Exploring Trends and Gaps in Teaching Linguistics Research among Undergraduate EFL Students: A Bibliometric Analysis

Rohima Nur Aziza Al Hakim

Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia
alhakimaziza@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The importance of linguistics is not just for EFL teachers to assist in mastering the concept of teaching. However, the understanding of linguistics should be started with the introductory for EFL Students as a fundamental course to help them build their understanding regarding what they are studying including the trends and gaps of the study in that context. This study aims to analyse trends and gaps in studies regarding teaching linguistics as a subject taught to EFL Students at the university level. This qualitative research applied bibliometrics analysis by collecting relevant studies taken from Publish or Perish web-apps and manage to collect 599 articles related to teaching linguistics from Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science databases ranging from 2018-2022; by applying exclusion and inclusion criteria, 367 articles were selected to be analysed using VOS viewer. The result showed the terms for the classroom, technology, foreign language, type, attitude, and literature are the most frequent and mostly discussed by the researchers. While in terms of solution, exploration, contribution, learning process, perception, difficulty, and text seems still gaining less attention compare the others. Therefore, these spots can be seen as research topic opportunity for future researchers to finding the niche. This result implies and also highlights that there are still many interesting topics to be explored regarding the scope of linguistics in language learning.

1. Introduction

Linguistics plays essential role for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. In linguistics, the student study what is language, what makes it up, what makes one language different from another one language, how it works, and what are the components behind the logic (Richard & Schmidt, 2010). Linguistics also studies how students can better use language for their purposes as language exists in human existence. Chaer (2012) states that Linguistics is the scientific study of language, also called linguistics science (Crystal, 2008). The ability to think about language as observable facts and derive inferences from actual observations is a key component of scientific reasoning in linguistics.

Furthermore, the branches of linguistics are categorized into two categories; microlinguistics and macrolinguistics. Microlinguistics studies the internal structure of language and it is divided into several disciplines, namely phonetics & *phonology* which discusses the characteristics of sounds in a language, *morphology* which discuss the formation of words,

semantics & pragmatics which discusses the meaning within language, *syntax* which discusses the way to form sentences, and *lexicology* which discuss the lexicon of languages. In addition, macrolinguistics studies the external structure of a language and it is divided into seven disciplines, they are *sociolinguistics* which discussed the relationship between language and the speakers (Holmes & Wilson, 2022), *psycholinguistics* which discussed the use and acquisition of language (McMahon, 2020), *anthropolinguistics* discusses the variety of language regarding the development of time, *stylistic* discusses the language style analysis, *philology*, and so on (Rohbiah, 2020). The branches of linguistics learned by the EFL students in the university level, but before they come to the branches itself, they will be given the introductory course in the third semester named *Introduction to English Linguistics* course. This introductory course plays important role regarding the other courses of its branches, however the writer argued that the relation is not only comes from the branches itself, but also the other courses, hence the writer is going to explore those relations.

Some researchers have conducted numerous previous related studies but not significantly similar to this research, Yuwono & Gultom (2015), and Wachyudi (2019) said that teachers need linguistics to help them explain about the english component. Furthermore, Suparman (2016) argued that linguistics science helped the teachers to solve the problems of language teaching, meanwhile Amenu (2020) discussed that linguistics is important by seeing some elements, such as phonetics, phonology, syntax, and semanttics. And Daulay, et all. (2021) examined the importance of Linguistics in English language teaching, as it pays attention to its function in English teaching. All the studies revealed that Linguistics can support the English language teacher understand and handle English language rules through teaching- learning strategies. Whereas this study examined deeply the interrelation of each branch of linguistics (micro and macro) thought in *Introduction to English Linguistics* course for EFL students and how the branches discussed interrelated to other courses thought in university level by examining the lesson plans.

2. Literature Review

Teaching linguistics is a compulsory course in the English language study program that introduces the students briefly to the scientific study of language, its branches or subfield and how it contributes to language teaching. A prerequisite course that precedes numerous branches of Linguistics included in the curriculum applied.

