

IDIOM STUDIES IN THE LAST DECADE: A BIBLIOMETRIC MAPPING OF RESEARCH TRACES BASED ON WEB OF SCIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of idiom research published between 2015 and 2025, utilising data from the Web of Science Core Collection. Despite increasing academic interest in idioms across linguistics, psycholinguistics, education, and applied linguistics, no previous study has systematically explored the intellectual structure, thematic development, and collaborative patterns of this field. To fill this gap, VOSviewer software was used to analyse 2,260 articles with the phrase "idiom" in their titles. Disciplinary distribution, research and citation trends over time, authorship and co-authorship networks, author, country, organisation, and document citation performance, bibliographic coupling of documents and authors, and co-occurrence of author keywords are all included in the study. The results demonstrate the multidisciplinary nature of idiom studies, which are prevalent in linguistics, education, cognitive science, and cultural studies. In terms of publication output and citation impact, the United States, England, and China rank at the top. *Idiom*, *phraseology*, *figurative language*, and *translation* are common keywords that illustrate the field's wide conceptual scope and its connections to applied linguistics and figurative meaning. Significant conceptual coherence is revealed by bibliographic coupling analyses, suggesting a solid intellectual foundation backed by common ideas and approaches. This study offers the first comprehensive, data-driven review of idiom research over the last ten years, providing insightful information on its major contributors, structural dynamics, and developing topics. Although limited to the Web of Science database and a single analytical tool (VOSviewer), the results establish a solid foundation for future cross-database and multi-tool research. The results can also help scholars identify important works, promote global cooperation, and investigate underrepresented fields such as idioms in digital conversations and cross-linguistic situations.

Keywords: Idiom, Bibliometric analysis, VOSviewer, Citation, Web of science

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Web of Science Core Collection veritabanından elde edilen veriler kullanılarak 2015–2025 yılları arasında yayımlanan deyim araştırmalarına yönelik kapsamlı bir bibliyometrik analiz sunmaktadır. Dilbilim, psikodilbilim, eğitim ve uygulamalı dilbilim alanlarında deyimlere yönelik akademik ilginin giderek artmasına rağmen, bu alanın entelektüel yapısını, tematik gelişimini ve iş birliği örüntülerini sistematik biçimde inceleyen bir çalışma bugüne kadar yapılmamıştır. Bu boşluğu doldurmak amacıyla, başlığında “deyim” ifadesi geçen 2.260 makale VOSviewer yazılımı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında disiplinlere göre dağılım, zaman içindeki araştırma ve atıf eğilimleri, yazarlık ve ortak yazarlık ağları, yazar, ülke, kuruluş ve belge düzeyinde atıf performansı, belge ve yazarların bibliyografik eşleştirmesi ile yazar anahtar sözcüklerinin birlikte görülme örüntüleri incelenmiştir. Bulgular, deyim çalışmalarının dilbilim, eğitim, bilişsel bilim ve kültürel çalışmalar başta olmak üzere çok disiplinli bir yapıya sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Yayın sayısı ve atıf etkisi açısından Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, İngiltere ve Çin ön sıralarda yer almaktadır. *Deyim*, *öbekbilim*, *imgesel dil* ve *çeviri* gibi yaygın anahtar sözcükler, alanın geniş kavramsal etki alanını ve uygulamalı dilbilim ile mecaz anlam çalışmalarına olan bağlantılarını ortaya koymaktadır. Bibliyografik eşleştirme analizleri, ortak kavram ve yaklaşımlarla desteklenen sağlam bir entelektüel temele işaret eden belirgin bir kavramsal tutarlılığı ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu çalışma, son on yıldaki deyim araştırmalarına ilişkin ilk kapsamlı ve veriye dayalı incelemeyi sunarak, alana önemli katkıda bulunanlar, alana dair yapısal dinamikler ve gelişmekte olan araştırma konuları hakkında önemli bilgiler sağlamaktadır. Web of Science veritabanı ve tek bir analiz aracıyla (VOSviewer) gerçekleştirilmesi yönüyle sınırlı olmasına rağmen, elde edilen bulgular yapılacak farklı veritabanları ve birden fazla araçla dizayn edilecek araştırmalar için bir temel oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, araştırmacıların önemli çalışmaları belirlemesine, küresel iş birliğini teşvik etmesine ve dijital iletişimlerde deyimler ile diller arası bağlamlar gibi yeterince temsil edilmeyen alanların araştırılmasına da katkı sağlayabilmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Deyim, Bibliyometrik analiz, VOSviewer, Atıf, Web of science

