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**BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF ONOMASTICS: THEMATIC AREAS
AND RESEARCH DYNAMICS (2005–2025)**

Abstract. The purpose of this study is to examine the dynamics, structure, and main thematic areas of onomastics research by means of bibliometric analysis of Scopus publications retrieved using the keyword “onomastics for the period 2005–2025. From 1,915 initially retrieved documents, the application of a temporal filter resulted in 1,834 publications. After duplicate removal and the correction of technical errors, 1,702 valid records were selected for analysis using the Bibliometrix package in RStudio. The results show a steady and accelerating increase in publication output, from 9 articles in 2006 to 203 in 2024, with the most productive period beginning after 2020, indicating the rapid maturation of onomastics as a discipline. Keyword co-occurrence analysis made it possible to identify three primary thematic clusters: (1) historical-linguistic and structural (historical linguistics, etymology, semantics), (2) applied and literary onomastics (translation, nomenclature), and (3) anthroponymic and cultural (personal names, socio-onomastics). The study demonstrates the expansion of global scientific collaboration and the strengthening of the interdisciplinary character of onomastics. These findings characterize current trends in the discipline and provide a foundation for future research, including in-depth cluster analysis, cross-database comparisons (Scopus vs. WoS), longitudinal tracking of emerging areas (socio-onomastics, digital naming), and the integration of altmetrics to assess broader scholarly impact.

Keywords: onomastics; bibliometric analysis; Scopus database; thematic clusters; publication dynamics; interdisciplinary research; anthroponymy; toponymy

Conflict of interests:

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Article history:

Received: 19.11.2025

Accepted: 29.01.2026

Introduction

Bibliometric analysis is a systematic method aimed at identifying patterns, trends, and their influence within the scientific literature (Passas, 2024). This approach enables graphical representation of research trends and provides insights into the development of a given field. It excels at processing large datasets and mapping evolutionary patterns in both foundational research and applied domains.

Network visualization tools, such as VOSviewer and CiteSpace, are widely employed in bibliometric studies to graphically explore relationships among co-citations, co-authorship networks, and keyword associations. A particularly powerful open-source tool is the bibliometrix R package, which simplifies science mapping and offers extensive capabilities for analyzing and visualizing structural elements of scientific publications (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Fundamental databases such as Scopus and Web of Science are recommended as primary sources for bibliometric literature searches. Accordingly, the present study focuses on publications indexed in Scopus under the keyword “onomastics from 2005 to 2025. No geographical or language restrictions were applied. Although scientific content in Scopus is predominantly in English (Petrushka, et al., 2020), all languages were included in the analysis. The collected bibliographic data were processed using the bibliometrix R package, enabling visualization of research trends and author communication networks.

In recent years, bibliometric approaches have been increasingly applied to the field of onomastics. For instance, Li, et al. (2024) conducted a bibliometric analysis of 768 articles from the Web of Science database covering the period 1972–2022. Their findings revealed a significant increase in publication output, peaking at 103 articles in 2018 and stabilizing at approximately 90–100 articles per year thereafter. The study identified key journals and influential authors in the field. While our analysis shares methodological similarities with Li et al. (2024), it differs in scope: it draws on the Scopus database, spans 2005–2025, and encompasses a substantially larger sample of approximately 1,800 documents, thereby exceeding the coverage limitations of Web of Science.

The purpose of this study is to determine the dynamics, structure, and main thematic areas in the development of scientific research in onomastics through a bibliometric analysis of works published in the Scopus database under the keyword onomastics over the past 20 years.

The scientific novelty of the present research lies in conducting, for the first time, a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the global onomastics publication array in the Scopus database over the extended period 2005–2025, employing the advanced tools of the Bibliometrix/ Biblioshiny package. In contrast to the earlier study by Li, et al. (2024), which was confined to the Web of Science database and ended in 2022 (768 documents), this work examines a markedly larger and more contemporary sample of 1,702 publications, incorporates data through 2023–2025, and delineates the current thematic structure of onomastics research as of 2025. Crucially, this is the first study to systematically identify and characterize – via keyword co-occurrence clustering – three principal thematic clusters defining contemporary global onomastic discourse: (1) historical-linguistic and structural direction, (2) applied and literary onomastics, and (3) anthroponymic and cultural aspects. These findings substantially update and expand existing bibliometric overviews of onomastics, establishing a solid foundation for ongoing monitoring of this interdisciplinary domain’s development.