The learning indicator of this topic was students' ability to describe language and linguistic science. To begin the topic discussion, students were presented with the definition of language based on the definition defined by some linguistics, followed by the roles or functions of language in human life. In Linguistics, students learned the unique characteristics of language that attracted linguists to discover them more. The students then learned the overview of Phonetics and Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics.

The learning indicator of this topic was students' ability to identify the three communication systems. Students learn that the messages or ideas delivered by humans are not merely in verbal language but possibly delivered using body language or gestures and by using symbols or writing form. Learning the human communication system helps EFL students prepare to learn activities in the classroom. Learning indicators is students' ability to understand the detailed development of the English language over time.

Introduction to English Linguistics course provides insights from Linguistics that are beneficial to enrich the EFL students in understanding the scope of linguistics in language learning. It prepares the students with a certain theoretical view of systemic functional linguistics disciplines, both micro and macro. In the field of Linguistics studies, the language from its inner side, micro linguistics covers several sub-disciplines such as Phonetics and Phonology, Semantics and Pragmatics, Syntax, and Lexicology. On the other hand, Macro linguistics, a field of Linguistics that studies language in relation to the external factors of language, comprises interdisciplinary studies of language and applied linguistics such as Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, translation, Lexicography, Anthropo Linguistics, and some other sub-disciplines. However, only some of the macro and micro linguistics sub-disciplines are listed in Indonesia's English Language and Education Study Program curriculum. They are varied among universities, but several fields of study that contribute to the theory and practice of EFL teaching are initially introduced in the Introduction to Linguistics English course.

As mentioned previously, Linguistics describes language in all its aspects. Phonetics is the first subfield of Linguistics introduced to the EFL students. It is the study of the physical aspect of speech that involves three aspects; how the sounds are produced (articulatory), transmitted (acoustics), and perceived auditory. The EFL Students, as indicated by selected learning indicators, are supposed to be able to memorise the production of speech sounds and classify the consonants, vowels, distinctive features, and suprasegmentals. The concepts of Phonetics were introduced which comprised the discussion of the production of speech sounds, consonants, vowels, distinctive features, and suprasegmentals. Phonology, on the other hand, was introduced separately in the sixth meeting. At the end of the meeting, students might be able to articulate the patterns of speech sounds. Students learned minimal pairs and phonemes, morphophonemic and phonological rules.

As the field of study exploring sound systems of language, Phonetics and Phonology contribute to the EFL students learning the sounds' description of human language. They learned how human's tools of articulation produce speech sounds and how the speech sounds are used within the given language; both courses support the EFL students in studying other courses, speaking and listening. The discussion about stress, rhythm, and intonation helps students properly speak English words and sentences.

Moreover, students might be able to speak as naturally as possible by knowing the place and manner of articulation and other aspects of phonetics and phonology. Moreover, they might be able to understand the words and sentences uttered by native speakers. Learning phonetics also helps the students recognise familiar and unfamiliar sounds, similar to the Speaking course. Broughton *et al.* (2003) pointed out that foreign language learners require a large number of new skills to acquire the pronunciation habits of a foreign language.

Moreover, they should respond to a new sound system to correctly hear the new language. English teachers should comprehend how English sounds are systematically used within the sound structure of English. Therefore, both Phonetics and Phonology are vital to them.

Further, Cakir & Baytar (2014) state that pronunciation deals with how a language is spoken. It conveys a substantial role in language target learning. It refers to the sequence of sounds used in speaking, as in *phonetics*. The students are intended to produce sounds by looking at which parts of vocal organs are involved. Learning phonetics helps EFL students recognise familiar and unfamiliar sounds, improve pronunciation, and develop independence in words and sound recognition. Le *et al*. (2021) in their study propose that pronunciation is extremely important in the speech process. Several aspects, including the learners' cultural, phonological, and phonemic awareness, as well as word stress, intonation, sentence stress, and word linking, influence it. However, the students might gain this proficiency if they learn and practice more. Yule (2010, as cited in Nurman, 2021) states that having adequate knowledge of Phonology could lead students to have good pronunciation if they practice.