1. Introduction

Idioms are conventional multiword expressions whose meanings cannot be entirely inferred from the literal meanings of their parts. They serve as fixed linguistic units that convey figurative, culture-specific meanings, reflecting the cognitive and cultural frameworks of a linguistic community. According to Fernando (1996), idioms are “conventionalised multiword expressions that function as single units of meaning,” while Nunberg, Sag, and Wasow (1994) define them as “phrases whose meanings are not predictable from the meanings of their parts.” From a figurative language perspective, Glucksberg and McGlone (2001) emphasise that idioms function as metaphorical constructs that efficiently communicate complex meanings within discourse.

Idioms are of vital importance for communication skills and language proficiency. Idioms embody shared cultural knowledge, values, and experiences, functioning as linguistic carriers of culture (Kovecses, 2010). In second language acquisition (SLA), the skilful use of idioms is closely related to fluent speech and figurative ability, similar to the native language (Wray, 2002; Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). As Heidari and Aliyar (2025) emphasise, idioms should be regarded not as peripheral elements but as “indispensable linguistic units whose mastery is essential for learners to attain communicative competence and native-like fluency”. Furthermore, idioms are found not only in informal language but also in academic speech and writing, where they perform rhetorical and evaluative roles (Miller, 2020), showing their importance across various genres and contexts.

Despite their importance, idioms remain challenging for both students and teachers due to their rigid structures and metaphorical, culturally dependent meanings (Liontas, 2017; Eyckmans & Lindströmberg, 2017). Over the past decade, research on idioms has rapidly expanded across the fields of linguistics, psycholinguistics, education, and applied linguistics, focusing on comprehension, teaching strategies, processing mechanisms, and cross-linguistic comparisons. Numerous bibliometric studies have been conducted to map research landscapes and track advances in related domains of figurative language study. For instance, Yuan and Sun (2023) used CiteSpace and Web of Science data to analyse metaphor research from 2010 to 2020 and identify key authors, organisations, and emerging hotspots. Similarly, Zhao, Zheng, and Zhao (2023) performed a scientometric review of conceptual metaphor research (2002–2022), revealing collaboration networks and evolving research themes, while Han, Peng, and Chen (2022) examined publications on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980–2022), highlighting key knowledge bases and research frontiers. Beyond metaphors, Yi, Zhao and Wang (2024) conducted a bibliometric analysis of multiword expression studies (1983–2024) by using CiteSpace, which includes idioms as a subcategory, reporting increasing interest in computational and applied linguistics contexts. A recent study conducted by Sun and Lin (2025) conducted a bibliometric analysis of the evolution and future direction of metonymy research between the years 2000 and 2023.

Additionally, Tauhid and Rohmah (2024) have explored the teaching of idioms within EFL contexts over the last two decades, providing insights into instructional trends and pedagogical approaches. However, these studies are either limited to specific subfields (e.g., metaphor or idiom pedagogy) or treat idioms as part of broader constructs, such as multiword expressions. To our knowledge, no cross-disciplinary, Web of Science–based bibliometric mapping has systematically examined idiom research as a distinct domain across its diverse subfields.

Bibliometric mapping offers a potential method to address this gap. Bibliometric analysis uses quantitative techniques to assess and

visualise scientific outputs, helping identify theme clusters, collaboration networks, publishing patterns, and important contributors in an area of study (Pritchard, 1969; Donthu et al., 2021). Unlike traditional narrative reviews, bibliometric mapping provides an objective, reproducible overview of a discipline's development by analysing citation patterns, co-authorship networks, and keyword co-occurrences. Visualisation tools, such as VOSviewer, facilitate the interpretation of these patterns, enabling researchers to detect emerging topics, influential works, and collaboration structures.