Materials and Methods

The initial data sample was generated based on the search query “onomastics” in the Scopus database. At the initial stage, 1,915 documents were identified, after which a time filter from 2005–2025 was applied to the sample, which reduced the final array to 1,834 publications. The metadata was exported in BibTeX format and checked for duplicates, technical errors, and incorrect entries. After exporting the data from Scopus, the metadata was uploaded to the Bibliometrix package (RStudio). At this stage, the system automatically performed basic cleaning: removing duplicates, checking the correctness of fields, eliminating empty or corrupted records, as well as leveling the time range. As a result of the built-in Bibliometrix procedures, the initial sample of 1834 documents was reduced to 1702 correctly readable publications for the period 2006–2024. The cleaned array included materials from 622 different sources, which confirms the diversity of publication sites and reduces the risks of sampling bias towards individual journals. The bibliometric analysis was performed using the R Studio software package with the Bibliometrix package, as well as its interactive interface, Biblioshiny. At the first stage, a performance analysis was performed, including the dynamics of publications by year, the most productive authors, countries and organizations. Next, network research was conducted: co-authorship maps, co-citation maps, and keyword recurrence maps. The use of clustering algorithms made it possible to identify the main thematic areas, the internal links between them and the degree of their development. The results were visualized using Biblioshiny tools, which provided a visual representation of the structure of the research area.

The Google Translate and Yandex Translate online translators were used to translate individual text descriptions and clarify the meaning of some terms at the interpretation stage. The tools were used exclusively at the stage of text preparation and did not affect the initial bibliographic data. An integrated bibliometric approach has allowed us to obtain a modern picture of the development of onomastic research, to determine their dynamics, thematic clusters and dominant scientific trends over the past nineteen years.

Results and Discussion

The annual publication activity demonstrated a steady growth in onomastics research in the period 2006–2024. If only 9 papers were published in 2006, then since the 2010s there has been an acceleration: the number of articles increased from 30–60 publications per year to 89 in 2016 and 97 in 2017 (Figure 1). After 2018, the growth became especially noticeable: 101 publications in 2018, 126 in 2019, and a sharp jump during the pandemic period – 163 (2020) and 172 (2021). The maximum activity was noted in 2023 and 2024, with 203 publications each, which indicated the formation of a mature and actively developing scientific field. The analysis showed that the field of onomastics showed rapid growth: the average annual growth rate of publications was 18.9%, which indicated a rapid expansion of research activity. Combined with a relatively “young” body of literature (the average age of documents was 6.22 years), this confirmed the formation of an actively developing scientific field in which new publications appeared much faster than they managed to accumulate citations.

The relatively low average citations per document (2.159) should be interpreted in context rather than as a sign of low quality or impact. Onomastics remains a highly specialized and often regionally oriented field, with many publications appearing in niche journals (e.g., *Acta Onomastica*, *Voprosy Onomastiki*) that primarily circulate within

language-specific or national scholarly communities. Recent works (especially post-2022) naturally accumulate fewer citations due to the typical 3–5-year citation window in humanities fields, where citation accumulation is slower compared to STEM disciplines. Furthermore, the predominance of descriptive, case-study, and regionally focused approaches over highly theoretical or broadly applicable ones limits cross-field citability and interdisciplinary visibility. Nevertheless, the presence of highly cited foundational works (e.g., Anderson, 2007, with 145 citations) indicates that theoretically oriented or broadly applicable studies continue to form the citation core of the discipline and attract sustained attention over longer periods.