From Previous points of view, the researcher can draw a line that Phonetics and Phonology support EFL students in learning pronunciation, listening, and speaking**.** The students learn the pronunciation course in the first semester, along with listening and Speaking courses. Listening and speaking courses were learned from the first to the fourth semester. In the first semester, they are classified as Elementary Listening and Speaking. They turned into Intermediate Listening and Speaking in the second semester, then levelled up as Advance listening and speaking in the third semester. Public Speaking was the last speaking level learned by the students in the fourth semester.

The next subfield of Micro Linguistics introduced to the EFL students is Morphology. Morphology discovers words and their internal structure as one of the subfields of microlinguistics. This course was introduced to the EFL students at the seventh meeting. At the end of the meeting, the students were supposed to be able to identify the types of morphemes and allomorphs. A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit of language (Lieber, 2009). Students were introduced to the bound and free morphemes, the two types of morphemes. Free morphemes consist of open and closed classes. The open class includes nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. In comparison, the Close class covers conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, articles, auxiliary verbs, demonstratives, comparatives, and quantifiers. In addition, Bound morpheme covers affixes, both derivational and inflectional.

Knowledge of morphemes helps the students learn the Grammar course that is taught from the first to the fourth semester. In the Grammar course, the students learn English parts of speech, tenses, phrases, sentences, and clauses, all requiring knowledge of words and their structure. The result of a study conducted by Sarfraz, Tariq & Abbas (2018) revealed that morphological awareness effectively improves students' writing.

Another study by Giyatmi (2019) showed that Morphological awareness helps increase the learners' vocabulary and recognise the meaning easily by viewing affixes attached to words. Moreover, good vocabulary mastery helps increase learners' reading and writing abilities (Adam, 2018). Moreover, McGregor (2015) points out that since morphology is related to word form, it is similar to phonology (describing how words are pronounced). It is related to lexical studies because patterns examined by morphology are used to create new words. Thus, morpheme as the introductory topic for Morphology is interrelated to learning parts of speech learned by the EFL students in the Elementary Grammar course in the first semester and other grammatical aspects learned in Intermediate Grammar, Advanced Grammar, and Expert Grammar.

The students learned the concept of syntax in the ninth and the tenth meeting. The ninth meeting of the course covered the sub-topics of syntax in defining sentences, the traditional approach to syntax, and the structuralist approach. Learning indicators of this meeting were students' ability to define the structure of sentences, discuss the traditional approach to the syntax and summarise the structuralist approach. While in the tenth meeting, a learning indicator that must be fulfilled is the student's ability to classify the transformational generative approach and phrase structure grammar.

Syntax has a close relationship with grammar courses. Grammar course gives students an understanding of English structure at word, phrase, clause, and sentence levels. Theoretical constructions of English structure are explored in-depth to give students a foundation on how English sentences are formed and joined together. Syntax studies the rules and structures, while grammar is the set of rules. Syntax and grammar are thoroughly interrelated (Misir, 2017) both in written and spoken language. Even though each concept has its meaning, these terms are often used interchangeably. Syntax is the arrangement of words and phrases in a sentence, while grammar, by contrast, consists of rules that administer language structure.

Having adequate knowledge of syntax is also beneficial for EFL students in learning Writing and Reading courses. The more highly skilled in English syntax these learners become, the greater their chances of becoming skilled English readers (Morvay, 2012).

Reading skills are taught continuously in four different semesters, from semester one until semester four. They are Elementary Reading, Intermediate Reading, Advanced Reading, and Critical Reading. In line with the previous research finding, Arusmar (2010) suggests that increasing syntax knowledge may help students improve their reading skills, particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The EFL students program an ESP course in the fourth semester.