Bibliometric mapping can be used to track the development of multidisciplinary connections, reveal recurring themes in the literature, highlight important authors and institutions, and show how idiom studies have evolved over time. In addition to improving comprehension of the intellectual framework of idiom research, such a methodical summary points researchers toward uncharted territory and potential future paths. More important advantages of bibliometric analysis include recognising the knowledge-intensive nature of scientific research and enabling time-series evaluations of research subjects within predefined parameters (Van Raan, 2005). Therefore, this study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of idiom-related research published between 2015 and 2025, using data retrieved from the Web of Science Core Collection. By employing VOSviewer, the study visualises co-authorship networks, country collaborations, citation patterns, and keyword co-occurrences to map the research landscape of idiom studies in the last decade. The findings of the study will show significant research trends and influential works, advance a meta-scientific knowledge of the field's evolution, and offer practitioners, educators, and academics interested in figurative language and applied linguistics insightful information.

The following questions are the focus of this study:

1. Which writers have produced the most in the last decade in the field of idiom studies?
2. Which countries have generated the greatest number of idiom studies?
3. Which studies have received the highest number of citations in the field?
4. Which keywords have been most frequently used by authors in idiom research?

2. Methodology

Bibliometric analysis, as originally defined by Pritchard (1969), involves using statistical and mathematical methods to examine books and other forms of written communication to identify patterns of publication, citation, and research progress. In recent years, bibliometric approaches have been extensively employed to map scientific knowledge, identify key

research areas, and reveal intellectual structures across disciplines (Donthu et al., 2021; Zupic & Čater, 2015).

This study employs a bibliometric mapping method to systematically examine the development and characteristics of idiom-related research over the past decade. The analysis examines publications indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection (WoSCC) from 2015 to 2025 that include the term “idiom*” in their title, ensuring that all selected documents explicitly focus on idioms as their main topic. The asterisk (*) enables the retrieval of records containing both singular and plural forms (e.g., idiom, idioms).

The dataset includes all available citation indexes within WoSCC to ensure comprehensive coverage of the relevant literature: Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE, 1980–present), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI, 1980–present), Arts & Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI, 1975–present), Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Science (CPCI-S, 1990–present), Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Social Sciences and Humanities (CPCI-SSH, 1990–present), Book Citation Index – Science (BKCI-S, 2005–present), Book Citation Index – Social Sciences and Humanities (BKCI-SSH, 2005–present) and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI, 2005–present). The retrieved records were exported in plain text format, complete with comprehensive bibliographic details, including authors, titles, abstracts, keywords, source titles, publication years, and citation counts. Duplicate and irrelevant entries were removed through manual screening.

The data collection process followed a systematic three-stage approach illustrated in Figure 1: (1) identification, (2) screening, and (3) inclusion. In the identification stage, all records containing the keyword “idiom” (n = 4183) were retrieved from WoSCC for the period 1975-2025. During the screening phase, records were filtered by publication year (2015–2025) and relevance, resulting in 2,260 documents. This refinement stems from our goal of documenting the mapping patterns observed in all papers published over the last ten years. In the inclusion phase, these 2,260 publications were selected for bibliographic analysis.

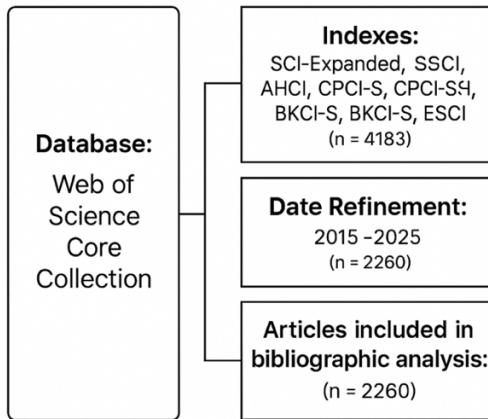


Figure 1. Data collection process for idiom studies

To analyse and visualise the bibliometric data, the software VOSviewer was used. Developed by Van Eck and Waltman (2010), VOSviewer is a widely recognised tool for constructing and visualising bibliometric networks, including co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence maps. The programme enables the identification of clusters representing thematic concentrations, research collaborations, and citation relationships among publications. (Dereli, 2024).