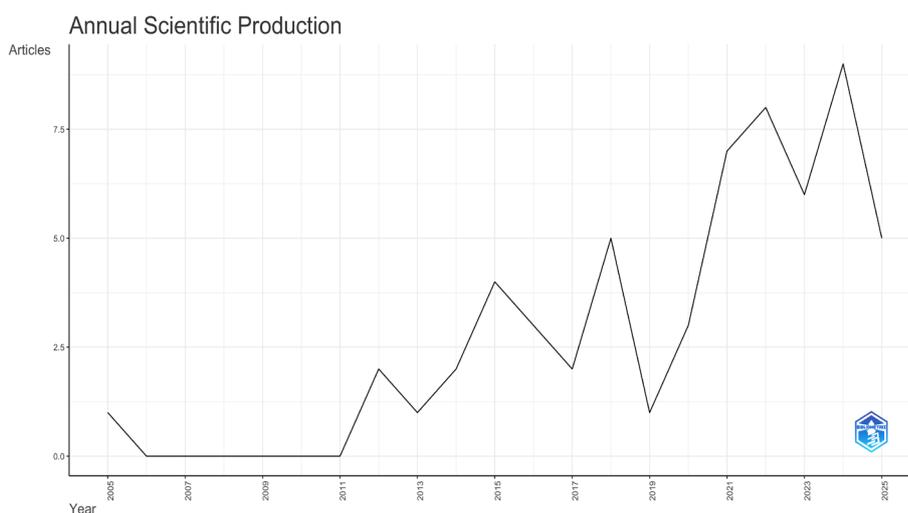


Fig. 1. Annual Scientific Production

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

The observed exponential growth in publication activity, particularly after 2018 and especially sharp during 2020–2024 (reaching 203 publications per year), cannot be attributed solely to natural academic maturation. Several interconnected factors likely contributed to this surge. First, the increasing interdisciplinarity of onomastics – evident in the growing integration with socio-linguistics, cultural studies, digital humanities, and identity research – has broadened the field’s appeal and attracted scholars from adjacent disciplines. Second, the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) paradoxically stimulated research output: restrictions on fieldwork shifted focus toward corpus-based, digital, and historical analyses of names, which require fewer resources and can be conducted remotely. Third, improved accessibility of large-scale bibliographic databases (Scopus expansion), open-access journals, and user-friendly bibliometric tools (Bibliometrix, VOSviewer) lowered entry barriers for researchers in emerging academic communities, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia. This combination explains not only quantitative growth but also the field’s accelerated shift toward maturity, as reflected in the short average document age (6.22 years) and high annual growth rate (18.9%).

An analysis of the most productive sources shows a clear concentration of publications in specialized publications on onomastics (Table 1). The leader is the journal “Acta Onomastica” with 102 articles, followed by “Voprosy Onomastiki” (80) and the international journal “Names” (71). Other significant sources, including “Névtani Értesítő”

(49), “Onomastica” (47), and “Onomastica desde América Latina” (34), also demonstrate a steady contribution to the development of the trend. The presence of journals from different regions (Europe, Latin America, and the USA) confirms the international nature of the research, although publication activity is concentrated around highly specialized onomastic sites.

Table 1. Most relevant sources

Sources	Articles
ACTA ONOMASTICA	102
VOPROSY ONOMASTIKI	80
NAMES	71
NEVTANI ERTESITO	49
ONOMASTICA	47
ONOMASTICA DESDE AMERICA LATINA	34
EPIGRAPHICA	20
ONOMA	20
FOLIA ONOMASTICA CROATICA	17
SLOVENSKA REC	16

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

An analysis of the dynamics of authors’ productivity shows that leading researchers in the field of onomastics demonstrate varying durations and intensities of publication activity (Figure 2). The horizontal lines reflect the career scope of the authors, and the size and color of the bubbles indicate, respectively, the number of published papers and their citations in individual years. Some authors, such as Chen Lnh, T. Farkas, I. Hoffmann, and M. Kazik, are characterized by moderate and consistent productivity, with low citation levels. Other researchers show pronounced peak periods. For example, J. David, J. Dvořáková, and I. Valentová achieved high publication rates and relatively high citations in 2023. Individual authors, such as C. Fernández Juncal, demonstrate high influence in certain years, for example, in 2018. A.F. Litvina is characterized by sustained productivity in 2019–2024, although the citation rate remains low.

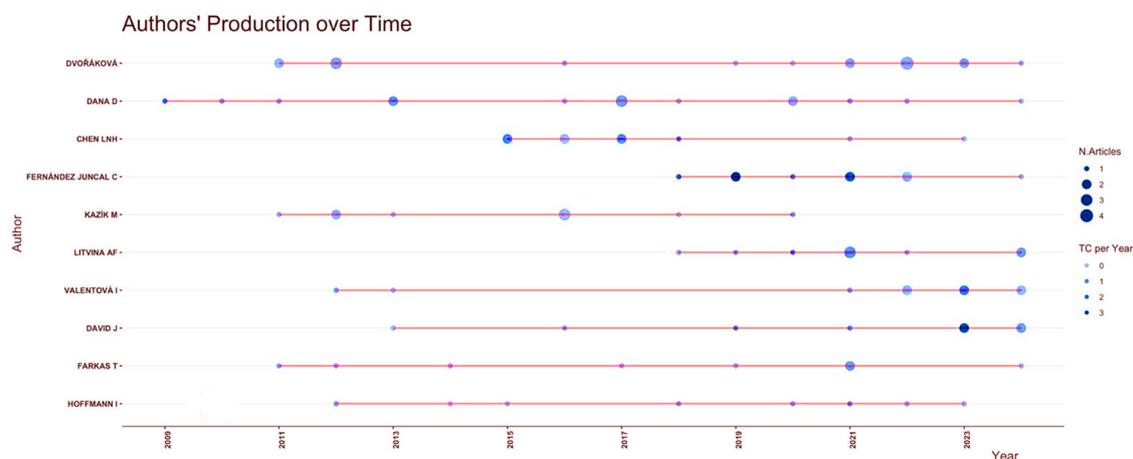


Fig. 2. Top-10 authors’ production over time
Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

