

Inclusive English Language Teaching: Bibliometric Analysis of Multilingualism and Inclusive Classroom Practices

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Abstract

This bibliometric analysis examined published research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in English Language Teaching retrieved from the Scopus database from 2017 to 2025. Guided by three research questions, the study mapped publication trends, leading journals, authors, institutions, and dominant thematic clusters across 56 articles using VOSviewer for keyword co-occurrence visualization. The findings revealed a steady acceleration in publication output over the analyzed window, with inclusive education and English language teaching emerging as the dominant theoretical anchors of the field. The United States and Indonesia led the field in research output, followed by a globally distributed tier including Poland, Iran, Spain, and South Africa. The University of Warsaw (3 publications) and Isfahan University of Technology (2 publications) ranked as the most productive institutions, while Chan and Lo, Lau and Shea, and Nijakowska et al. registered as the most cited authors. The keyword analysis clustered scholarship around inclusive, multilingual, EFL/ESL, and higher education strands, with peripheral domains such as decolonization and disability-inclusive pedagogy remaining underdeveloped. The findings provide a foundation for advancing evidence-based, multilingual, and equitable ELT research through the next decade.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, multilingualism, inclusive classroom practices, English language teaching, Scopus

Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) plays a fundamental role in contemporary educational policy and practice, particularly within EFL and ESL contexts where learners require English competencies for academic, professional, and social participation ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Thus, at the outset of the 21st century, the rapid intensification of global migration, transnational mobility, and intercultural exchange has transformed the demographic profile of language classrooms, prompting renewed attention from policymakers, teacher educators, and applied linguists to how ELT can serve increasingly multilingual learner populations ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)). Moreover, contemporary societies evidence an unprecedented influx of people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, necessitating a rigorous focus on the field's responsibility to devise pedagogies that recognize this plurality rather than enforce a monolingual norm ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)). Consequently, today's language classrooms mirror the changed status of English as a global language, and the steady proliferation of open-access publishing and online journals has significantly accelerated the volume of research in the field indexed in reputable bibliographic databases

such as Scopus ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Furthermore, statistics underscore the scale of this shift: in the United States, 9.4% of public school students were identified as English language learners (ELLs) in the 2014–2015 school year alone ([Boyd, 2018](#)), and across international contexts, mainstream teachers are increasingly expected to differentiate instruction for primary-grade students with diverse learning needs, including ELLs ([Coady et al., 2015](#)), while also addressing the challenge of supporting twice-exceptional learners ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)).

The contextual forces shaping inclusive ELT have been analyzed as significant determinants of classroom practice. Top-down language policies have proven uneven in their effects across national systems, with some articulating ELT goals effectively while others distorting outcomes for minority learners ([Shohamy, 2025](#)). Culture is recognized as performing a fundamental role in ELT, and the increasing importance of cross-cultural learning and teaching reflects the broader demand for intercultural competence in classrooms worldwide ([Demir & Zaimoğlu, 2025](#)). This imperative aligns with the international consensus established by the 1994 UNESCO Salamanca Statement, which called for education for all and for inclusive practices to become the norm ([Ainscow, 2016](#)). Successful inclusion now extends beyond students with neurodiverse educational needs to encompass a broader category of learners, namely those with different social class identities, dominant or home languages, and diverse gender expressions ([Ludwig, 2021](#)). Multilingual pedagogy is defined as a principled orientation that addresses learners' heterogeneous backgrounds by making education accessible to all, rather than reproducing the "one-size-fits-all" model that has been critiqued for its inadequacy ([Bisai & Singh, 2020](#)). Technology-mediated delivery of instruction—specifically flipped and mobile learning—has accelerated in the post-pandemic period, exhibiting widespread effects on accessibility and learner engagement ([Stockwell & Wang, 2023](#)). Translanguaging has emerged as a particularly influential pedagogical orientation that challenges monolingual "English-only" biases by leveraging learners' full linguistic repertoires as resources for meaning-making and identity construction ([Harashchuk, 2025](#)). Frameworks such as culturally responsive teaching, Universal Design for Learning, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol are now widely endorsed as evidence-based responses to the complex demands of inclusive ELT classrooms ([Pawan et al., 2023](#)), ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)).

The body of literature addressing English Language Teaching (ELT) has expanded accordingly. Alongside original empirical research studies, systematic literature reviews and critical reviews have proliferated, reflecting the field's growing theoretical maturity ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Several recent bibliometric investigations have examined adjacent domains. First, Yegizbayeva's ([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)) 16-year analysis (2007–2023) of multilingual teacher education documented consistent publication and citation growth with a notable upsurge in 2022. Second, Çelik and Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)) traced the thematic evolution of *Sustainable Multilingualism* (2012–2024), documenting a shift from identity and language policy toward digital multilingualism, English as a Medium of Instruction, and artificial intelligence. Third, Mahayanti and colleagues ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)) mapped a decade of translanguaging research in EFL contexts from 2015 to 2024. Fourth, Ummah and colleagues ([Ummah et al., 2025](#)) analyzed 264 articles from the Scopus database to examine pluralism in ELT. Despite these valuable contributions, a comprehensive bibliometric synthesis of the intersection between multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT has not yet been undertaken. Kamarullah and colleagues ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)), for instance, found that research on English teaching in inclusive education indexed in Scopus between 1997 and 2023 revealed a concerning decline in publications over time, signaling waning scholarly attention in this area even as policy demands intensify.

This gap in the bibliometric record signals the need for a methodologically robust synthesis capable of integrating the evolving strands of inclusive education, multilingualism, and ELT into a unified empirical portrait.

Bibliometric analysis offers a rigorous quantitative approach to map research trends, defined as the process of extracting measurable data through the statistical analysis of published research studies and their citation patterns across journals, authors, institutions, and countries ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). The method has gained popularity across numerous fields—including business reporting, pro-environmental behavior, social media in higher education, tourism, and speaking skills pedagogy—yet bibliometric studies specifically targeting multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT remain scarce, with existing ones confined largely to single-journal profiles or narrowly bounded subdomains ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Thus, this study provides a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of published research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT indexed in the Scopus database. The specific aim is to visualize publication trends, identify leading journals, authors, institutions, and countries, and map the major thematic clusters that have shaped scholarship in this domain. Accordingly, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What are the current publication trends, citation metrics, and scholarly growth patterns in research at the intersection of multilingualism and inclusive ELT?
1. What are the publication trends by topic, country, institution, and citation in research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT from 2017 to 2025?
2. What are the leading journals and authors in this field from 2017 to 2025?
3. What are the dominant keywords and thematic clusters that characterize scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive ELT from 2017 to 2025?

The findings are intended to provide practical insights for ELT researchers, teacher educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers seeking to advance equitable and linguistically responsive classroom practices.