In this study, VOSviewer was used to create visual maps for co-authorship analysis (including authors, institutions, and countries), co-citation analysis (authors and journals), and keyword co-occurrence analysis (research themes and areas of interest). The bibliometric mapping approach provides an objective overview of the structure and evolution of idiom studies by highlighting influential contributors, key topics, and emerging trends. The methodology ensures transparency and reproducibility by employing a systematic search strategy, a widely recognised database (WoSCC), and established analytical tools (Zupic & Čater, 2015; Donthu et al., 2021).

3. Data Analysis

This section presents the results of bibliometric analyses conducted on studies related to terms obtained from the Web of Science Core Collection for the period 2015–2025. The analyses are structured sequentially to provide a comprehensive overview of the research environment. First, the disciplinary distribution of publications in Web of Science categories is explained, followed by an examination of the annual trends in publications and citations. In subsequent sections, dominant themes and emerging research focal points are identified by examining authors' productivity and collaboration networks, citation analyses for

authors, countries, organisations and documents, bibliographic matching models, and co-occurrence analyses of author keywords.

3.1 Web of Science categories

The dataset comprises 4,183 documents, spanning a wide range of disciplines. The most represented categories include “Language & Linguistics”, “Linguistics”, “Humanities Multidisciplinary”, “Education Research”, “Anthropology”, “Religion”, “History”, “Literature”, “Psychology Experimental”, “Computer Science Theory Methods”, and “Music”.

This broad disciplinary spread reflects the interdisciplinary nature of idiom studies, which draw from cognitive linguistics, cultural studies, psycholinguistics, education, and computational linguistics. Such diversity indicates that idioms are not confined to linguistic inquiry alone but are also studied as cognitive, cultural, and communicative constructs (Figure 2).

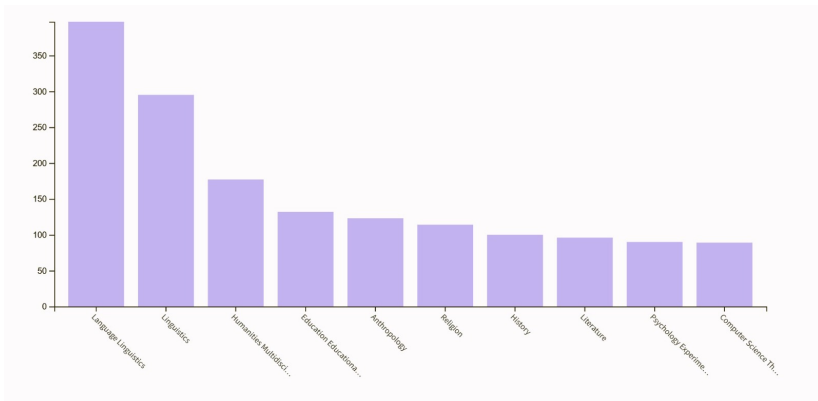


Figure 2. Web of Science categories

3.2 Annual trends in publications and citations

Analysis of publication dynamics reveals a steady rise in scholarly attention to idioms over the past decade, accompanied by fluctuations in citation counts. Certain years stand out with disproportionately high citation activity relative to publication volume, suggesting the influence of seminal works that shaped subsequent research directions. For instance, citation levels peaked around 2014, exceeding 2,000 citations, despite a relatively modest number of publications.

Overall, these temporal patterns illustrate the growing maturity and recognition of idiom studies as an independent research area, where foundational contributions continue to inform newer works (Figure 3).