The strong concentration of publications in a limited number of specialized onomastic journals (*Acta Onomastica*, *Voprosy Onomastiki*, *Names*) reflects both the field's historical institutionalization in Europe and the ongoing need for dedicated venues where niche topics can be discussed in depth. This pattern, however, also highlights a potential fragmentation: while ensuring depth within sub-communities, it may slow broader interdisciplinary dissemination and citation impact. The productivity curves of leading authors (Figure 2) further reveal that sustained output often correlates with affiliation to strong research centers (e.g., HSE University, Universidad de Salamanca), suggesting institutional support and collaborative networks as key drivers of individual productivity.

An analysis of the most productive affiliations shows that research in the field of onomastics is concentrated in a number of leading universities and research centers in Europe (Figure 3). HSE University leads the way with 22 publications, followed by Universidad de Salamanca (20) and CNRS – Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (19). Significant contributions are also made by the Slovak Academy of Sciences (17), Ural Federal University (15), and the research center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (15). Affiliations from Spain, Poland, and Slovakia, such as Universidad de Zaragoza, University of Lodz, and Matej Bel University, confirm the wide geographical spread of the research. The presence of the Not Reported category (11) indicates incomplete metadata in some publications.

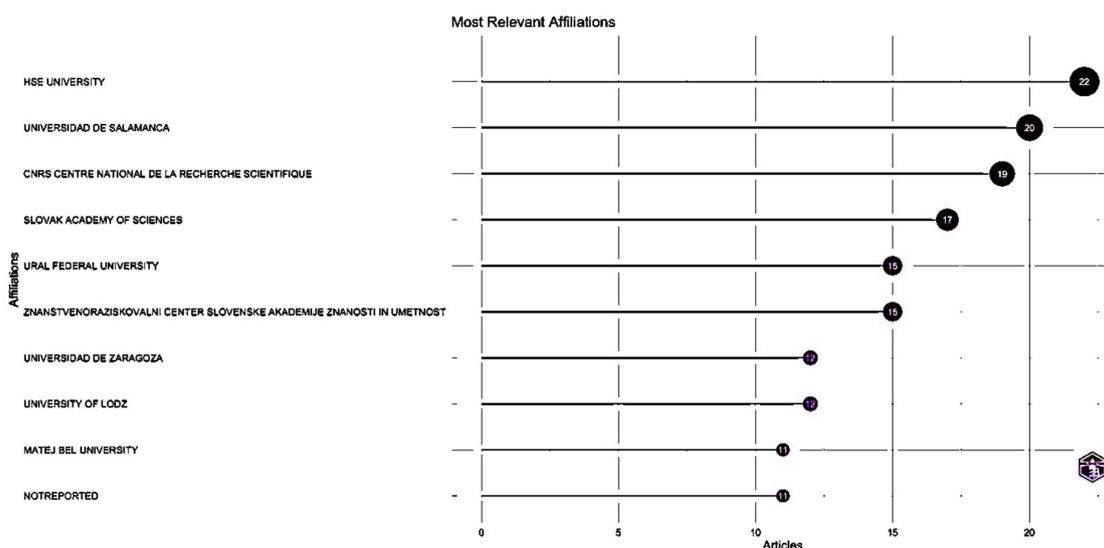


Fig. 3. Top-10 most relevant affiliations

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

Data from the Corresponding Author's Country Collaboration Plot shows the publication productivity of countries and the level of international cooperation (Figure 4). The most active countries in the table are Poland (96), Spain (77), and the Czech Republic (58). The United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany also make important contributions, but contribute fewer publications than the three leading countries. The level of international cooperation varies greatly from country to country. China and Mexico have the highest MCP shares (16.7%), while Germany, Finland, France, and the United Kingdom are more inclined to international partnerships. In contrast, Italy, Romania, Brazil, Estonia, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Croatia do not have international joint

publications in the dataset (MCP = 0). In general, productive countries such as Poland, Spain, and the Czech Republic often conduct research within their own countries (SCP), while countries such as China, Mexico, Germany, and Finland are close to equilibrium between domestic and international studies. It should be noted that these results are based on Scopus data. Linguistic, institutional, and funding-related factors can affect the level of international cooperation.