The knowledge of syntax is also beneficial to studying Writing courses as one of the English language skills that EFL students should deeply notice. Good writing is started by knowing how to organise an idea into correct sentences, and organising correct sentences is discussed in syntax. The writing course is given for four semesters; from the first to the fourth semester continuously, they are Elementary Writing, Intermediate Writing, Advanced Writing, and Academic Writing. The comprehension of syntax and syntactic characteristics of the language being taught supports the language teacher in improving the quality of teaching materials and teaching quality (Adityas et al., 2021). It is beneficial for the EFL students to learn the English Education Technology course, Language Teaching Methodology course taught in semester V, Material Development course, and TEFL course in semester VI.

Semantics and pragmatics are the last subfields of Micro Linguistics introduced to EFL students. Both these fields of study provide a study on meaning in language. The meaning of language can be seen whether implicitly or explicitly. Semantics and pragmatics examined these two categories briefly. Semantics is one of the disciplines in linguistics that investigates the sense of words in the language. It only deals with text and analyses the meaning of words.

Furthermore, it does not study context; it is only concerned with grammar, vocabulary, and the theoretical meaning of a word (Saeed, 2015). Thus, semantics only analyse what a certain expression means in a general sense. At the same time, pragmatics is an extensive field that analyses the situational background, in addition to grammar, vocabulary, and conceptual meaning. Instead of exploring the expression, this term of study examines what the speaker wants and means by using a certain word. They study different aspects of the utterance, such as the speaker's proposed meaning, contextual aspects, and the listener's inferences to infer the utterance (Barron, 2020). In simple words, pragmatics deals with what the speaker and listener imply in an utterance.

The discussions of semantics and Pragmatics were presented separately in the eleventh and twelfth meetings. The learning indicator for the eleventh meeting was students' ability to identify words and word relationships, dictionaries and lexicon, the semantics of the sentence, linguistics, logic, and speech acts. The concept of Pragmatics was discussed in the twelfth meeting. At the end of the meeting, students were supposed to be able to memorise pronouns, deixis, and more on situational context.

Pragmatics plays an important role in English language teaching because the four language skills in language learning, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, do not occur in isolation in communicative texts or activities (Andriyani, 2016; Bolinger, 2022). Thus, a good pragmatic competence for the language learner must be considered. This competence also facilitates language users to successfully achieve their communicative aims in intercultural communication (Mazulfah, 2019). Pragmatics helps the language learner and teacher construct effective communication by avoiding misinterpretation and having good language comprehension. Moreover, Pragmatics does help the language teacher select suitable teaching materials, particularly in selecting reading text for reading class (Firas, 2015).

Semantic, on the other hand, facilitates vocabulary learning and increases students' understanding and awareness of word meaning, sentence relationships, and discourse and context (Alsayed, 2020). Thus, this certainly supports the students in learning Writing, Speaking, Discourse Analysis, and reading courses. Furthermore, concerning the Translation course, Semantics and Pragmatics are one of the most important courses that examine the meaning and the context of the language used in Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL); hence this course will be fundamentally related to each other, this course in the 5th semester.

Turning to the macro linguistics field, introduced to the EFL students at the 13th and 14th meetings. They are psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. Psycholinguistics describes the psychological process by human beings to master and use a language. It concerns language acquisition, perception, and production (Akmajian et al., 2017; Roberts, (2012).

Psycholinguistics describes the psychological process by human beings to master and use a language. It concerns language acquisition, perception, and production (Akmajian et al., 2017). It deals with various linguistic, social, and psychological analyses related to acquiring a second language. It gives students knowledge and competencies in analysing language acquisition variables experienced by language learners in acquiring their second language. In addition, psycholinguistics supports teachers in considering appropriate methods to teach the four language skills; writing, reading, listening, and speaking, particularly in helping the students understand the difficulties of these four skills' intrinsic and extrinsic difficulties. Moreover, it also helps the students explain the errors they make in language learning and defines some kinds of brain disorders affecting language-learning performance (Purba, 2018).