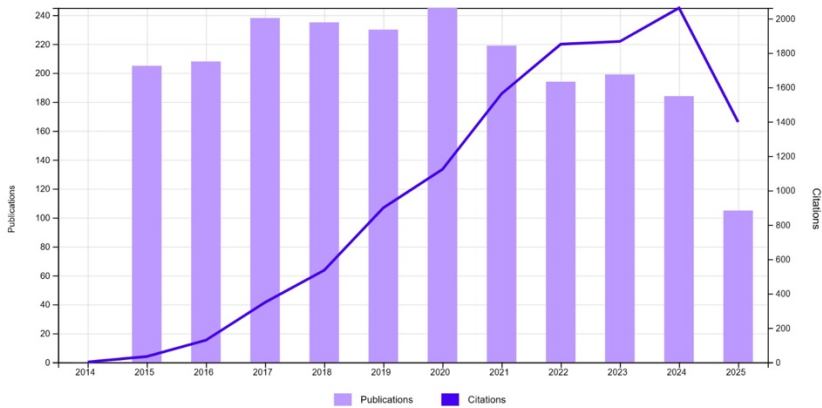


Figure 3. Distribution of the publications and citations by year

3.3 Authorship and co-authorship networks

The authorship analysis identified 3,941 contributors, of which 2,636 met the inclusion criteria of at least one publication and one citation. The co-authorship network constructed from the 50 most relevant authors reveals 18 central figures exhibiting frequent collaborative ties and shared thematic interests. Prominent nodes within the network include Bethel, Kelly J.; Bjork, Robert L.; Bloss, Cinnamon S.; Boelt, Debra L.; and Darst, Burcu F., each of whom is associated with publications that have received more than 26 citations.

Co-authorship patterns serve as a robust indicator of intellectual collaboration and the diffusion of knowledge across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. Dense interconnections among key authors indicate cohesive research clusters and collaborative research agendas (Figure 4).

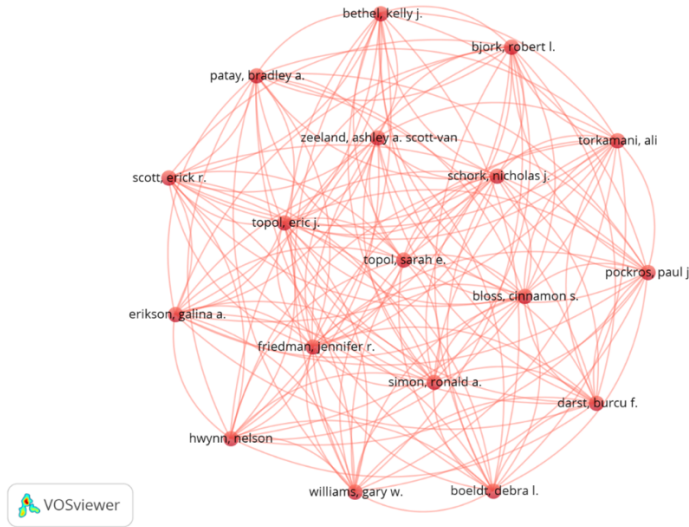


Figure 4. Co-authorship of authors

3.4 Citation analyses

According to Appio et al. (2014) and Donthu et al. (2021), citation analysis is a fundamental method for scientific mapping based on the idea that it represents the intellectual connections between publications arising from one journal citing another. To understand the intellectual dynamics of a study topic, citations can be used to examine the most significant articles in that field. In the present section, citation of authors, countries, organisations and documents will be included in turn.

3.4.1 Citation of authors

Citation analysis provides insight into the most influential contributors in idiom-related research. Among the 2,636 eligible authors, the top-cited researchers include Hinton, Devon E. (245 citations), Kohrt, Brandon A. (226), Sharma, Vivek (218), and Bass, Judith K. (202) (see Figure 5 and Table 1).

Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the 10 selected authors, including their publications and citations.

Table 1. Top 10 most cited authors

Author	Documents	Citation
Hinton, Devon E.	3	245
Kohrt, Brandon A.	4	226
Sharma, Vivek	13	218
Bass, Judith K.	3	202
Kaiser, Bonnie N.	2	202

Bolton, Paul A.	1	190
Haroz, Emily E.	1	190
Vulchanov, Valentin	6	184
Vulchanova, Mila	6	184
Zhang, Yiran	8	166

These highly cited authors serve as intellectual anchors in the field, producing seminal works that are frequently referenced in studies addressing idiom comprehension, cross-cultural interpretation, and applied pedagogy.

