

A bibliometric study of English textbook analyses (1979–2022)

ABSTRACT

In recent years, the field of English textbook analysis has garnered increasing attention from scholars worldwide, emerging as a burgeoning research hotspot. However, this field currently lacks a comprehensive and systematic analysis. This study adopts a bibliometric approach, using raw data from Scopus to review research on English textbooks from 1979 to 2022. Overall, research in this field has shown a steady upward trend, with a significant acceleration in growth over the past five years. The results indicate that scholars from Asia, especially East Asia, have made the most significant contributions to this field. Most studies typically utilize methods such as corpus approach and critical discourse analysis to explore themes such as ideology, gender, culture, and language teaching in English textbooks, thereby making this research field a pivotal lens for comprehending global language education and societal dynamics, fostering mutual understanding and communication across diverse regions worldwide. Through these studies, the field of English textbook analysis not only advances language education but also provides significant insights and support for educational reforms and societal development on a global magnitude.

Keywords: Bibliometric study; CiteSpace; English textbook analysis; EFL.

1. INTRODUCTION

As a globally influential language, English plays a crucial role on the international stage. It has been incorporated into educational systems worldwide. With the increasing recognition of the importance of English, significant attention has been devoted to the extensive study of the vital resources for learning and teaching this language—English textbooks. The analysis of English textbooks primarily focuses on two dimensions: linguistic and cultural aspects. In the in-depth analysis of linguistic aspects, scholars focus on meticulous examination of grammar and vocabulary, encompassing the complexity of vocabulary [1,2], sentence structure [3], variations in tense [4]. Furthermore, they delve into the practical application of pronunciation and phonetic rules [5]. These endeavors aim to assist students in establishing a solid linguistic foundation, thereby enhancing their language proficiency and communicative effectiveness.

Culture has always been a major focus of textbook research. Learning a language is not just about acquiring a practical skill; it's also about facilitating communication with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence, many scholars explore whether the cultural content in English textbooks contributes to fostering students' cross-cultural communication skills, enabling them to better adapt to multicultural environments [6]. In addition, culture refers to "the attitudes, beliefs and behavioral norms that distinguish a group of people" [7]. Therefore, English textbooks should not merely be regarded as "delivery systems of facts", as the ideologies inherent in the cultural content they contain, such as identity formation and gender awareness, are also subjects continually explored by scholars [8].

Many studies have delved into the linguistic and cultural dimensions of English textbooks, but our understanding of the overall landscape and development of English textbooks analysis over the past few decades is still quite limited. To address this lacuna, this study endeavors to employ bibliometric method to thoroughly investigate this field, thereby furnishing a comprehensive depiction of its current scholarly landscape and predicting future developmental trends. In this regard, this study propels the progression of language education and furnishes invaluable perspectives and assistance for global-scale educational reforms and societal advancements.

2. Literature review

Bibliometric analysis employs quantitative methods to analyze and assess academic literature. In the field of social science research, scholars extensively employ bibliometric analysis to delve into specific domains such as translation [9], news discourse [10], social media [11,12,13], etc.

English textbooks, deemed indispensable channels for knowledge dissemination, have garnered extensive scholarly attention. Pertinent bibliometric studies focusing on English textbooks have emerged. For example, Wang and Ping [14] reviewed the development of English textbooks in the Web of Science over the past 30 years and found that research output and citation have increased year by year. However, there is currently limited research utilizing data from the Scopus database as the object of study to investigate the development of English textbook analysis. Scopus is a widely used database that covers a wide range of academic publications. In addition, some studies have overlooked the disciplinary attributes of the field, as well as factors such as the subject areas and regional growth rates of the published journals, resulting in a lack of comprehensive presentation of the development of English textbook analysis. Based on the two research gaps mentioned above, this study aims to select as many relevant publications as possible for a comprehensive analysis of the field.