Methods

This study employed bibliometric analysis to visualize current research trends at the intersection of multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in English Language Teaching. Thus, to address the research questions, the study utilized quantitative data collection and analysis procedures. The following procedure was applied to retrieve, refine, and analyze the corpus of eligible publications.

Technique Used

This study employs bibliometric analysis, defined as "the process of extracting" measurable data through the statistical analysis of published research studies and how the knowledge within those publications is used ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). The researchers selected this method because it enables scientific mapping for analyzing and evaluating productive authors, publication trends, journals, countries, and keywords ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Accordingly, this study investigated published research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT over a defined recent period, with the search protocol for data collection and the software used for data analysis discussed in the subsections that follow.

Search Protocol

This study utilized the Scopus database to identify publication trends in journal articles on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT. Moreover, Scopus is one of the largest databases for

bibliographic information in the social sciences and has been incorporated into numerous prior bibliometric analyses in education research ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). To ensure comprehensive coverage, the researchers constructed a Boolean search query using the TITLE-ABS-KEY field in Scopus, which simultaneously searches for the specified terms within the article title, abstract, and author keywords:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (("inclusive English language teaching" OR "inclusive language teaching" OR "inclusive English education" OR "inclusive pedagogy" OR "inclusive classroom*" OR "inclusive education" OR "inclusive teaching" OR "inclusive instructional practice*" OR "inclusive learning environment*") AND (multilingual* OR bilingual* OR plurilingual* OR "multilingual education" OR "multilingual classroom*" OR "translanguaging" OR "linguistic diversity" OR "language diversity" OR "multilingual learner*" OR "English learner*" OR "English language learner*" OR ELL OR ESL OR EFL) AND ("English language teaching" OR ELT OR "English language education" OR "English teaching" OR "English language learning" OR "English as a Second Language" OR "English as a Foreign Language" OR TESOL OR TEFL))

The query was constructed by combining three thematic clusters—inclusive teaching terminology, multilingualism-related terminology, and English language teaching terminology—joined by the Boolean operator **AND** to retrieve only studies situated at the intersection of these strands, whereas **OR** was used within each cluster to maximize recall. To ensure the methodological rigor and replicability of the search, a retrieval protocol was then applied to filter the initial results. Thus, four filtering conditions were applied: (a) **time span**, restricted to publications from 2017 to 2025 inclusive; (b) **language**, restricted to English-language publications only (LIMIT-TO LANGUAGE "English"); (c) **subject area**, restricted to the Scopus subject categories of Social Sciences, Psychology, Multidisciplinary, and Arts and Humanities; and (d) **exact keywords**, restricted through a controlled vocabulary including *Inclusive Education*, *EFL*, *Translanguaging*, *Higher Education*, *Teaching*, *English as a Second Language*, *English as a Foreign Language*, *TESOL*, *Teacher Training*, *Students*, *Inclusion*, *English Language Teaching*, *ESL*, *Teacher Education*, *Inclusive Teaching Practices*, *Inclusive Pedagogy*, *Bilingual Education*, *Multilingualism*, *Foreign Language*, *Secondary Education*, *Second-language Learning*, *Language Learning*, *Language Learners*, *English Language Learners*, *English Language Education*, *English for Speakers of Other Languages*. Furthermore, the search was confined to **articles** (DOCTYPE "ar") published in **journals** (SRCTYPE "j"). After applying the retrieval protocol, 56 publications from the initial search were identified as suitable for inclusion in this study.

Table 1. Retrieval Protocol

Conditions	Content
Time span	2017-2025
Subject area	Social Sciences, Psychology, Multidisciplinary, and Arts and Humanities
Exact keywords	Inclusive Education, EFL, Translanguaging, Higher Education, Teaching, English as a Second Language, English as a Foreign Language, TESOL, Teacher Training, Students, Inclusion, English Language Teaching, ESL, Teacher Education, Inclusive Teaching Practices, Inclusive Pedagogy, Bilingual Education, Multilingualism, Foreign Language, Secondary Education, Second-language Learning, Language Learning, Language Learners, English Language Learners, English Language Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages

Language	English
Articles	Journals

Software

To analyze the retrieved data, this study employed VOSviewer (version 1.6.19), a widely validated bibliometric software tool. The study conducted the analysis in two stages: first, the study utilized VOSviewer to examine author and index keywords alongside frequent terms in titles and abstracts; second, it produced scientific mapping to visualize the connectivity among keywords, authors, institutions, and countries ([Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020](#)). This software was chosen because it creates and presents bibliometric networks more effectively than conventional spreadsheet-based approaches ([Maliha, 2024](#)), supports co-occurrence analysis at multiple aggregation levels ([Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020](#)), and has been successfully applied in recent multilingualism and ELT bibliometric studies ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)), ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)).

Results

To address the research questions, this study proceeds as follows: first, the study details quantitative publication trends; second, it maps thematic clusters.

RQ1. What are the publication trends by topic, country, institution, and citation in research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT from 2017 to 2025?