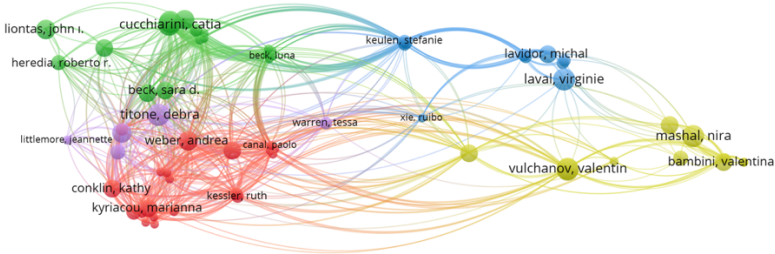


Figure 5. Citation of authors

Author citations reveal relationships among researchers based on how often they cite one another or are mentioned jointly (Figure 5). Each dot symbolises an author, and the size of the dot denotes the author's number of publications or citation effect; the larger the dot, the more significant the author. Colours indicate thematic or cooperative groupings within the field, such as groups of writers that regularly mention one another or study related subjects.

The red cluster means specific authors who focus on idioms and cognitive linguistics. While authors in the blue cluster are studying figurative language and learning a second language, authors in the green cluster are focused on the neurocognitive aspects of idiom comprehension.

3.4.2 Citation of countries

Citation analysis by country provides valuable insights into global research networks, geographical influence, and collaborative partnerships in idiom-related scholarship. Among the 108 countries represented in the dataset, each with at least one document and one citation, 98 countries met the inclusion criteria and were included in the citation network analysis.

The resulting network demonstrates a complex structure of international collaboration and citation linkages. The United States holds

a central position with the highest citation count and the strongest international connectivity, forming extensive links with Chile, Poland, Russia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Georgia, Liberia, Mozambique, and Uganda. Additional regional clusters are identified across the network: a blue cluster including England, Denmark, Norway, Australia, and Türkiye; a green cluster including Germany, the Netherlands, Chile, Azerbaijan, and Switzerland; a purple cluster including China, Iran, Brazil, and Scotland; and a red cluster including Russia, Croatia, Ukraine, and Poland. These clusters indicate not only regional proximity but also shared thematic interests and co-citation patterns (Figure 6).

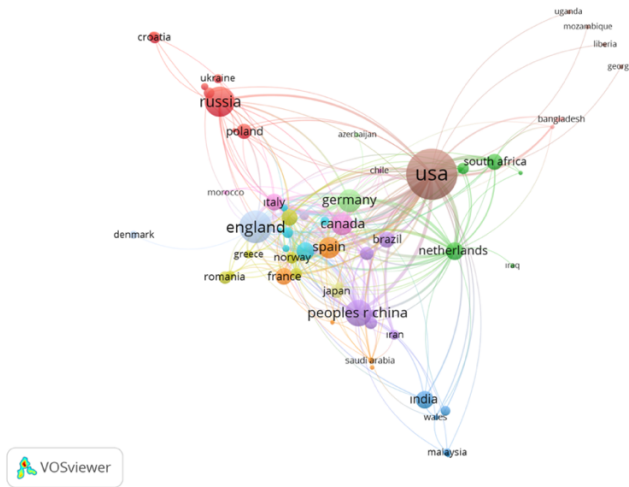


Figure 6. Citation of countries

Quantitative results further reveal that the countries with the highest total citation counts are the United States (4,853 citations), England (1,669), the Netherlands (1,211), China (1,163), and Canada (699). Other highly cited contributors include Germany (580), Spain (482), Norway (458), Italy (453), and Australia (404) (Table 2). Türkiye ranks 26th globally, with 38 publications, 41 citations, and a total link strength of 16, highlighting its emerging role in the international research community on idioms.

Table 2. Citation of the top 5 countries

Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
USA	497	4853	385
England	209	1669	223
Netherlands	63	1211	135
China	134	1163	158
Canada	98	699	165

Countries with a high volume of publications and strong citation linkages often serve as collaboration hubs, promoting cross-national knowledge exchange and advancing both theoretical and applied research. The presence of multiple clusters within the citation network indicates that studies on idioms have evolved through a wide range of international contributions, rather than being concentrated in a single region.