The last subfield of macro linguistics presented to the EFL students were Sociolinguistics. At the end of the meeting, students were supposed to be able to identify the relationship between language and society. The sub-topics discussed in this meeting were diversity in language and society, dialect differences, lingua franca, pidgins, creoles, and slang. The students were first introduced to the definition of sociology and linguistics as two different disciplines and how they relate to each other. As the study's main concern, the relationships between language and society were the most discussed sub-topics. In addition, the students learned how language changed over the decades, reflecting the interaction among people or groups. At the end of the meeting, the students learned about slang as one of the language varieties used in society.

The essential subtopics of sociolinguistics provide the students with basic knowledge of language and society that is beneficial to learning speaking courses; regarding the use of language based on its context. Shu (2019) exposes that an essential role of sociolinguistics in language teaching is to provide the learners with the appropriate rules of speaking and writing and raise their sociolinguistics awareness. Besides speaking courses, it also supports the students in learning the Cross-Cultural Understanding course taught in the fifth semester. This course examines the relationship between language and culture, the importance of understanding culture in studying a foreign language, personal values, culture's importance in second and foreign language learning, multiculturalism, and diversity (Kasim, 2017).

In language teaching, both psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics support the language teacher in the teaching and learning process. Broughton *et al.* (2003) point out that Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics, which, together with linguistics proper, form the central area of applied linguistics that is concerned with many activities involving language that are relevant to language teaching. Teachers can select or decide on suitable methods to teach the students by considering students' motivation, cognitive development, group interaction, the social roles of education, and some other aspects of both disciplines.

3. Method

This qualitative research is a type of library research that used bibliometric analysis to investigate the trends and gaps in linguistics' teaching research area by combining ideas from Fraenkel, 2022; George, 2008 and Mayring, 2004. This study's article data is based on research from papers published in Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science indexed-journals. The Publish of Perish 8 reference management program was used to collect research data.
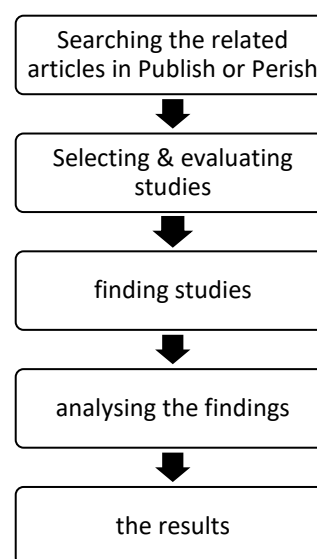

Figure 3.1 The research process

The content analysed for this study was the introductory linguistics course and other related courses offered for EFL students across seven semesters.

Table 3.1. Initial and Final Search of Data Metrics

Metric Data	The Initial Search	The End of Search Data
Publication years	2018-2022	2018-2022
Citation years	4 (2018-2022)	4 (2018-2022)
papers	599	367
Citations	921	696
Cites/year	230.25	174.00
Cites/paper	1.54	1.90
Author/paper	1.58	1.69
H-index	13	12
G-Index	20	15
hI,norm	10	9
Hi,annual	2.50	2.25

Table 3.1 displays the initial and final search of data metrics. The researcher used inclusion and exclusion criteria such as inclusion: topic on macrolinguistics and microlinguistics, research article, undergraduate level. While for the exclusion: topic is not related to teaching linguistics (macrolinguistics and microlinguistics area), chapter, books and review, not undergraduate level.

4. Result and Discussion

After searching scientific articles through Publish or Perish (PoP) software on database Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science by using the keyword "Teaching Linguistics" and "Linguistics Learning", of 599 articles, there are 367 that relate to the context and inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 4.1 The Distribution of the number of articles published

Publication	Number Articles	Percentage
2018	49	13.35%
2019	73	19.89%
2020	89	24.25%
2021	86	23.43%
2022	70	19.07%
Total	**367**	**100%**

In conformity with the table 4.1, the distribution of 367 articles of related topics in 2018-2022. The majority of articles published between 2020 and 2021 hold half the total article data obtained in the last four years, with 2020 with the most research. However, in 2022, only 19.07% of articles discussing the topic of teaching linguistics.