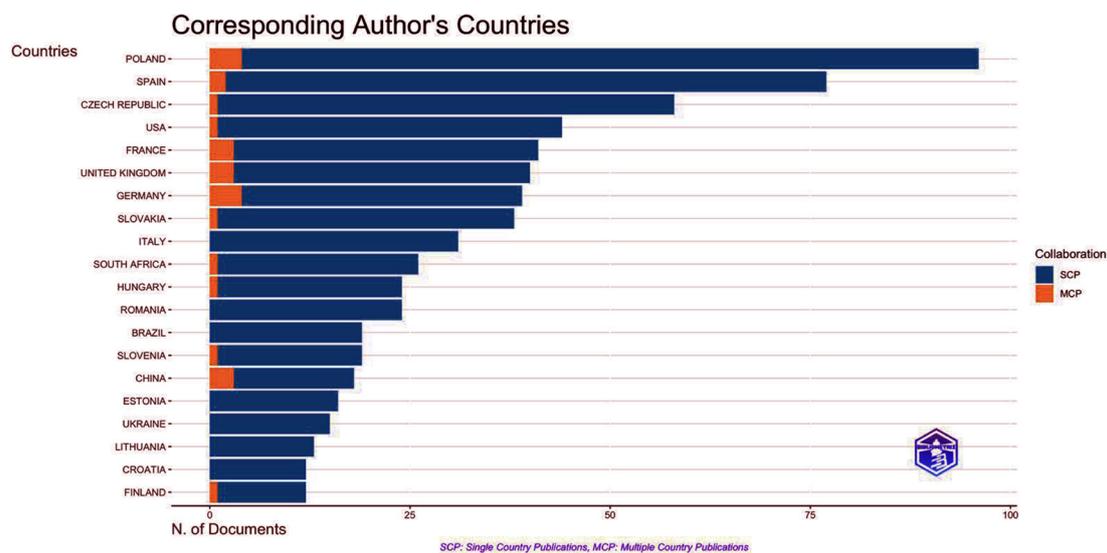


Fig. 4. Corresponding author's countries

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

Among the works that received the most international citations, the work of Anderson (2007) clearly leads, with 145 citations. It is followed by Depauw and Clarysse (2013) and Mensah (2015) with high annual citation rates (Table 2). Motschenbacher (2020) and Kirk (2021), published in recent years, also show high annual citation rates, demonstrating the growing influence of new research. In general, these works form the main citation pillars for theoretical and methodological directions in onomastics and related fields.

Table 2. Top-15 most global cited documents

Paper	DOI	Total Citations	TC per Year	Normalized TC
Anderson (2007)	https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199297412.001.0001	145	7,63	8,27
Depauw and Clarysse (2013)	https://doi.org/10.1163/15700720-12341144	50	3,85	14,04
Mensah (2015)	https://doi.org/10.1080/13696815.2014.976545	46	4,18	12,50
Brixhe (2010)	https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444317398.ch16	41	2,56	7,11
Kenakin (2008)	https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.bjp.0707407	41	2,28	3,70

The topic trends graph shows how the main areas of research in the field of onomastics have changed over time (Figure 6). The most common and stable topics are onomastics, anthroponymy, toponymy, socio-onomastics, and literary onomastics, that is, names and their cultural and linguistic contexts. Many of these terms have been used for several years in a row and represent the ongoing interest in the field. In recent years, new directions have emerged: the appearance of such terms as Chinese, theophoric names, prosopography, and morphology only at a later stage testifies to the expansion of the field. At the same time, keywords such as language, historical linguistics, cultural identity, and ethnicity make up an important part of linguistic and cultural research in onomastics. A number of earlier terms have become rare over time, which may imply a change in the focus of research. In general, the graph clearly shows the preservation of traditional topics in the field of onomastics and the gradual strengthening of new areas of research.