3. DATA AND METHODS

CiteSpace is a specialized tool for scholarly literature bibliometric analysis and visualization. It is designed to import academic literature databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, Dimensions, etc., to assist researchers in understanding the knowledge structure, research trends, and collaborative networks within academic fields [15]. Although CiteSpace possesses the capability to produce lucid visual maps and statistical reports, the indispensability of manual calculations becomes apparent in the realms of data cleansing and preprocessing, parameter configuration and fine-tuning. By synergistically harnessing the strengths of automated analysis and the meticulousness of manual calculations, researchers can attain research outcomes that are more dependable and inclusive, thereby ensuring the efficacy and overall scholarly merit of the analysis. For instance, when conducting co-cited author analysis using CiteSpace, system limitations may result in incomplete display of certain authors' names, thus obscuring their roles and contributions into the data. Given the pros and cons of CiteSpace, in this study, the author employed a combination of manual and software-based approaches for obtaining research results and enhance the effectiveness of the study.

To encompass as much relevant data for this study as possible, the author employed various terms, including *English textbook*, *English coursebook*, *English language textbook*, *EFL textbook*, *ELT textbook*, and *English teaching material*. These terms were utilized to search for English-language journal articles in the Scopus database, ensuring that titles, abstracts, and keywords included at least one of these terms. Using this search strategy, a total of 861

documents were retrieved, subsequently exported in RIS format, encompassing article titles, abstracts, authors, keywords, and references. To ensure the accuracy of the study, each document underwent meticulous manual checks. This process involved the removal of duplicate files and the exclusion of results not focusing on English textbook analysis. Ultimately, 574 documents were obtained, providing in-depth information regarding the study of English textbook analysis. Additionally, considering that author names and country/region names may appear in different linguistic forms, meticulous verification was conducted to ensure a unique linguistic form for each entity, thereby further enhancing the precision and credibility of the study.

4. RESULTS

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the development of the English textbook analysis domain over the past few decades, the author conducted research from the following five aspects: (1) the chronical development of English textbook analysis; (2) the distribution of domains and Top 10 journals; (3) The most frequently discussed research topics in different periods; (4) the most productive countries/ regions; (5) the most highly cited authors in references in different periods.

4.1 The Chronological Development of English Textbook Analysis

Based on the data gathered, the author conducted a comprehensive analysis of annual publication output. A line graph (Figure 1) was created to visually illustrate the evolution of the English textbook analysis field from 1979 to 2022.

The initial documentation of relevant research in the Scopus database dates back to 1979, with two articles published during that year. Strain [16] presented an overview of a study focusing on vocabulary and sentence structures within Japanese English textbooks. Price [17] conducted a comparative investigation of English textbooks available in bookstores in Shanghai and Beijing, examining aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, exercises, and text.

The data depicted in Figure 1 illustrates a consistent upward trend in publication, signifying a substantial and accelerating growth within the field. English textbook analysis has steadily evolved into a field of substantial scholarly influence since 1979. Over the 32-year period from 1979 to 2010, a total of 56 articles were published in the Scopus database, with an average of about 1.8 articles per year. However, in the following 12-year period from 2011 to 2022, the number of related publications surged to 518 articles, averaging approximately 43 articles per year. Remarkably, during the 3-year period from 2020 to 2022, a total of 241 articles were published, accounting for a significant 47% of the total output for that timeframe.

Figure 1 also highlights the year 2021 as the peak in terms of publication numbers, with a total of 93 articles, nearly four times the quantity published in 2017 (24 publications). This indicates a clear and significant increase in scholarly interest and output in the field of English textbook analysis in recent years. The exponential growth in annual publication reflects increasing research endeavors and heightened recognition of the significance of studying and analyzing English textbooks as a crucial aspect of language education. By examining the publication over the years, researchers can gain valuable insights into the development and progress of the field, identify emerging trends, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in English textbook analysis.

Figure 1. Chronological distribution of publications concerning English textbooks analysis (1979–2022)

4.2 The Distribution of Domains and Top 10 Journals

To visualize the disciplinary distribution within this field, a pie chart (Figure 2) was created. The findings indicate that the majority of publications fell under the Social Sciences category, accounting for 52% of the total. The Arts and Humanities category closely followed, representing 34% of the publications. Additional disciplines contributing to this field include Psychology (3%), Computer Science (2%), Business, Management, and Accounting (2%), Engineering (2%), Econometrics and Finance (1%), and Environmental Science (1%). To accommodate less-represented disciplines, a collective category titled “Other” was created, encompassing 3% of the total publications.

To offer further insights, the author compiled a list of the top 10 journals based on publication frequency (Table 1). It is important to clarify that in this study, the column labeled “Year” refers to the initial year of appearance for a specific item, such as a keyword or publication.