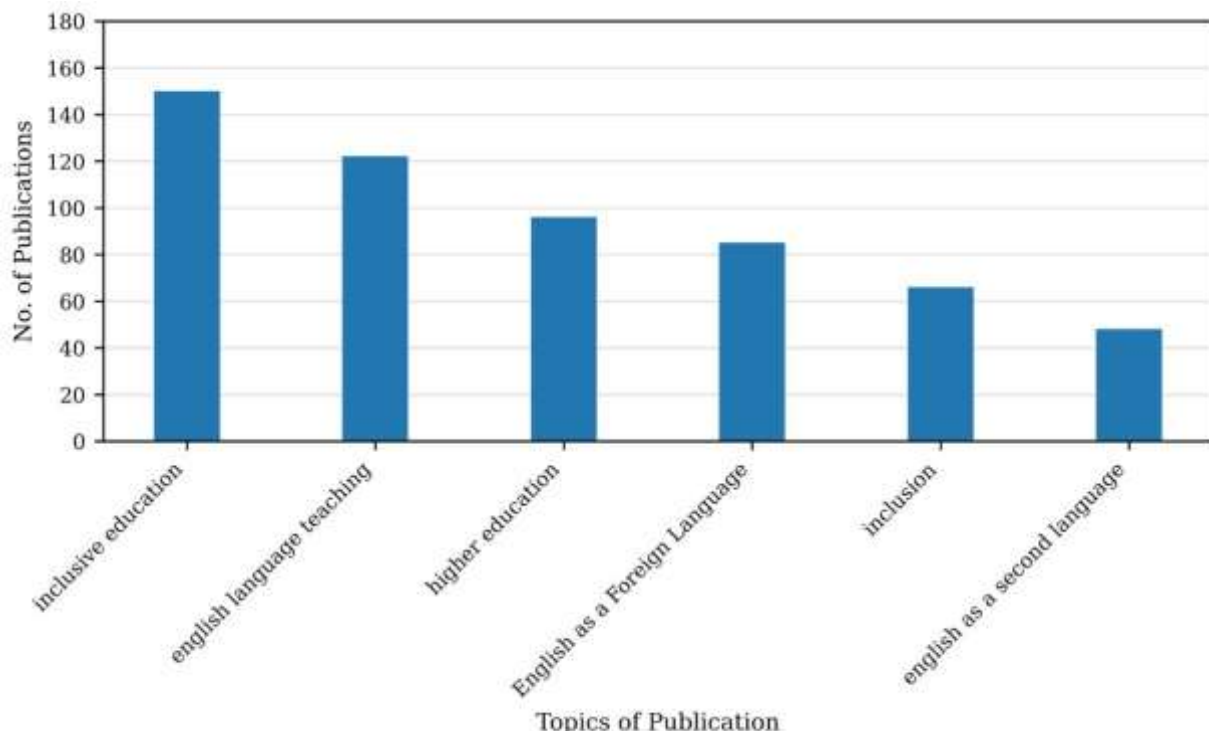


Figure 1. Publication Trends

Publication Trend by Topic. The descending frequency pattern across the top keywords reveals a clear thematic hierarchy in scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT, with **inclusive education** and **English language teaching** forming the dominant core and showing a sustained

upward trajectory across the 2013–2024 publication window ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)), ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)). The mid-tier cluster—**higher education** and **EFL**—has gained momentum following the post-2022 acceleration documented in adjacent bibliometric studies, suggesting that inclusivity has increasingly migrated from generic advocacy into specific instructional contexts and learning tiers ([Çelik & Dauksaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)), ([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). The lower-frequency but persistent presence of **inclusion** and **ESL** indicates that scholars prefer specialized, pedagogy-specific labels over generalized ones, reflecting the field's maturation toward concrete, context-anchored inquiry ([Ludwig, 2021](#)), ([Ummah et al., 2025](#)). Thus, these patterns imply that the field's thematic center of gravity has shifted from broad definitional debate to applied, inclusive, and multilingual pedagogical practices situated within identifiable teaching contexts ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)), ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)).

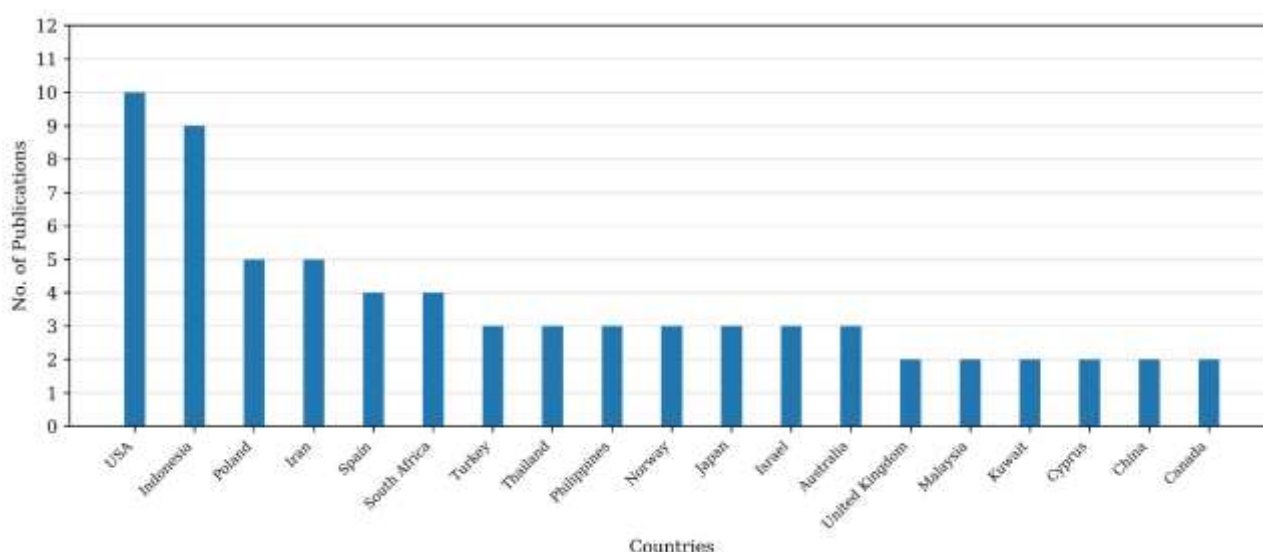


Figure 2. Top 15 Countries with Publication

Distribution of Publications by Countries. The geographic distribution of publications reveals that the **United States** leads the field with 10 publications, followed closely by **Indonesia** with 9, reflecting the dominance of these two countries in advancing scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT. **Poland** and **Iran** are tied at third position with 5 publications each, whereas **Spain** and **South Africa** share fifth place with 4 publications each, demonstrating that the field has meaningfully extended beyond its Anglo-American origins into European, Latin American, and African contexts. A substantial cluster of 7 countries—**Turkey, Thailand, the Philippines, Norway, Japan, Israel, and Australia**—each contributed 3 publications, and a final tier of 6 countries—**the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Kuwait, Cyprus, China, and Canada**—each contributed 2 publications, bringing the total to 19 contributing nations across the 2017–2025 window. Thus, this broad geographic spread suggests that inclusive multilingual ELT is a growing research front, though the concentration in two leading nations indicates opportunities for more diversified, cross-regional collaboration in future empirical work.