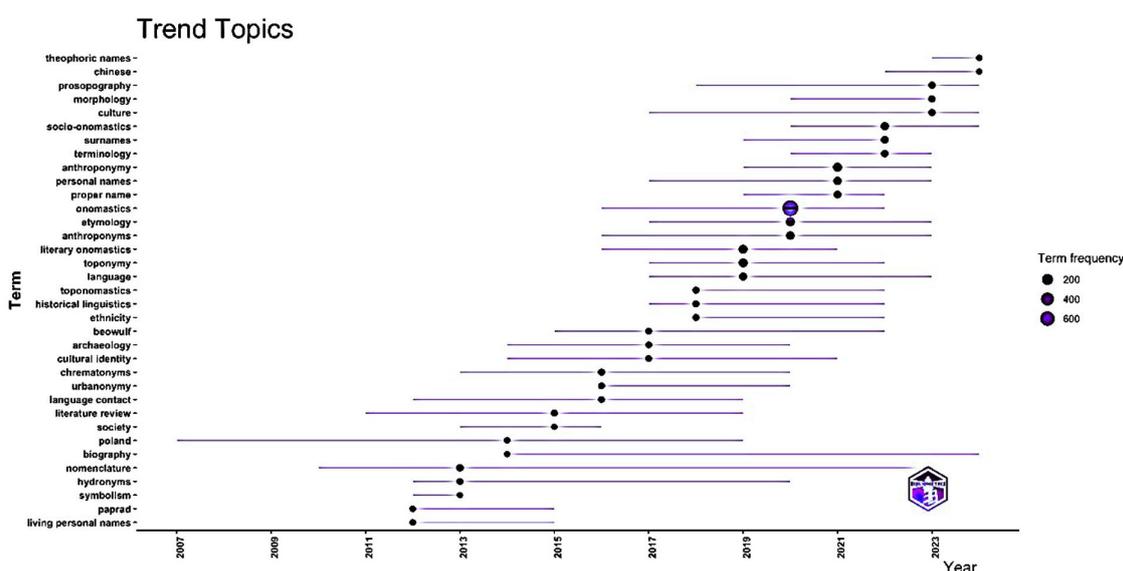


Fig. 6. Trend topics

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

The co-occurrence network of keywords reflects the main topics in the field of onomastics and their interrelationships (Figure 7). The largest and central node in the graph is “onomastics”, indicating that it is often found in conjunction with many other concepts. The division of nodes in the network into groups (clusters) clearly shows that research is concentrated in several main areas.

The red cluster focuses on historical-linguistic and structural aspects: such terms as historical linguistics, etymology, semantics, anthroponymy, toponymy, sociolinguistics, and ethnicity are concentrated in this group.

The blue cluster focuses on applied and literary onomastics: proper names, nomenclature, language, literary onomastics, and translation.

The green cluster focuses on personal names and terms related to cultural characteristics (first names, anthroponymy).

The general network shows that onomastics is a broad and interdisciplinary field: research is closely linked to language, culture, social structure, history, and literature. At the same time, the structure of the network clearly reflects the main areas of research

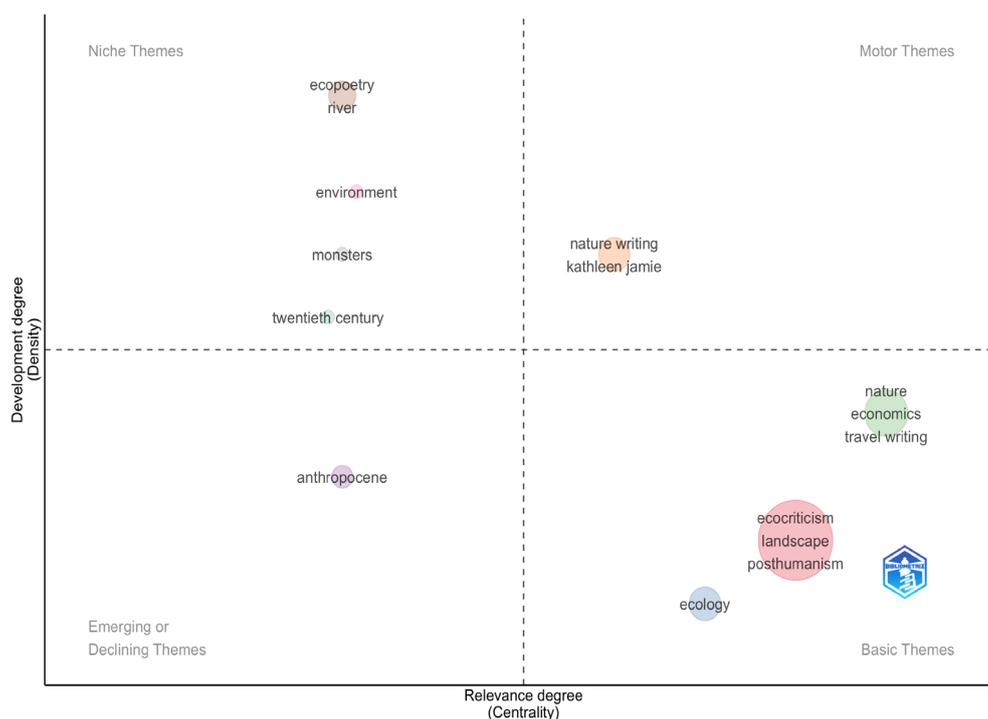


Fig. 8. Thematic map

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

The factor map (MCA) shows the relationships of keywords with respect to onomastics through two dimensions (Figure 9). Dim 1 (29.28%) represents an axis that highlights the difference between theoretical areas and applied/interdisciplinary research: dialectology, ethnolinguistics, and semantics are concentrated on the left, while applied terms such as socio-onomastics, gender, and place names are concentrated on the right. Dim 2 (14.34%) refers to the division by object of study: in the upper part there are anthroponymy, toponymy, and first names, while in the lower part there are dialectology and lexicography.