This compilation of top 10 journals aims to underscore the scholarly outlets that have made significant contributions to the discourse surrounding English textbooks over the years. Table 1 indicates that the top 10 journals are concentrated within the subdomains of Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, and Education. They fall under the disciplines of Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* (24 publications), *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* (20 publications), and *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* (16 publications) are the top three journals in terms of publication frequency. When considering the average publication frequency, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* takes the lead, with an annual average of 2.22 publications from 2014 to 2022. Following closely, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* maintains an average of 2.18 publications per year from 2011 to 2022, while *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* secures the third position with an average of 1.33 publications per year from 2011 to 2022. Notably, *ELT Journal* and *RELC Journal*, pioneering publications in this field since 1979, place sixth and tenth, respectively. Their average publication rates stand at 0.30 and 0.23. This affirms their enduring scholarly contribution.

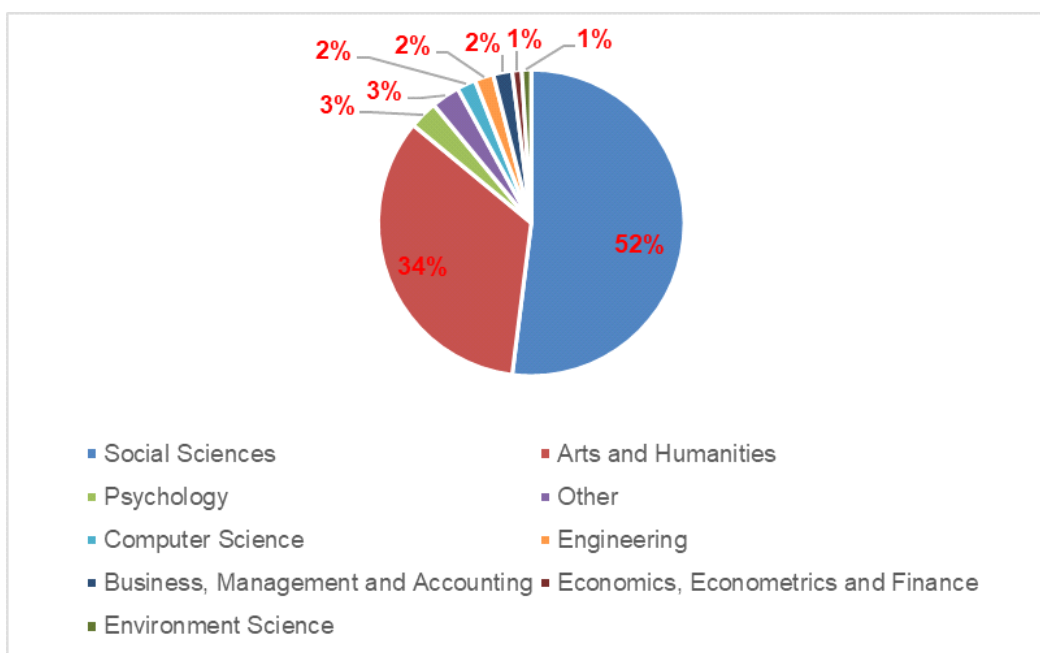


Figure 2. The distribution of domains of English textbooks analysis (1979–2022)

Table 1. Top 10 journals on English textbooks analysis in terms of total publications (1979–2022)

Rank	Journals	Sub-domains	Year	Total	Average
1	Theory and Practice in Language Studies	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2012	24	2.18
2	Journal of Language Teaching and Research	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2014	20	2.22
3	Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2011	16	1.33
4	Journal of Asia TEFL	Linguistics and Language, Education	2010	15	1.15
5	Language Teaching Research	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2008	15	1
6	ELT Journal	Language and Linguistics, Education, Developmental and Educational Psychology	1979	13	0.30
7	English Language Teaching	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2012	11	1
8	Language Culture and Curriculum	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2000	11	0.48
9	Asian EFL Journal	Language and Linguistics, Linguistics and Language, Education	2013	10	1
10	RELJ Journal	Language and Linguistics,	1979	10	0.23

		Linguistics and Language, Education			
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4.3 The Most Frequently Discussed Research Topics in Different Periods

