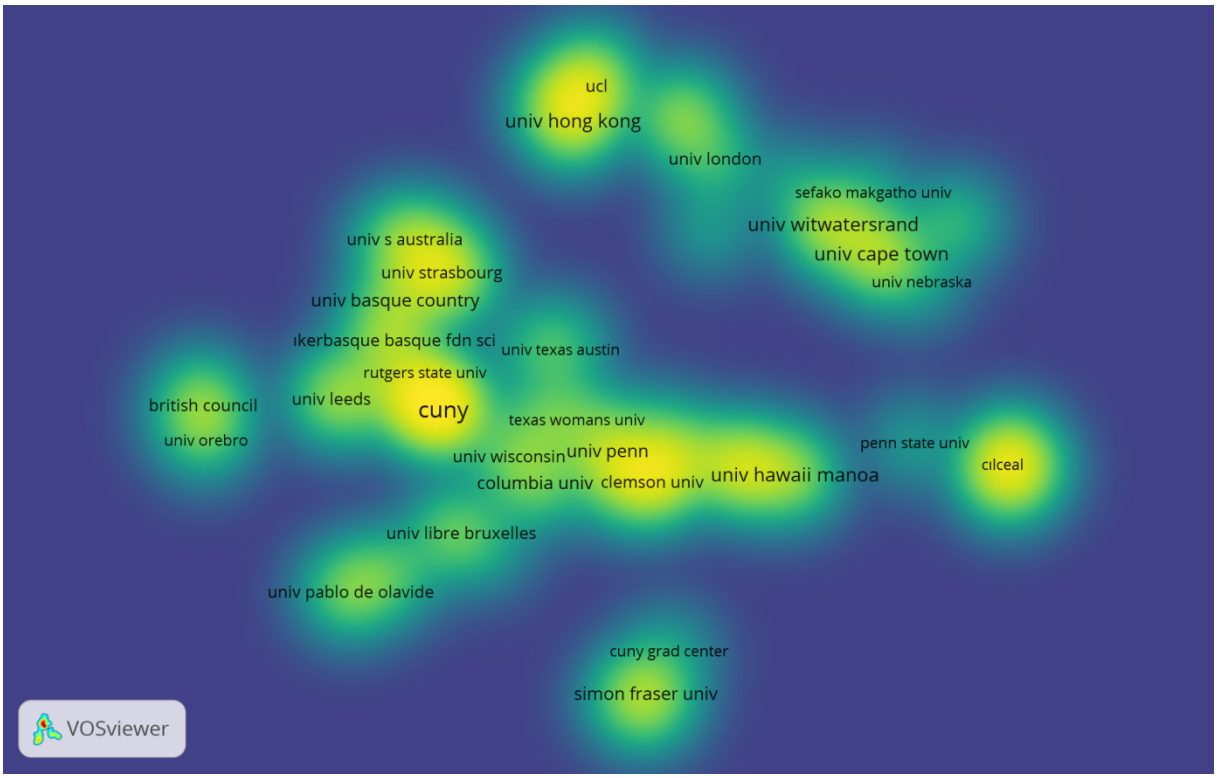


FIGURE 7. Citation analysis of organizations density visualization

For the visualization of Figure 7, minimum number of documents of an organization was selected 1 and the minimum number of citations of an organization was selected 10. Out of 116 organizations, 103 have met the threshold which has led to 90 items and 15 clusters. University of Cuny has 9 documents with 1424 citations and 39 total link strength. After Cuny comes Birmingham University with 5 documents and 1571 citations and a total link strength 87. University of Witwatersrand has also 5 documents but 205 citations with a total link strength of 24. Pennslyvania State University, Rutgers State University, University of Hong Kong, University of Basque Country and University of Texas Austin have high number of citations with total link strengths between 11 and 32.

Conclusion, Discussion and Future Directions

Conclusion

The current research has used a bibliometric analysis to define the most prominent authors, sources, themes and trends in the field. Scientific visualizations through Vosviewer software tool have been mapped for a deeper comprehension of the domain. Furthermore, the findings of the study display the dynamic developmental process of the field throughout years. Foreign language classroom settings can be studied further in different contexts for translanguaging. Contribution to more comprehensive insights with practical implementations will be provided with translanguaging studies.