Several groups are observed on the map: in the upper left there are terms related to anthroponymy; in the lower left, keywords of the language-dialectological direction; in the center, general concepts of onomastics; and on the right, applied or social research (gender, socio-onomastics, literature review). Terms like onomastics, which are closer to the center, indicate that they are basic for the field, but with low resolution.

In general, the map shows that research in onomastics is divided along two main axes: 1) theoretical linguistic research and 2) applied, social, or cultural areas. At the same time, it proves that anthroponyms and toponyms are the main objects of research in the field. To clarify these interpretations, it is important to consider the content of articles related to keywords.

Table 3. Countries' collaboration world map

From	To	Frequency
CHINA	JAPAN	138,0308956
CANADA	AUSTRALIA	134,4910001
CHINA	AUSTRALIA	134,4910001
NETHERLANDS	AUSTRALIA	134,4910001
UNITED KINGDOM	AUSTRALIA	134,4910001
USA	AUSTRALIA	134,4910001
USA	KOREA	127,8391609
JORDAN	INDONESIA	117,2401137
TURKEY	INDONESIA	117,2401137
CHINA	HONG KONG	114,1138045
INDONESIA	MALAYSIA	109,6976228
UNITED KINGDOM	MALAYSIA	109,6976228
BRAZIL	SINGAPORE	103,8172559
USA	SINGAPORE	103,8172559
CZECH REPUBLIC	KAZAKHSTAN	67,29149357
POLAND	KAZAKHSTAN	67,29149357
FRANCE	QATAR	51,18479632
SPAIN	QATAR	51,18479632
INDONESIA	SAUDI ARABIA	44,53686271

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

Country Collaboration Map

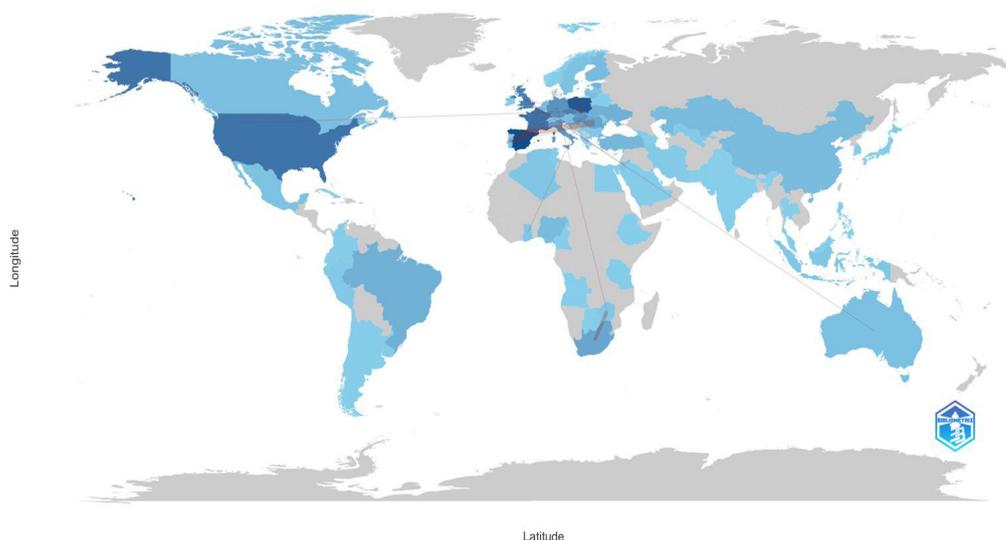


Fig. 10. Countries' collaboration world map

Source: Generated by the author through bibliometrix software

Conclusion

As a result of the bibliometric analysis conducted, it has been found that between 2006 and 2024, research in the field of onomastics has grown at a significant rate. The constant increase in the number of publications indicates that this direction has become increasingly relevant in the scientific community.

Co-citation and co-occurrence networks demonstrate that onomastics research is multidirectional and interdisciplinary. The formation of three main thematic clusters (historical-linguistic, literary-applied, and anthroponymic-cultural) reflects the structural diversity of the field. In general, onomastics at the present stage is becoming a comprehensive field of study at the intersection of language, culture, and society.

The findings lay the groundwork for future studies, including deeper cluster-specific analyses, cross-database comparisons (Scopus vs. WoS), longitudinal tracking of emerging themes (e.g., socio-onomastics, digital naming), and integration of altmetrics to assess broader impact.