To visually demonstrate the themes and trends in the field of English textbook analysis, the author divided the years from 1979 to 2022 into four periods: (1) Period 1: 1979-2004 (20 publications); (2) Period 2: 2005-2010 (36 publications); (3) Period 3: 2011-2016 (165 publications); and (4) Period 4: 2017-2022 (353 publications). The frequencies of different keywords appearing in each period were manually analyzed. In order to enhance the conciseness and readability of the table, keywords related to the same research topic were consolidated into a single term. For example: *ELT*, *English teaching*, *English language teaching*, *teaching practice*, *language teaching as language teaching* in the table; *male*, *female*, *sexism*, *gender representation*, *gender stereotypes*, *gender bias* as *gender*, *critical discourse analysis*, *critical discourse* as *CDA*.

Table 2 shows the 20 keywords with the highest frequency in each period. We can see that there are some shared keywords across the four periods, including the general terms in this domain (*textbook*, *textbook evaluation*, and *EFL*) and more specific terms (*gender*, *language teaching*, and *corpus approach*)

The recurring presence of *gender* across all four periods indicates scholars' attention to gender education. With a gradual increase in both frequency and ranking of this theme, particularly in Period 4 where the quantity surges, it rises to second place. It is noteworthy that research on gender primarily concentrates on countries with significant gender controversies, particularly in countries with Islamic faith, such as Iran [18,19] and Indonesia [20,21]. The presence of *Islam* in the Period 3 can echo this issue. In the global context of promoting gender equality, English textbooks in these two countries still exhibit noticeable levels of gender inequality. For example, Lee [18] argued that the English textbooks in Iran tend to endorse a male-dominated Islamic culture, constraining female to household and school settings, and associating female with stereotypical job roles. Also, Fithriani [21] analyzed the visual texts depicting male and female characters in the two Indonesian English textbooks, which revealed that both textbooks exhibited gender inequality. These studies offer us a glimpse into modern gender education, providing robust support for educational institutions worldwide to reform textbook content and promote gender equality awareness.

The term *language teaching* prominently emerges across all four periods, indicating its enduring significance in the field. During the initial stages, research in language education primarily focused on the detailed analysis of texts, sentence structures, and vocabulary. This emphasis on linguistic fundamentals is further highlighted by the notable presence of *vocabulary* (ranking 2nd in Period 2, ranking 17th in Period 4). Over time, language education has undergone a transformation, integrating broader contextual factors such as cultural influences, ethnic identity, and gender studies. This shift indicates an increasing awareness of the complex interplay among language, social norms, and individual identity. The emergence of keywords such as *identity*, *stereotypy* and *neoliberalism* in the latter three period serves as compelling evidence.

Culture teaching consistently ranks among the top five in all four periods (Period 1: ranking 4th with 3 occurrences; Period 2: ranking 5th with 3 occurrences; Period 3: ranking 3rd with 23 occurrences; Period 4: ranking 4th with 30 occurrences). Culture teaching aids in breaking down cultural barriers, promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect, and cultivating students' intercultural communication skills. According to relevant studies in the database, it is evident

that the English textbooks in most countries are influenced by factors such as ideology and power, leading to biases in the presentation of cultural content. For example, after examining EFL textbooks for 10th grade in South Korea, Song [22] pointed out that there is a tendency to emphasize American English and American culture, thus revealing societal inequalities in terms of race and nationality. Keles and Yazan [23], based on the concentric circles model, pointed out that New Headway elementary level textbooks focus on the inner circle's culture, overlooking the culture in the expanding circle.

Additionally, cultural education can help students better comprehend and appreciate their own culture, thereby enhancing their cultural confidence and sense of identity. This is particularly significant for fostering identity recognition and social integration in culturally diverse environments. This is why keywords such as *cultural values* appear on the list.

The emergence of the *corpus approach* across four distinct periods demonstrates its widespread acceptance as a quantitative analysis method within the field of English textbook analysis. Notably, the utilization of corpus analysis in this context was first introduced by Frazier in Period 1. In his groundbreaking work, Frazier [24] explored the application of corpus analysis to examine the grammar structures taught in intermediate or advanced ESL/EFL textbooks. Since then, many scholars have used corpus approach to conduct textbook research in the field of English textbook analysis. For example, through a corpus analysis of metaphors in business English textbooks, Skorczynska Sznajder [25] aimed to assess whether the choice of metaphors in textbooks is consistent with the actual language use. The incorporation of corpus approach in English textbook analysis has proven to be instrumental in providing empirical evidence and objective insights into language usage patterns within educational materials.