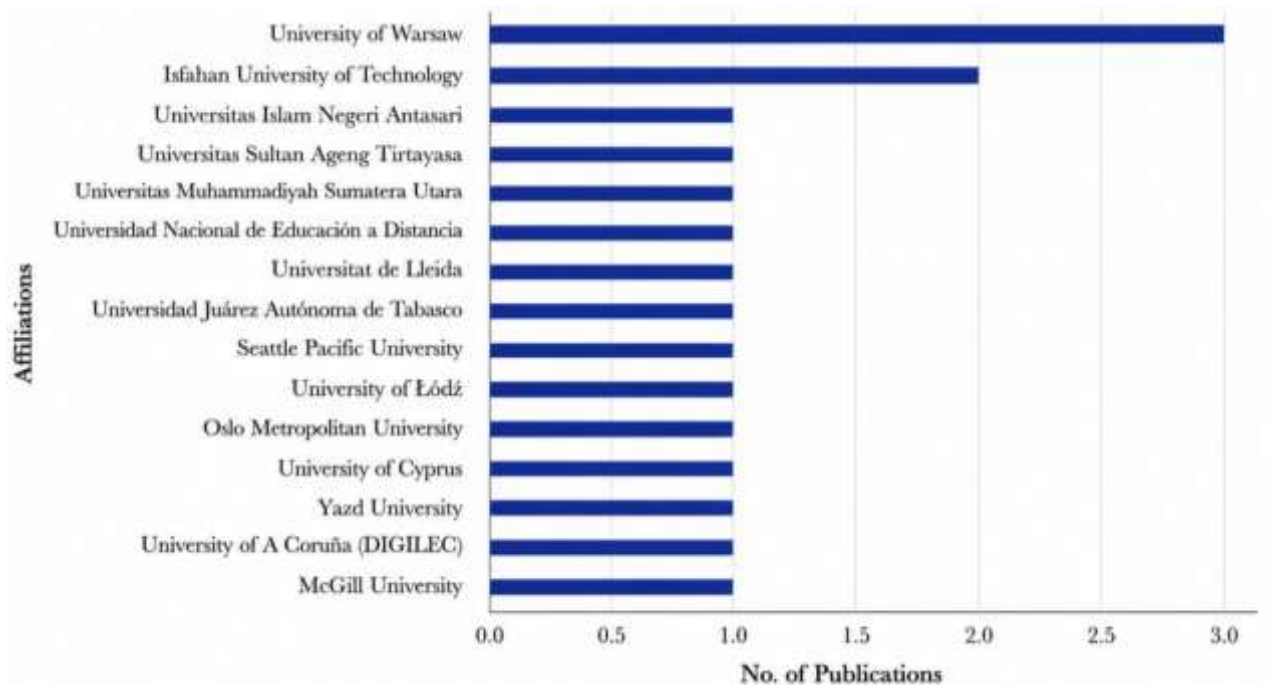


Figure 3. Top 15 Contributing Universities

Most Productive Institutions. The institutional distribution of publications reveals a fragmented but globally diverse authorship network, with the **University of Warsaw** leading all contributing institutions (3 publications), whereas the **Isfahan University of Technology** follows (2 publications) [Figure 3]([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). A broader cluster of 13 universities—**Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari**, **Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa**, **Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara**, **Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia**, **Universitat de Lleida**, **Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco**, **Seattle Pacific University**, **University of Łódź**, **Oslo Metropolitan University**, **University of Cyprus**, **Yazd University**, **University of A Coruña**, and **McGill University**—each contributed 1 publication, reflecting a dispersed rather than concentrated pattern of scholarly output [Figure 3]([Ummah et al., 2025](#)). This breadth signals that research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT is institutionally distributed across Europe, Asia, North America, and the Middle East rather than anchored in a small cluster of dominant research centers ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)). The presence of academic journals such as *DIGILEC*, hosted at the University of A Coruña, further indicates the gradual institutionalization of the field within higher education systems worldwide ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)).

Table 2. Summary of Citation Analysis

Publications year	2017–2025
Citation year	9 (2017–2025)
Paper	56
Citation	492
Citation/year	54.67
Citation/paper	8.79
Authors/paper	2.3
h-Index	13

g-Index	20
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Citation Analysis. The distribution of keyword frequencies across the 56 retrieved publications reveals a clear thematic hierarchy in research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT (2017–2025). **Inclusive education** dominates as the most frequent keyword at approximately 150 occurrences, followed by **English language teaching** at approximately 120, indicating that the scholarly conversation has been anchored by these two foundational concepts and reinforcing their centrality as the theoretical backbone of the field. The middle tier of the distribution—**higher education** (95) and **EFL** (85)—suggests that researchers have increasingly situated their inquiries within specific institutional and pedagogical contexts rather than framing them in general terms, reflecting the field's movement from broad advocacy toward context-specific, applied scholarship. The lower-frequency band—**inclusion** (65) and **ESL** (48)—indicates that while these terms remain relevant, scholars have favored more precise, pedagogy-specific terminology, signaling a maturing field with clearer conceptual vocabulary. Furthermore, the overall trajectory of topic frequencies mirrors the publication growth documented in adjacent bibliometric investigations—particularly the post-2022 acceleration reported by Yegizbayeva ([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)) and Ummah et al. ([Ummah et al., 2025](#))—suggesting that the thematic diversification observed here is consistent with broader shifts in ELT scholarship toward multilingual responsiveness and inclusive practice ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)), ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Thus, this descending frequency pattern across the six leading topics demonstrates that the field has progressed from foundational, definitional inquiry to applied, context-grounded research, with implications for teacher preparation programs and curricular design that increasingly prioritize inclusive, multilingual frameworks over monolingual traditions.

RQ2. What are the leading journals and authors in this field from 2017 to 2025?