To determine the trends and gaps in this teaching linguistics study, mapping analysis was conducted. Each connection is exhibited in the network visualization (Al Husaeni et al., 2021). The researcher performed screening of terms with the minimum number of occurrences of a term is 3 times. Thus, from 1418 terms, 140 meet the threshold. For this study, the researcher only 46 terms.
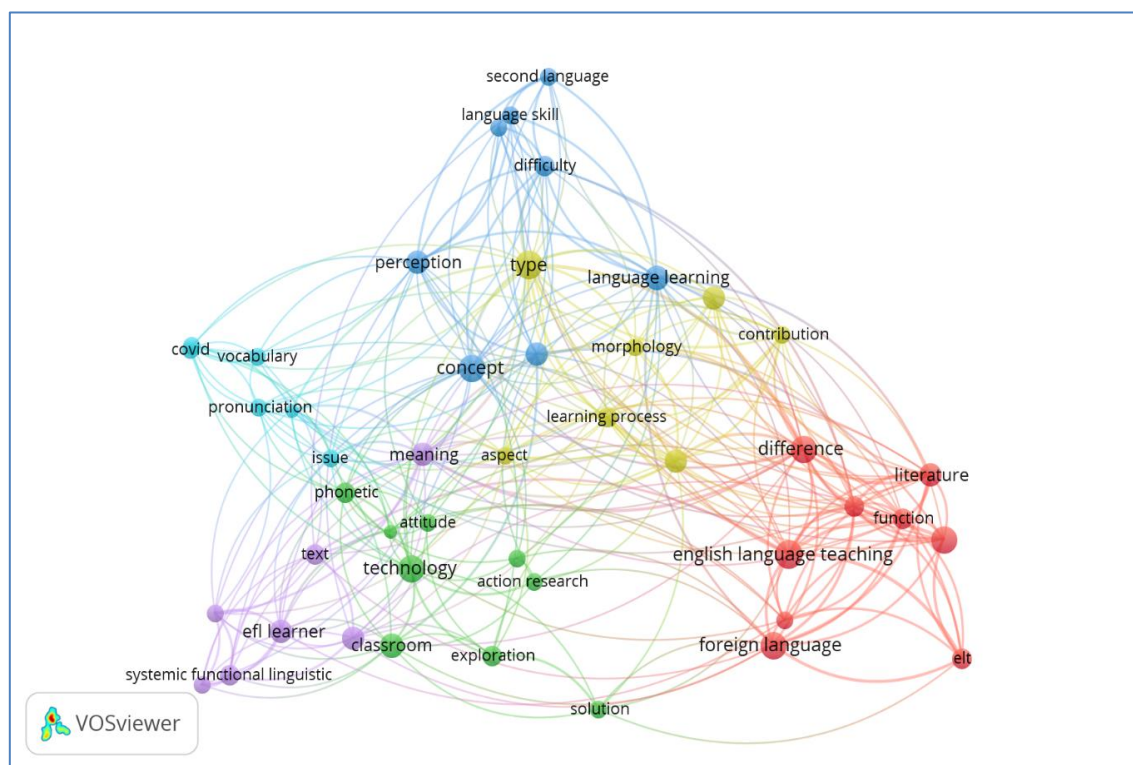

Figure 4.1 The Network Visualisation of Linguistics Teaching research

Based on Figure 4.1, the network visualization is separated into six clusters.

a) Cluster 1 which is the red colour has 9 items; difference, ELT, English language, English language teaching, foreign language, function, literature, preference and value.

b) Cluster 2 which is the green colour has 9 items; action research, attitude, classroom, English phonetic, exploration, phonetic, solution, teaching linguistic, technology

c) Cluster 3 which is the blue colour has 8 items; concept, difficulty, language learning, language skill, language teaching, perception, psycholinguistic, second language

d) Cluster 4 which is the yellow colour has 7 items; aspect, case study, contribution, English linguistics teaching, learning process, morphology, type

e) Cluster 5 which is the purple colour has 7 items; EFL learner, implementation, meaning, SFL, systemic functional linguistic, systemic functional linguistics, text

f) Cluster 6 which is the tosca colour has 6 items; covid, issue, pandemic, phonology, pronunciation, vocabulary