The rise of *CDA* in periods 2-4 highlights its widespread adoption as a research methodology aimed at elucidating the underlying intentions and ideologies within discourse. Furthermore, it serves to unveil power dynamics and ideologies inherent in social practices [26], particularly within the sphere of textbook analysis. Table 2 indicates a broad range of topics that align with the shifting social and political landscapes over time. *Nationalism* is evident in Period 1, followed by *racism* in Period 2, and *neoliberalism* in Period 4.

In terms of the application of English textbooks, the textbooks for *secondary education* receive the most attention. It is a crucial period for the cognitive, linguistic, and cultural development of adolescents. During this period, students delve deeper into abstract concepts and cross-cultural information. English education not only emphasizes language skills but also encompasses understanding and contemplation of culture, history, society, and ideologies. Therefore, researching the design and application of English textbooks in secondary education can better assist scholars and educators in understanding how to promote students' comprehensive literacy and cross-cultural communication skills, as well as guide students in forming healthy cultural cognition and critical thinking.

Table 2. The most frequently occurring keywords in English textbook analysis (1974-2022)

Rank	Period1 (1979-2004)		Period2 (2005-2010)		Period3 (2011-2016)		Period4 (2017-2022)	
	Keywords	Freq.	Keywords	Freq.	Keywords	Freq.	Keywords	Freq.
1	Textbook	10	Textbook	13	Textbook	82	Textbook	162
2	Language teaching	6	Vocabulary	5	Textbook evaluation	28	Gender	51

3	Japan	4	Language teaching	3	Culture teaching	23	Language teaching	39
4	Culture teaching	3	Textbook evaluation	3	Corpus approach	15	Culture teaching	30
5	Gender	2	Culture teaching	3	EFL	15	Textbook evaluation	28
6	Textbook evaluation	2	EFL	2	Gender	14	Textbook analysis	23
7	Cultural values	2	Australia	2	English language	11	EFL	20
8	China	2	Hong Kong	2	Discourse analysis	10	English language	19
9	Grammar	2	Corpus approach	2	CDA	9	Corpus approach	19
10	Vocabulary	2	CDA	2	Curriculum	8	CDA	17
11	Business	1	Gender	2	Checklist	8	Curriculum	14
12	Corpus approach	1	Racism	2	Content analysis	7	Secondary education	13
13	Curriculum	1	Pedagogy	2	Secondary education	7	Indonesia	13
14	EFL	1	Computer science	2	Language teaching	6	Human	12
15	Nationalism	1	Cultural values	1	China	4	China	11
16	Secondary education	1	Business English	1	Iran	3	Vocabulary	11
17	Singapore	1	Ideology	1	Textbook analysis	3	Discourse analysis	11
18	NA		Singapore	1	Business English	3	Content analysis	10
19	NA		Globalisation	1	College English	3	Stereotypy	6
20	NA		Primary education	1	Islam	2	Neoliberalism	6

4.4 The Most Productive Countries/Regions

The analysis of data from Scopus, as depicted in Figure 3, illuminates the regional distribution and productivity levels in the field of English textbook analysis. Notably, the figure reveals that Iran emerges as the most productive country in this domain, contributing to nearly 16% of the total publications. Iran's rich history of research in English textbooks dates back to 1979, reflecting its longstanding commitment to advancing the understanding and development of language education. Following closely behind Iran are mainland China and Indonesia, with 58 publications each, securing the second and third positions, respectively. It is noteworthy that the top three countries/regions in terms of publication volume are all developing countries/regions. This highlights the strong academic development of them, indicating their increasing influence and capability in the field of English textbook analysis.

The majority of research in this domain is concentrated in Asia, with 11 out of 15 countries/regions represented. East Asia, including mainland China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan, leads with a total of 133 publications, accounting for 23% of the overall output. The Middle East (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey) closely follows with 125 publications, while

Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand) ranks next with 110 publications. This reflects the increasing importance that Asian countries/regions place on English education. In terms of the starting year of publications, research activities in Asia began relatively later compared to those in Western countries, primarily around 2010. Despite being early initiators of research, the Western countries (UK, Australia, US, Spain) have the lowest total publication count, standing at 99 publications.