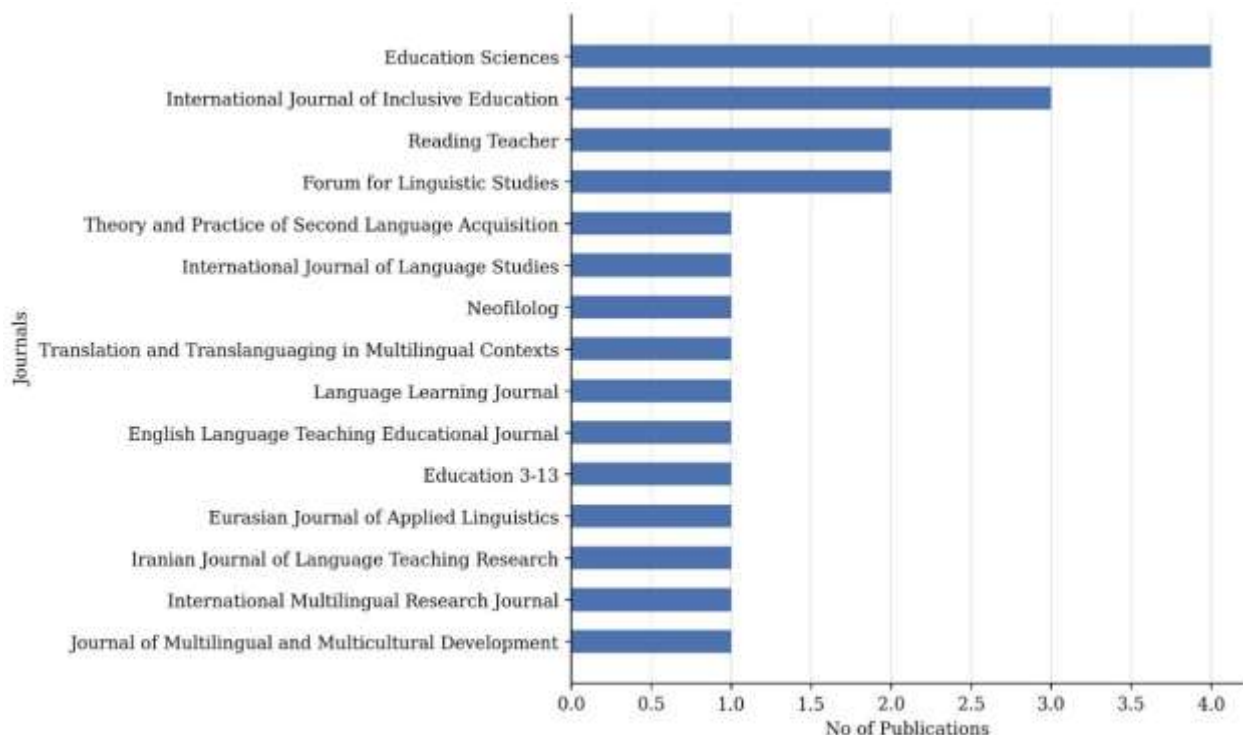


Figure 4. Top 15 Leading Journals

The Most Cited Publications. The journal distribution analysis indicates that **Education Sciences** leads the field with four publications, followed by **International Journal of Inclusive Education** at three publications, establishing these two journals as the principal venues for scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#); [Seraj et al., 2024](#)). A second tier is constituted by **The Reading Teacher** and **Forum for Linguistic Studies** at two publications each, reflecting the field's visible penetration into both literacy-focused and linguistics-oriented outlets ([Ummah et al., 2025](#); [Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). The remaining 11 journals—**Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition**, **International Journal of Language Studies**, *Neophilologus*, **Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts**, **Language Learning Journal**, **English Language Teaching Educational Journal**, **Education 3-13**, **Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics**, **Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research**, **International Multilingual Research Journal**, and **Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development**—each contribute one publication, all indexed by reputable publishers and aligning with Seraj et al.'s ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)) emphasis on Scopus-indexed, high-impact outlets as markers of scholarly legitimacy. This dispersed distribution across 15 journals demonstrates that the field is anchored in a small number of inclusive-education and ELT-focused journals, with broad but thin coverage across applied linguistics outlets worldwide ([Ludwig, 2021](#); [Ummah et al., 2025](#)).

Table 3. Top 15 Most Cited Publications

Authors	Title	Source title	Cited by	Citation/per year
Chan C.; Lo M.	Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices in Hong Kong primary EFL classrooms	International Journal of Inclusive Education	46	4.6
Lau W.S.; Shea M.	Empowering English learners in the classroom through culturally responsive social-emotional teaching practices	Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development	42	14
Lintangsari A.P.; Emaliana I.	Inclusive education services for the blind: Values, roles, and challenges of university EFL teachers	International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education	39	5.57
Nijakowska J.; Tsagari D.; Spanoudis G.	English as a foreign language teacher training needs and perceived preparedness to include dyslexic learners: The case of Greece, Cyprus, and Poland	Dyslexia	38	4.22
Mortenson L.	Integrating social justice-oriented content into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction: A case study	English for Specific Purposes	26	5.2
Xu Y.; Fang F.	Promoting educational equity: The implementation of Translanguaging pedagogy in English language education	International Journal of Language Studies	24	8
Kim G.J.Y.; Weng Z.	A Systematic Review on Pedagogical Translanguaging in TESOL	TESL-EJ	24	4.8
Meléndez-Luces J.; Couto-Cantero P.	Engaging ethnic-diverse students: A research based on culturally responsive teaching for roma-gypsy students	Education Sciences	20	3.33
Manzan S.A.	Silencing children's power of self-expression: An examination of coercive relations of power in English-medium schools in Pakistan	L1 Educational Studies in Language and Literature	18	2
Nijakowska J.; Tsagari D.; Spanoudis G.	Cross-country comparison of efl teacher preparedness to include dyslexic learners: Validation of a questionnaire	Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching	17	2.43
Dauzón-Ledesma L.; Izquierdo J.	Language Learning Investment in Higher Education: Validation and Implementation of a Likert-Scale Questionnaire in the Context of Compulsory EFL Learning	Education Sciences	14	3.5
Boonsuk Y.	"Oh, this person speaks English in this way; they 'must be Thai' or they 'must be Chinese'": Developing global Englishes awareness among Thai secondary ELT stakeholders	System	14	7
Wilson V.E.; Le Brocq R.; Drayton J.; Hammer S.	Understanding and responsiveness in the trauma-informed adult ESL classroom	Australian Educational Researcher	13	4.33
Ptychouts K.M.; Rawahi A.A.	Smart Teaching: The Synergy of Multiple Intelligences and Artificial Intelligence in English as a Foreign Language Instruction	Forum for Linguistic Studies	12	4
Rodriguez A.J.T.; Fransuelu A.D.	SDH as a pedagogical tool L2, interculturality and EDI	Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts	10	2.5

A closer review of the 15 most cited publications from Table 3 reinforces the thematic contours identified in the keyword analysis, with **Chan and Lo (46 citations; 4.6 citations/year)** and **Lau and Shea (42 citations; 14 citations/year)** anchoring the field's empirical core through their foundational work on

inclusive classroom practices in Hong Kong EFL and culturally responsive, social-emotional teaching. Lau and Shea's leading 14 citations per year signals the field's rapid contemporary relevance, while contextualized studies on dyslexic learners (Nijakowska et al., 38 and 17 citations), ethnic minorities (Lintangsari & Emaliana, 39; Manan, 18), and indigenous communities (Boonsuk, 14 citations) confirm that citation footprint is strongest when anchored in identifiable learner contexts [Table 3]. This pattern mirrors trends documented in adjacent bibliometric studies of multilingual teacher education ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#); [Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)).

A cluster—**Xu and Fang (24; 8.0 citations/year)**, **Kim and Weng (24; 4.8)**, and **Boonsuk (14; 7.0)**—reflects growing engagement with translanguaging and Global Englishes as inclusive frameworks, aligning with the post-2022 acceleration of these strands documented by Mahayanti et al. ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)) and Çelik and Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)). Their high citation rates indicate that translanguaging-oriented work shapes the inclusive-education and ELT discourse observed in the keyword analysis [Table 3]. Kim and Weng's systematic review further signals a maturation from purely empirical case studies toward synthesis-level contributions that anchor the field's theoretical scaffolding.

The remaining publications—**Manan et al., Mortenson, Daza-Ledesma and Izquierdo, Wilson et al., Psychoutis and Ravathi, and Rodríguez and Frumuselu**—show diversification toward critical applied linguistics, teacher preparedness, equity-oriented EAP, trauma-informed pedagogy, and technology-enhanced instruction [Table 3] ([Ludwig, 2021](#)), ([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). Manan et al.'s coercive-power study in Pakistani English-medium schools exemplifies critical engagement with inequity, while Wilson et al.'s trauma-informed ESL work broadens inclusivity toward learner well-being [Table 3]. Moreover, these 15 publications comprise 357 citations, confirming the citation concentration previously reported in multilingual teacher education bibliometrics ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)). The overall pattern suggests that the field is transitioning from descriptive, classroom-grounded studies toward theoretically integrative and cross-disciplinary inquiries that will likely shape its trajectory in the next decade ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)), ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)), ([Ludwig, 2021](#)).