From the network visualisation data, the research trend in the linguistics teaching topics that appears the most of 367 articles such as *English language teaching, foreign language, difference, concept, technology, and type*. Therefore, the most dominant which is the research trend is in the red cluster. To see the gaps in this research topic, it can be seen from the overlay visualization, where this mapping analyzes the terms that appear every year in the research.
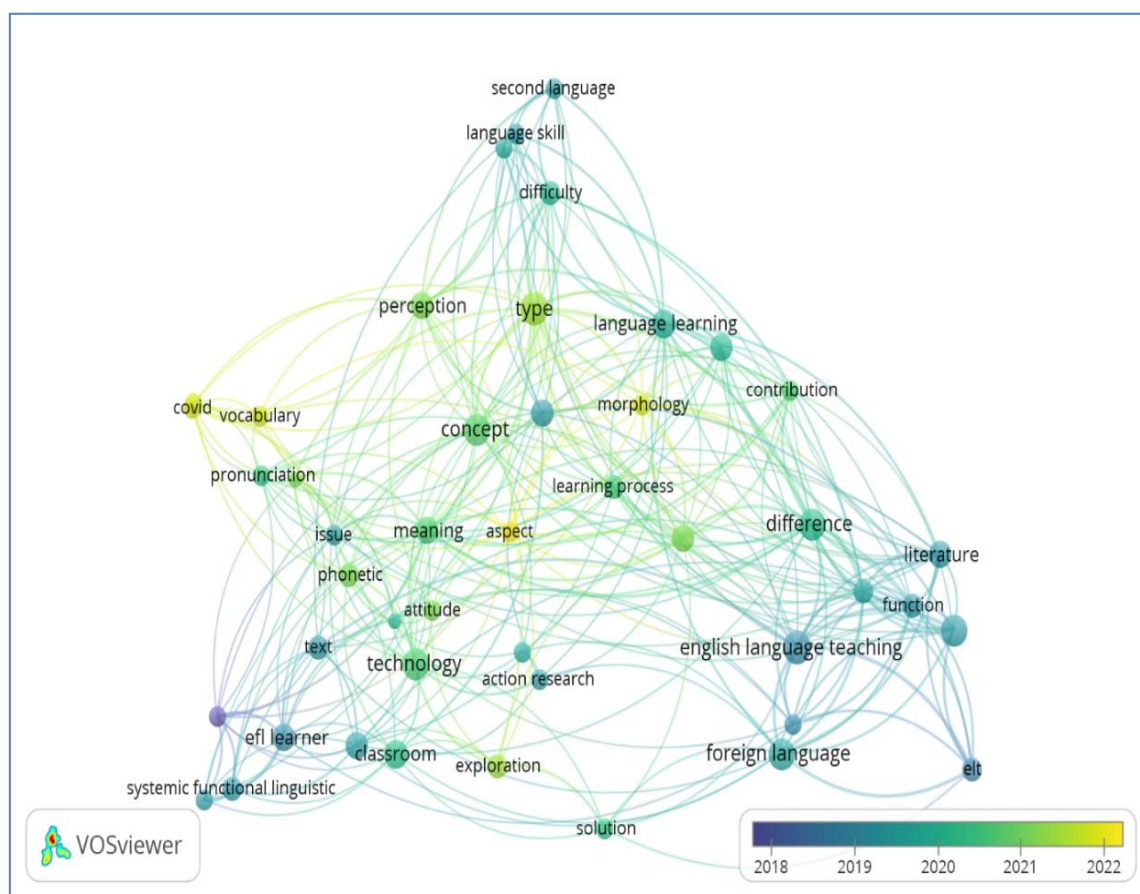