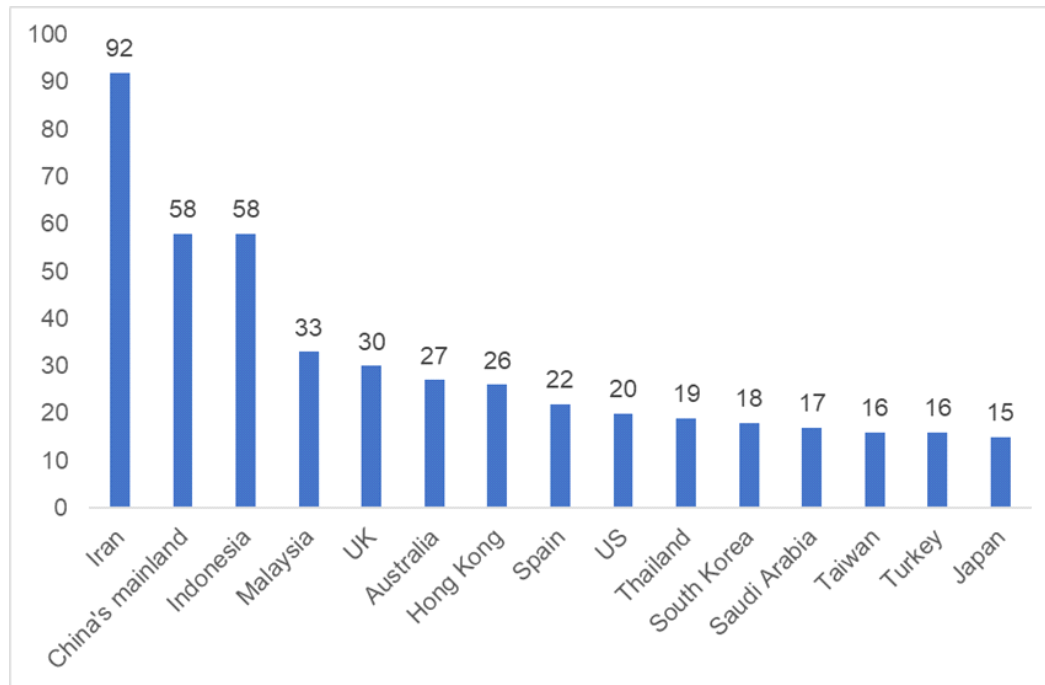


Figure 3. The 15 most productive countries/regions in English textbook analysis (1979-2022)

The comprehensive analysis of the latest trends in the domain of English textbook, as presented in Table 3, provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of scholarly output from 2017 to 2022. The data underscores Asia continue to dominate the forefront of publication output, signifying the region's sustained prominence in contributing to the advancement of language education. Indonesia, China's mainland, and Iran emerge as the frontrunners in terms of total publications during this six-year period, with 54, 42, and 31 publications respectively. This signifies a robust average annual publication rate of 9, 7, and 5.17, positioning them as the top three contributors in driving the ongoing discourse and research endeavors in English textbook analysis.

Furthermore, while Pakistan and Vietnam may not be prominently featured in Figure 3, their inclusion in Table 3 at the 13th and 15th positions respectively sheds light on their escalating contributions to the field. Pakistan's inaugural relevant research appears in 2010, with 12 subsequent publications over the last six years, averaging 2 publications per year. Similarly, Vietnam enters the research field with its first publication in 2017, with a total of 9 publications released over the same period, equating to an average of 1.5 publications per year. The inclusion of these two countries underscores the expanding influence and contributions of Asian nations in shaping the trajectory of English textbook research, further diversifying the global perspectives and insights within this domain.