Discussion

The findings of this bibliometric analysis offer a comprehensive overview of the intellectual evolution, disciplinary boundaries, and pedagogical shifts within translanguaging scholarship between 2010 and early 2024. The exponential growth in publications and citations observed after 2016 directly mirrors what scholars have termed the "multilingual turn" in applied linguistics (Prada & Turnbull, 2018; Wei, 2018). While Cen Williams (1994) and Colin Baker (2011) initially conceptualized translanguaging within Welsh bilingual classrooms, the surge in SSCI-indexed output between 2016 and 2022 reflects the widespread adoption of García and Wei's (2014) and Otheguy et al.'s (2019) unitary linguistic repertoire framework. By challenging traditional monoglossic ideologies and strict language separation policies, this theoretical paradigm resonated globally with researchers investigating diverse educational contexts, explaining both the sharp post-2016 publication spike and the subsequent citation peak in 2022–2023.

The thematic clustering of author keywords underscores a significant transition from purely theoretical debates toward classroom-based instructional design. The prominence of nodes such as *pedagogical translanguaging*, *translanguaging pedagogy*, *teacher education*, and *English medium instruction (EMI)* confirms that researchers increasingly view translanguaging not merely as a spontaneous communicative practice among bilinguals, but as a deliberate, scaffolded instructional strategy (Lewis et al., 2012; Prilutskaya, 2021). Consistent with Moore

(2016) and Lisaitė and Smits (2022), the strong co-occurrence of *EMI* and *higher education* reveals that as universities worldwide internationalize their curricula, educators and students rely on their full semiotic repertoires to mediate complex disciplinary content and overcome linguistic barriers. Furthermore, the presence of themes such as *identity construction*, *emergent bilingual*, and *decolonization* aligns with Creese and Blackledge (2015) and Sayer (2013), illustrating that translanguaging research inherently intersects with critical sociolinguistics, learner empowerment, and social justice.

An examination of journal distribution and citation networks reveals that translanguaging has established a robust institutional home within leading applied linguistics and bilingual education outlets, notably *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *International Journal of Multilingualism*, and *Applied Linguistics Review*. At the same time, the presence of *TESOL Quarterly* and *System* demonstrates its growing relevance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts—a trend echoed in recent regional scholarship calling for flexible bilingual pedagogies in traditionally monolingual EFL settings (Altun, 2021; Erdin & Salı, 2020; Yuvayapan, 2019). The temporal shift visible in the source overlay analysis—moving from foundational bilingualism journals pre-2017 toward identity- and discourse-oriented outlets post-2017—further confirms the field's maturation from defining the construct to interrogating its sociopolitical and interactional nuances.

Finally, the author and institutional citation networks highlight both the geographical diversity and the theoretical centralization of the field. While foundational scholars at CUNY (e.g., Ofelia García, Ricardo Otheguy) and UK/European institutions (e.g., Li Wei, Adrian Blackledge, Jasone Cenoz) anchor the theoretical core, the high visibility of institutions such as the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Hong Kong—alongside prolific recent contributors like Kevin W. H. Tai—illustrates that empirical innovation is heavily driven by postcolonial, multilingual, and EMI contexts in Africa and Asia. Comparing these findings with Xinm et al. (2024), it becomes evident that while North American and European scholarship laid the conceptual groundwork, global south and Asian higher education contexts are increasingly shaping contemporary empirical applications of pedagogical translanguaging.

Future Directions

Translanguaging is a lively practise as it combines choosing and implementation of various resources and repertoires inside of the brain. In the current study, there are limitations such as

using only English language and Web of Science Core Collection database and SSCI indexed journals which can lead to some missings out. As this study has been conducted with the limitation of just one database and one software, other databases and software analysis tools can be used in the future. Some other analysis other than carried out here in this study such as analysis of countries and regions can also be conducted. Bibliometric analyses on how translanguaging is related with other disciplines can also be the research foci. The role of translanguaging in digital and online learning environments, especially in the digitalized educational domains can be explored. Investigations on how translanguaging can be supported by technological tools and platforms can be carried out. A deeper and more up-to-date understandings can be cultivated.

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