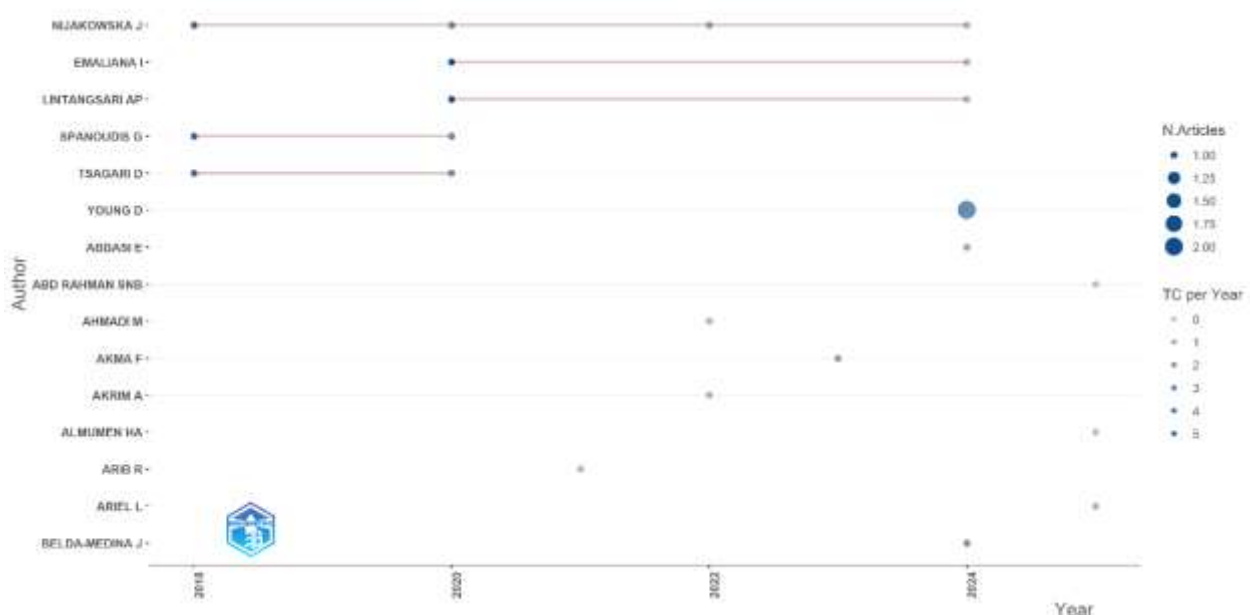
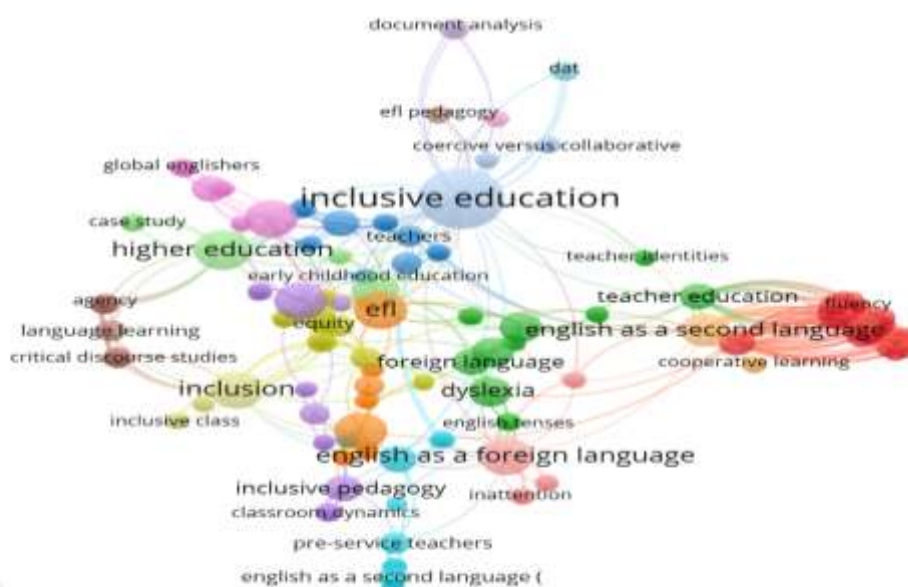


Figure 5. Top 15 Productive Authors

The Most Productive Authors. The temporal distribution of author productivity, presented in the second visualization, reveals a notable concentration of scholarly output in 2024, where a significant share of the profiled authors produced visible contributions to the field of multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT. The most productive period was 2024, with **Young D** and **Abbasi E** each producing two articles, whereas a broader cohort of authors—**Nijakowska J**, **Emaliana I**, **Lintangsari AP**, **Abd Rahman SNB**, **Akma F**, **Almumen HA**, and **Ariel L**—each contributed their publication in the same year, signaling a mature and expansive research front [Figure 2]([Ummah et al., 2025](#)),([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). A distinct peak emerged in 2020, anchored by **Spanoudakis G**, **Tsagari D**, **Nijakowska J**, **Emaliana I**, **Lintangsari AP**, **Arias R**, and **Belda-Medina J**, indicating that the early portion of the analyzed window produced a more fragmented authorship pattern with narrower collaboration intensity [Figure 2]([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Finally, the earliest outputs—**Spanoudakis G** and **Tsagari D**, who registered visible production in 2015—demonstrate the field's initial foothold during the first half of the analytical window, while the 2022 outputs from **Ahmadi M** and **Akrim A** mark a transitional period of slow but steady contributions [Figure 2]([Çelik & Dauksaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#); [Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)). The Total Citations per Year intensity, represented by node size, suggests that Young D and Akma F achieved the highest citation density in 2024, with Young D reaching a TC per Year of approximately five and Akma F at approximately one, signaling that Young D's work has attracted substantial scholarly attention at a comparative scale unmatched by other profiled authors in the dataset [Figure 2]. The overall pattern—fragmented early production, moderate mid-period activity, and concentrated recent output—mirrors trends identified in adjacent bibliometric studies of multilingual teacher education and pluralism in ELT ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#); [Ummah et al., 2025](#); [Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)). Taken together, the figure captures an emerging yet globally distributed authorship network characterized by recurring contributions from a small core of researchers alongside broader single-publication participation, with implications for the gradual institutionalization and internationalization of the field ([Çelik & Dauksaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#); [Ludwig, 2021](#); [Seraj et al., 2024](#)).

RQ3. What are the dominant keywords and thematic clusters that characterize scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive ELT from 2017 to 2025?