Table 3. The 15 most productive countries/regions in English textbooks analysis (2017-2022)

Rank	Countries/regions	Total	Average	Year
1	Indonesia	54	9	2011
2	China's mainland	42	7	2009
3	Iran	31	5.17	1979
4	Australia	19	3.17	2006
5	Malaysia	18	3	2009
6	Thailand	18	3	2014
7	UK	15	2.5	1988
8	Saudi Arabia	13	2.17	2011
9	South Korea	13	2.17	2013
10	Spain	13	2.17	2010
11	US	13	2.17	2003
12	Hong Kong	12	2	2008
13	Pakistan	12	2	2010
14	Turkey	9	1.5	2009
15	Vietnam	9	1.5	2017

4.5 The Most Highly Cited Authors in References in Different Periods

The analysis of the author's academic contributions and influence is based on the citation frequency of their book chapters, monographs, journal articles, and other literature by other scholars. In an effort to comprehensively illustrate the most influential scholars in English textbook analysis for each period from 1979 to 2022, the study divided this timeframe into four distinct periods and identified the top fifteen scholars for each period, as presented in Table 4. Overall, the top 10 most frequently cited authors in the field, ranked in descending order, include Brian Tomlinson, Jack C. Richards, John Gray, Michael Byram, Braj B. Kachru, M.A.K. Halliday, Alan Cuningsworth, Norman Fairclough, Claire Kramsch, and J.F.K. Lee, all of whom are prominent figures in the fields of education, linguistics, and language studies.

Notably, the top three scholars across these periods are Brian Tomlinson, Jack C. Richards, and John Gray. Brian Tomlinson's consistent presence in three periods (9th in Period 2, 4th in Period 3, 1st in Period 4), underscores his enduring impact. Similarly, Jack C. Richards also maintained a strong presence (10th in Period 2, 1st in Period3, 2th in Period 4). The recurrent citations of these two scholars, particularly in the recent 11 years, indicate a significant emphasis on the interplay between textbooks, curriculum development, and language education pedagogy. Furthermore, John Gray's appearances (12th in Periods 2, 3rd in Period 4) reveal a noteworthy increase in his citation frequency, highlighting the growing recognition of his contributions to the field.

The only scholar who appeared in all four periods is M.A.K. Halliday. This indicates that systemic functional grammar (SFG) and the social semiotic framework have provided in-depth tools and perspectives for analyzing textbook structure, language use, and meaning construction in the 40-year development process of textbook research. In addition to M.A.K. Halliday, Table 4 also includes many scholars who provide theoretical frameworks for textbook analysis. For example, Norman Fairclough's CDA is a discourse analysis method that emphasizes social practice and power relations, which is widely used to reveal the social meanings and power structures in textbooks. Braj Kachru proposes the three concentric circles

to describe the different uses of English worldwide, emphasizing the power and identity relations among different language varieties. Michael Apple's critical curriculum theory focuses on power and ideology issues in the education system, providing important analytical tools for understanding the power relations and ideology behind textbook design.

The authors' presence in a specific time period in Table 4 can be confirmed by examining the occurrence of keywords in Table 2. For instance, the significant increase in gender in Period 4 in Table 2 aligns with the inclusion of J.F. K. Lee during the same period in Table 4. In this period, Lee and Collins' [27] article "Gender voice in Hong Kong English textbooks-some past and current practices" is widely cited in reference according to our database.

Table 4. Top 15 highly cited authors in each period (1979-2022)

Rank	Period1 (1979-2004)		Period2 (2005-2010)		Period3 (2011-2016)		Period4 (2017-2022)	
	Author	C#	Author	C#	Author	C#	Author	C#
1	Halliday, M.A.K.	5	Kress, G.	5	Richards, J.C.	31	Tomlinson, B.	74
2	Phillipson, R.	2	Phillipson, R	5	Hutchinson, T.	30	Richards, J.C.	62
3	Hofstede, G.	2	Hutchinson, T.	4	Ellis, R.	30	Gray, J.	50
4	Cortazzi, M.	2	Apple, M.W.	4	Tomlinson, B.	29	Byram, M.	45
5	Kramsch, C.	2	Pennycook, A	4	Cunningsworth, A.	26	Kachru, B.B.	44
6	Cohen, L.	2	Birjandi, P	3	Mukundan, J.	23	Halliday, M.A.K.	43
7	Nunan, D.	2	Porreca, K.L.	3	Fairclough, N.	21	Cunningsworth, A.	41
8	Byram, M.	2	Sunderland, J	3	Ansary, H.	20	Fairclough, N.	38
9	Pennycook, A.	2	Tomlinson, B.	2	Kramsch, C.	17	Lee, J.F.K.	38
10	McDonough, J	2	Richards, J.C.	2	Byram, M.	17	Kramsch, C.	37
11	Fairclough, N.	2	Halliday, M.A.K.	2	Cortazzi, M.	17	Pennycook, A.	33
12	Tucker, C.A.	2	Gray, J.	2	Widdowson, H.G.	16	Hutchinson, T.	32
13	Coulthard, M.	2	Biber, D.	2	Littlejohn, A.	15	Cortazzi, M.	32
14	Miller, C.	2	Ellis, R.	2	Halliday, M.A.K.	15	Mcgrath, I	30
15	Risager, K.	1	Cunningsworth, A.	2	Nunan, D.	15	Shin, J.	29