Figure 4.2. The Overlay Visualisation of Topic "Linguistics Teaching" research

Based on Figure 4.2 exhibits the year-to-year trends related to linguistics teaching or the keyword. The colour in the terms indicates the period of research. The terms seen in research in 2018 show a dark blue colour, such as ELT, EFL learner, issue, foreign language and action research. Until 2022 it shows a yellow colour, such as Covid, vocabulary, aspect, and morphology. It can be concluded that the terms that are still clear are the latest research. This can be an opportunity for other researchers to conduct research in that area. Furthermore, gaps can also be seen from the density visualisation in Figure 4.3.
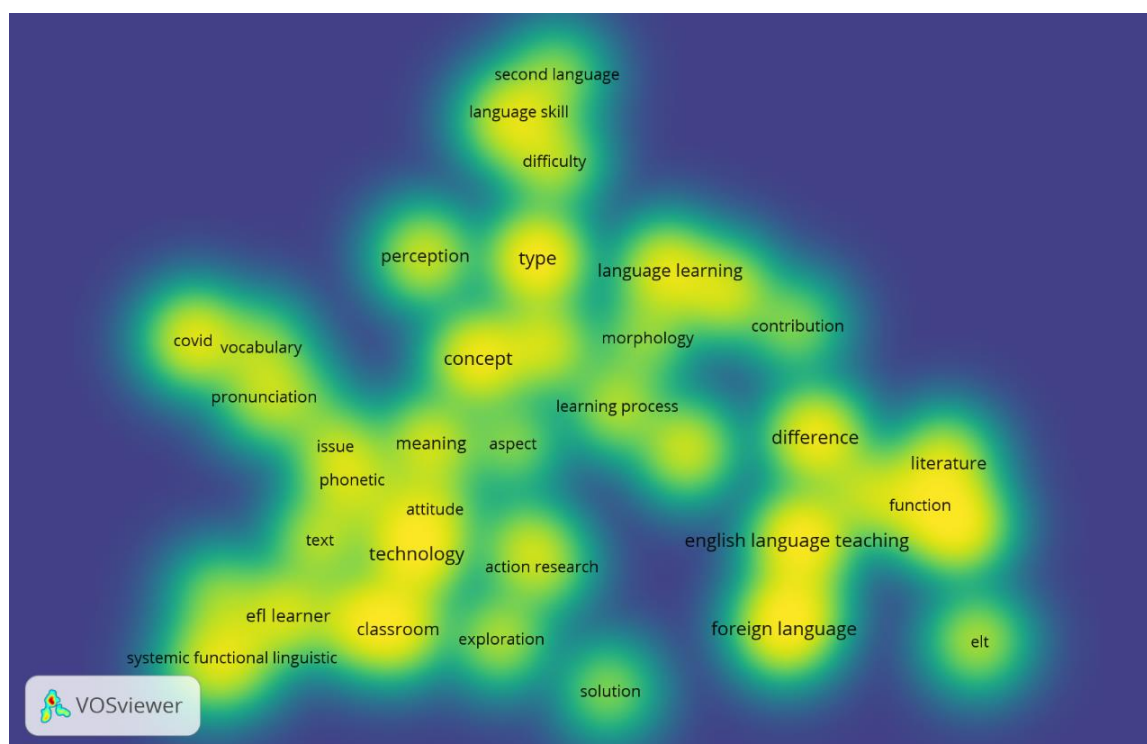
Figure 4.3. Visualisation of Density of Topic "Linguistics Teaching"

The depth of research related to teaching linguistics can be seen in Figure 4.3. The more intense the colours, the more scholars or researchers investigate relevant topics (Effendi et al., 2021). It can be noticed that the terms for the classroom, technology, foreign language, type, attitude, and literature are the most dominant (frequent) and mostly discussed by the researchers. In terms of solution, exploration, contribution, learning process, perception, difficulty, morphology, and text have not been studied much. This is a research opportunity for future researchers to research related terms.

4. Conclusion

The topic for teaching linguistics provides insights that are beneficial to enrich the research area in investigating the scope of linguistics in language learning. It prepares the future researchers with a certain trends and gaps in linguistics disciplines both microlinguistics and macrolinguistics.

5. Acknowledgement

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