3.4.3 Citation of organisations

Institutional analysis shows that 449 organisations produced at least one publication with at least one citation. A total of 26 clusters, 2,363 links, and an overall connection strength of 2,954 were identified.

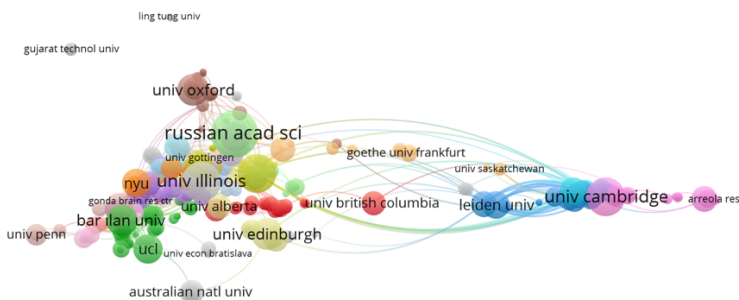


Figure 7. Citation of organisations/institutions

The most influential institutions are Harvard University (13 documents; 793 citations), University of Amsterdam (12; 615), Chinese Academy of Sciences (4; 469), McGill University (26; 443), and University of Illinois (27; 351). In Türkiye, Koç University is among the contributors, with 2 documents and 7 citations (Figure 7).

3.4.4 Citation of documents

The analysis of citation patterns at the document level provides insights into the intellectual foundations and core literature shaping idiom-related research. By examining the interconnections among publications, it is possible to identify the studies that have had the most significant influence on subsequent research and served as pivotal reference points in the field.

A total of 208 documents met the inclusion criteria of having at least one citation and were found to be interconnected within the citation network. These works collectively formed 18 clusters and 439 citation links, indicating a moderately dense network of mutual referencing and shared conceptual bases (Figure 8). The clustering structure reflects

distinct thematic areas, each anchored by seminal publications that have guided theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, or applied research directions within idiom studies.

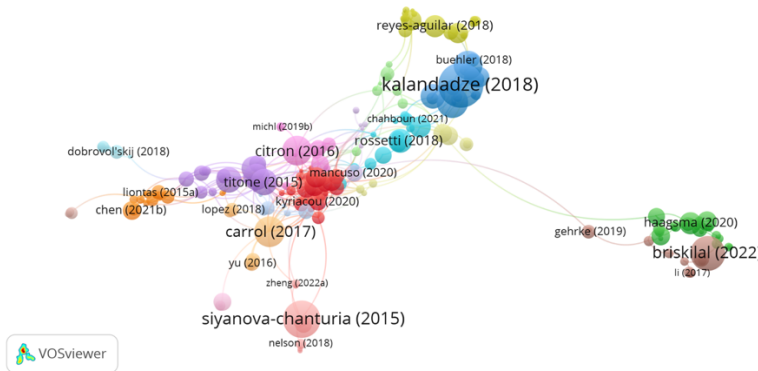


Figure 8. Citation of documents

The most frequently cited documents occupy a central position in this network and constitute the conceptual backbone of the field. As summarised in Table 3, McNally et al. (2015) ranks first with 462 total citations and an annual average of 42 citations, reflecting its sustained impact over time. Polinsky (2018) has 229 citations (28.63 per year), while Kaiser et al. (2015) has 190 citations (17.27 per year). Other highly influential publications include Drayton (2018) with 179 citations and Ray (2016) with 170 citations.

Table 3. Top 5 most cited documents and their average and total citations

Top 5 most cited documents	Citations	
	Average per year	Total
McNally et al. (2015)	42	462
Polinsky (2018)	28.63	229
Kaiser et al. (2015)	17.27	190
Drayton (2018)	22.38	179
Ray (2016)	17	170

3.5 Bibliographic coupling

Bibliographic coupling analysis measures the conceptual similarity between studies by examining the shared references between them. This method reveals intellectual connections and thematic coherence within a research field. When two documents cite the same references, they are considered bibliographically coupled, indicating that they share a common theoretical foundation or methodological approach (Dirik et al., 2023). This approach is particularly valuable for exploring research frontiers and core conceptual frameworks in emerging or interdisciplinary

domains such as idiom studies. In the following section, bibliographic coupling of documents and authors will be provided in turn.