C#: the amount of citation frequency

5. discussion and Conclusion

English textbooks play a crucial role in language education, serving as the principal instructional tool for educators and an indispensable learning resource for students. The scholarly examination of English textbooks has witnessed a notable surge in recent years. In terms of

content, previous analyses of English textbooks have predominantly concentrated on discrete facets: linguistic and cultural content. These studies have explored how English textbooks facilitate students' enhancement of English language proficiency and intercultural communication skills by presenting linguistic knowledge and cultural backgrounds, thereby fostering comprehensive language development. In terms of research methods, previous studies commonly employ methods such as content analysis and corpus-based approach to delve into knowledge embedded within English textbooks. However, there has been relatively limited scholarly research employing bibliometric analysis to systematically review and summarize the field of English textbook analysis. Bibliometric analysis plays a crucial role in comprehending and visualizing the accumulated knowledge and the subtle changes within well-established fields. This study has undertaken a comprehensive systematic review of English textbook analysis spanning from 1979 to 2022, offering an insightful examination of the prevailing trends and development in the field.

To sum up, research on English textbooks has been steadily increasing over the past four decades, particularly in the past 12 years where the number of relevant publications indexed by Scopus has significantly increased, accounting for 90% of the total number of publications. The statistical data reveal that the research field is an interdisciplinary field. 52% of the publications are published in Social Sciences and 34% in Humanities, while the remaining 14% of articles are published in a diverse range of fields such as Psychology, Computer Science, Engineering, Econometrics and Finance, etc. These findings highlight the significant impact of English textbooks on various fields of study and emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in enhancing the quality of teaching materials.

The research findings indicate that in the field of English textbooks analysis, the relevant studies not only focus on language teaching, but also pay considerable attention to culture teaching, gender, ideology, and other related topics. This suggests that the research in the field has entered into relatively deeper levels and has begun to explore the implicit content within the textbooks. Accordingly, many theories/approaches/methods from Linguistics and Language are used in this area, such as CDA, corpus approach, and content analysis. Among them, corpus approach has gained the most popularity in this academic area since the emergence of English textbook analysis. Apart from corpus approach, CDA provides significant contributions to the analysis of English textbooks by uncovering power structures, ideologies, and biases inherent within their discourse.

It is worth noting that the research on English textbooks is predominantly authored by scholars from Asia, with a particular focus on East Asia. Although English-speaking Western countries like the United Kingdom and the United States also rank among the top 15 in terms of publication count, they generally do not exhibit the same level of developmental momentum observed in Asian countries/regions. It is imperative to emphasize the prevalence of Western scholars as prominently cited authors, thus underscoring the necessity for Asian scholars to cultivate theoretical innovation within this domain. Moreover, encouraging the active participation of Asian scholars in discussions surrounding English textbooks can contribute to fostering dialogue and mutual understanding between the East and the West. By studying and evaluating different approaches to teaching English, scholars from various backgrounds can contribute their unique perspectives, enriching the global discourse on language education.

However, the study acknowledges certain limitations. First, the data utilized in this research comes primarily from Scopus. While Scopus is a valuable source, its usage may lead to the oversight of pertinent articles available in other databases such as [Web of Science](#) Core Collection and Springer Link. Furthermore, the scope of this study is limited to English journal

articles. It is essential to recognize the significance of including publications in languages other than English. Lastly, it is crucial to acknowledge the inherent subjectivity involved in bibliometric analysis. Researchers must exercise judgment when determining the inclusion and exclusion criteria for data selection and analysis [28]. Awareness of potential biases and the implementation of transparent methodologies can help mitigate subjectivity and enhance the credibility of the study results.

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