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БИБЛИОМЕТРИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ ОНОМАСТИКИ: ТЕМАТИЧЕСКИЕ ОБЛАСТИ И ДИНАМИКА ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ (2005–2025)

Аннотация. Цель исследования – изучить динамику, структуру и основные тематические направления исследований в области ономастики путём библиометрического анализа публикаций в базе Scopus по ключевому слову «ономастика» за период 2005–2025 годов. Из 1915 первоначально найденных документов после применения временного фильтра осталось 1834 публикации. После удаления дубликатов и исправления технических ошибок для анализа отобрано 1702 корректных записи с использованием пакета Bibliometrix в среде RStudio. Результаты свидетельствуют о стабильном и ускоряющемся росте публикационной активности: от 9 статей в 2006 году до 203 в 2024 году, причём наиболее продуктивный период начался после 2020 года, что указывает на быстрое созревание ономастики как дисциплины. Анализ совместной встречаемости ключевых слов позволил выделить три основных тематических кластера: (1) историко-лингвистический и структурный (историческая лингвистика, этимология, семантика), (2) прикладная и литературная ономастика (перевод, номенклатура), (3) антропонимический и культурный (личные имена, социоономастика). Исследование показывает расширение глобального научного сотрудничества и усиление междисциплинарного характера ономастики. Полученные выводы характеризуют современные тенденции в дисциплине и создают основу для дальнейших исследований, включая углублённый анализ кластеров, сравнение

баз данных (Scopus vs. WoS), лонгитюдное отслеживание новых направлений (социономастика, цифровой нейминг) и интеграцию альтернативных метрик для оценки более широкого воздействия.

Ключевые слова: ономастика; библиометрический анализ; база данных Scopus; тематические кластеры; динамика публикаций; междисциплинарные исследования; антропонимика; топонимика.

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ОНОМАСТИКАНЫҢ БИБЛИОМЕТРИЯЛЫҚ ТАЛДАУЫ: ТАҚЫРЫПТЫҚ САЛАЛАР ЖӘНЕ ЗЕРТТЕУ ДИНАМИКАСЫ (2005–2025)

Аңдатпа. Зерттеудің мақсаты – Scopus дерекқорында «ономастика» кілт сөзі бойынша 2005–2025 жылдар аралығында жарияланған еңбектерге библиометриялық талдау жүргізу арқылы ономастика саласындағы зерттеулердің динамикасын, құрылымын және негізгі тақырыптық салаларын зерделеу. Бастапқыда анықталған 1915 құжаттың ішінен уақыттық сүзгі қолданылғаннан кейін 1834 жарияланым іріктеліп алынды. Қайталанатын жазбалар мен техникалық қателер жойылған соң, RStudio ортасында Bibliometrix пакетін пайдалану арқылы 1702 дұрыс жазба талдауға алынды. Нәтижелер жарияланым белсенділігінің тұрақты әрі үдемелі өсуін көрсетеді: 2006 жылғы 9 мақаладан 2024 жылы 203 мақалаға дейін, ал ең өнімді кезең 2020 жылдан кейін басталған, бұл ономастиканың ғылым саласы ретінде жедел дамуын айғақтайды. Кілт сөздердің бірлесіп кездесуін талдау нәтижесінде үш негізгі тақырыптық кластер анықталды: (1) тарихи-лингвистикалық және құрылымдық (тарихи лингвистика, этимология, семантика), (2) қолданбалы және әдеби ономастика (аударма, номенклатура), (3) антропонимиялық және мәдени (жеке есімдер, социономастика). Зерттеу ономастика саласындағы жаһандық ғылыми ынтымақтастықтың кеңеюін және пәнаралық сипаттың күшеюін көрсетеді. Алынған нәтижелер пәндегі қазіргі үрдістерді сипаттап, болашақ зерттеулерге негіз қалайды, оның ішінде кластерлерді терең талдау, дерекқорларды салыстыру (Scopus пен WoS), жаңа бағыттарды (социономастика, цифрлық нейминг) ұзақ мерзімді бақылау және ғылыми ықпалдың ауқымын бағалау үшін баламалы метрикаларды енгізу көзделеді.

Түйінді өздер: ономастика; библиометриялық талдау; Scopus дерекқор; тақырыптық кластерлер; жарияланымдар динамикасы; әнаралық зерттеулер; антропонимик; топонимика.

Authors' contributions

Rustemova G. – Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Methodology, Writing – Original Draft, Visualization.

Orynkhanova G. – Data Curation, Investigation, Writing – Review and Editing.