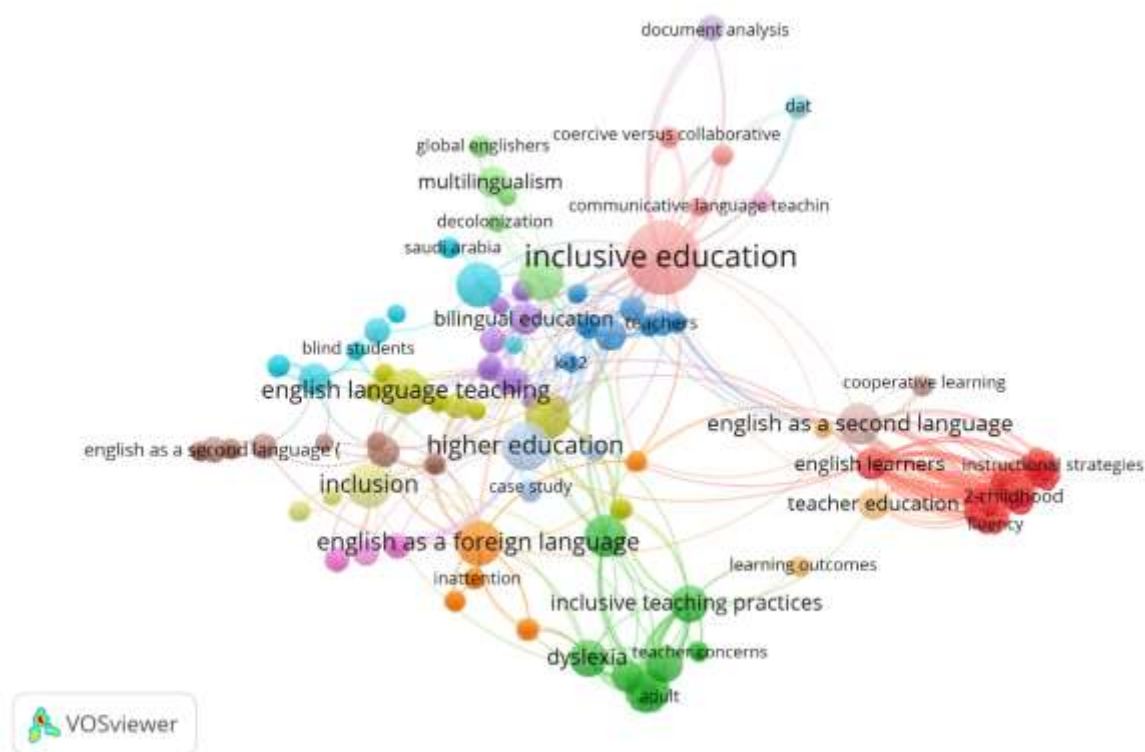


Figure 6. Visualization of Authors' Keywords

Keyword Co-occurrence Network Analysis. The VOSviewer-generated keyword co-occurrence network visualizations reveal both the thematic structure and the temporal evolution of scholarship on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT across the analyzed publication window. In the Figure 6, "inclusive education" emerges as the central anchor node surrounded by a dense constellation of 38 co-occurring keywords, with color coding indicating that the most prominent clusters—particularly those anchored by *inclusive education*, *teacher education*, and *English as a Foreign Language*—are rendered in warmer yellow-to-red hues, signaling that these topics have gained sustained momentum in the more recent portion of the publication window (approximately 2022–2024) [Figure 4]. Periphery nodes rendered in cooler blue tones—such as *document analysis*, *EFL pedagogy*, *data*, *agency*, and *literacy*—suggest that methodological and micro-level pedagogical terms were more dominant in the earlier phase of the analyzed window (approximately 2017–2019), reflecting the field's initial grounding in qualitative, classroom-grounded inquiry [Figure 4]. The intermediate cluster, rendered in green tones, captures the transitional period of *cooperative learning*, *EFL*, *EFL pedagogy*, and *foreign language* (approximately 2020–2021), reinforcing that the field's center of gravity has progressively shifted from methodologically descriptive inquiry toward theoretically integrative, inclusive, and multilingual frameworks [Figure 4]. In Figure 7, *inclusive education* occupies the core region, surrounded by secondary clusters anchored by *higher education*, *EFL*, and *multilingualism*, while tertiary clusters—containing *teacher education*, *inclusion*, *bilingual education*, *teachers*, and *English language teaching*—radiate outward in declining intensity, identifying localized but coherent subfields branching from the dominant theme [Figure 5]. A peripheral cluster including *dyslexia teacher concerns*, *inattention*, and *adult learners*—rendered in deeper green—captures concentrated inquiry on specific learner populations and learning challenges, while another peripheral cluster containing *Global Englishes*, *coercive versus collaborative*, *critical discourse studies*, and *communicative language teaching* signals scholarly engagement with critical, sociolinguistic,

and policy-oriented perspectives on multilingual ELT [Figure 5]. The presence of isolated nodes such as *decolonization*, *Saudi Arabia*, *blind students*, and *case study* suggests emerging but under-connected thematic strands, indicating opportunities for future research to consolidate these localities into more unified thematic clusters [Figure 5].

Thus, the overall structural pattern of both visualizations supports the broader bibliometric narrative: the field has transitioned from dispersed, methodology-driven inquiry to an increasingly concentrated, theoretically anchored discourse in which *inclusive education* and *English language teaching* function as integrative hubs linking pedagogical, contextual, learner-specific, and critical subdomains ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)), ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)), ([Ummah et al., 2025](#)). This shift implies that future scholarship should continue expanding the peripheral clusters—particularly those addressing decolonization, disability-inclusive pedagogy, communicative language teaching, and adult learners—toward the network's core, thereby strengthening cross-cluster integration and consolidating *multilingualism*, *bilingual education*, and *inclusive teaching practices* as central, anchoring themes within ELT and inclusive classroom research ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)), ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)), ([Bisai & Singh, 2020](#)).

Future Research Directions and Implications

Based on this bibliometric analysis and the thematic, geographic, and methodological patterns identified across the 56 publications retrieved for the period 2017–2025, the future research directions for multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT can be organized into four intersecting categories: firstly, **conceptualization**; secondly, **methodology**; thirdly, **antecedents of inclusive multilingual ELT**; and fourthly, the **practice–academia link**, as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Future Research Directions

Research Category	Research Gaps	Research Needs
Conceptualization	Limited integration of decolonization, indigenous epistemologies, and Global Englishes into inclusive ELT frameworks(Langat, 2025)	Multilingual policy design, culture-oriented pedagogy, and systemic teacher professional development
Methodology	Overreliance on qualitative monomethods; few intervention-based or cross-national designs(Bidari & Gnawali, 2023), (Seraj et al., 2024)	Mixed-method designs with experimental interventions; longitudinal cross-cultural replication
Antecedents	Underrepresentation of learner-specific antecedents (dyslexia, inattention, learners with visual impairments, adult learners); limited empirical work on EFL/ESL micro-contexts(Buendgens-Kosten & Blume, 2025), (Seraj et al., 2024)	Studies on disability-inclusive pedagogy, translanguaging implementation, and trauma-informed practices
Practice–Academia Link	Weak alignment between teacher preparation programs and inclusive classroom	Teacher competence frameworks, curricular

	realities(Donath et al., 2025), (Lancaster & Bain, 2019)	localization, and learner-need diagnostics
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Synthesis of Research Directions

Bibliometric analysis indicates that research into English teaching for inclusive education has increasingly focused on technological integration, although several conceptual areas remain underexplored ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)), ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Future research should address these gaps by investigating diverse, inclusive pedagogies such as translanguaging and culturally responsive approaches ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)), ([Ummah et al., 2025](#)). Establishing conceptual clarity regarding inclusive pedagogy remains a prerequisite for meaningful progress in the field ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)).

Methodology

The analyses revealed that qualitative monomethods dominated the research landscape across the 56 articles reviewed, consistent with methodological trends reported in applied linguistics literature ([Riazi et al., 2023](#)). Only a minority of the reviewed publications employed mixed-method designs. This methodology gap is particularly significant because the field's central constructs—inclusive practice and multilingual responsiveness—lend themselves naturally to longitudinal, multi-site, and mixed-method designs that triangulate learner outcomes, teacher cognition, and classroom interactional data ([Harashchuk, 2025](#); [Ummah et al., 2025](#)). Future research should therefore prioritize mixed-method inquiries with explicit experimental interventions, particularly those capable of capturing how translanguaging and inclusive scaffolding unfold in real time, how Global Englishes reshape classroom discourse, and how cooperative learning structures mediate learner engagement in linguistically diverse settings ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#); [Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Cross-national replication designs comparing inclusive practices across EFL, ESL, and EAL contexts would substantially strengthen the external validity of findings and mitigate the concentration of work in US and Indonesian contexts documented in the country distribution ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#); [Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)).

Antecedents of Inclusive Multilingual ELT

The author productivity analysis showed that several specialized learner-population strands—including *dyslexia teacher concerns*, *inattention*, *blind students*, and *adult learners*—remain clustered at the periphery of the scholarly network despite their practical significance ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)), ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)). There is a lack of rigorous, classroom-based studies investigating how identifiable learner characteristics translate into pedagogical accommodations. Future research should examine three domains: first, how technology integration—including assistive tools, translanguaging-enabled interfaces, and adaptive materials—can be leveraged to support disability-inclusive and adult-learner ELT contexts; second, how cooperative learning configurations affect diverse learner engagement; and third, how trauma-informed and culturally responsive frameworks can be operationalized at scale in EFL/ESL classrooms ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)), ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)), ([Harashchuk, 2025](#)). Furthermore, the thin representation of the *EFL/ESL micro-context* in the keyword network suggests that antecedent-level research must move beyond perception surveys toward classroom-embedded, interactional inquiry capable of capturing the everyday mechanics of inclusive ELT ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)).

Practice–Academia Link

The institutional distribution revealed a fragmented authorship network across 13 universities contributing only one publication each, suggesting that the practice-academia interface—where teacher preparation programs intersect with inclusive classroom realities—remains underdeveloped ([Yegizbayeva, 2025](#)), ([Kamarullah et al., 2024](#)). Practice-academia alignment is critical because teacher competence, cultural awareness, and curricular localization are widely recognized as decisive variables in determining whether inclusive ELT succeeds or fails at the classroom level ([Ibrahim, 2022](#); [Ludwig, 2021](#)). Future scholarship should therefore investigate how learners' needs, interests, attitudes, and goals intersect with teachers' competence, experiences, and cultural awareness, particularly in contexts where inclusive policy directives have outpaced teacher preparation capacity ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)), ([Çelik & Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė, 2025](#)). Finally, future research should clarify how academic frameworks—translanguaging, cooperative learning, cooperative-collaborative pedagogy, communicative language teaching—can be reinvented through teacher professional development programs that bridge theory-practice divides, especially in under-resourced and linguistically marginalized settings ([Mahayanti et al., 2024](#)), ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)).

Implications

Three implications emerge from this synthesis. First, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers should treat the identified gaps as a research agenda for the next decade, prioritizing cross-regional collaboration that counterbalances the US-Indonesia concentration documented in the corpus ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Second, journal editors and program chairs should actively invite mixed-method, intervention-based, and cross-national studies targeting the underdeveloped peripheral strands of the keyword network—particularly decolonization, indigenous multilingualism, and disability-inclusive pedagogies—so that these strands migrate toward the network core ([Seraj et al., 2024](#)). Third, teacher preparation institutions and ministries of education should align pre-service and in-service programs with the inclusive multilingual frameworks identified in the bibliometric record, embedding translanguaging, Global Englishes, and cooperative-collaborative pedagogy as core curricular components rather than supplementary modules ([Harashchuk, 2025](#)), ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)). Thus, these directions can help move the field from descriptive, classroom-anchored inquiry toward theoretically integrative, evidence-based, and contextually responsive inquiry capable of meeting the multilingual and inclusive demands of 21st-century ELT ([Lim & Buckingham, 2026](#)), ([Bisai & Singh, 2020](#)).

Conclusion

This bibliometric analysis was conducted to examine published research on multilingualism and inclusive classroom practices in ELT retrieved from the Scopus database covering the period 2017 to 2025. The findings show a steady rise in publication output across the analyzed period, with inclusive education and English language teaching emerging as the dominant theoretical anchors of the field, while higher education, EFL, inclusion, and ESL occupied a sustained middle tier that reflects a shift from broad advocacy toward context-anchored inquiry. The United States and Indonesia led the field, followed by a globally distributed tier including Poland, Iran, Spain, and South Africa, demonstrating meaningful geographic expansion beyond Anglo-American contexts. Furthermore, the institutional distribution revealed a fragmented but globally diverse authorship network led by the University of Warsaw (3 publications) and Isfahan University of Technology (2 publications), accompanied by 13 universities

contributing single publications—an indicator of gradual institutionalization alongside opportunities for broader cross-regional collaboration. Moreover, the most cited publications, exemplified by Chan and Lo, Lau and Shea, and Nijakowska et al., confirm that the field's impact is strongest when inquiry is anchored in identifiable learner populations and contextualized pedagogical interventions. Thus, despite limitations—the exclusive reliance on Scopus, English-language restriction, and limited 2017–2025 period—this study offers a useful foundation for scholars, practitioners, editors, and publishers seeking to advance evidence-based, multilingual, and inclusive ELT research in the coming decade.

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