3.5.1 Documents

The bibliographic coupling analysis of documents was conducted on 993 publications that met the inclusion criteria of having at least one citation and being connected within the network. The results revealed the formation of 16 distinct clusters, with 22,368 links and a total connection strength of 67,973, reflecting a moderate to high level of intellectual integration across the literature (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Bibliographic coupling of documents

The publications with the highest numbers of bibliographic couplings were Kaiser (2015) with 190 citations, Polinsky (2018) with 228 citations, and McNally (2015) with 459 citations. In terms of overall connection strength, the leading works were Senaldi (2022), Cieslicka (2015), and Senaldi (2024).

3.5.2 Authors

At the author level, bibliographic coupling analysis encompassed 2,095 researchers, resulting in 42 clusters and an overall link strength of 813,860, indicating extensive conceptual intersections and shared citation practices among scholars (Figure 10). Among the top five authors with the highest number of bibliographic couplings, citation counts and overall link strengths were relatively similar. Specifically, Denny Brosbroom received 459 citations with a link strength of 606; Marie K. Deserno, 459 citations with a link strength of 606; Richard J. McNally, 3,473 link strength; Donal J. Robinaugh, 2,282 link strength; and Li Wang, 604 link strength.

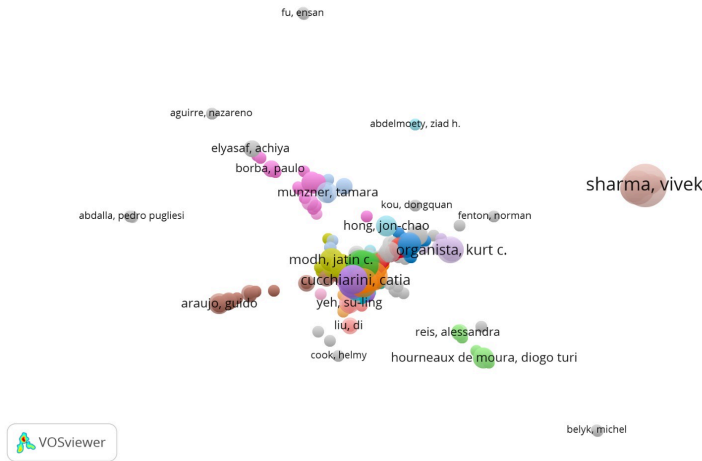


Figure 10. Bibliographic coupling of authors

Within this network, several authors stand out for their strong bibliographic linkages, indicating substantial alignment in the literature they cite. Notably, Richard J. McNally, Donald J. Robinaugh, and Li Wang exhibit the highest coupling strengths, suggesting that their work consistently draws on comparable conceptual foundations. This pattern implies that these authors contribute to related thematic domains and collectively shape the core intellectual structure of idiom research.

3.6 Co-occurrence of author keywords

Keywords are fundamental components of scientific articles that represent the core themes, areas of interest, and new developments within a field (Yan Xiang-Yun et al., 2022). By examining how frequently specific phrases appear together in the literature, the author's analysis of keyword co-occurrence enables the identification of conceptual connections. Using VOSviewer, keywords are automatically grouped into clusters that represent thematic structures and research hotspots within the field.

The analysis revealed 447 interconnected keywords that appeared at least three times across the dataset. These terms formed 20 clusters, 2,071 links, and a cumulative link strength of 2,598, indicating a well-structured, thematically diverse research field (Figure 11). Among the most frequently used keywords, “*idiom*” occurred 137 times, followed by “*phraseology*” (93), “*translation*” (51), “*figurative language*” (47), and “*metaphor*” (41). In terms of total link strength, “*idiom*” ranked highest (280), demonstrating its central role as the primary research focus, while “*phraseology*” (182), “*figurative language*” (116), “*translation*” (105), and “*metaphor*” (98) also exhibited strong interconnections.

to idiom-related studies. Secondly, the geographic distribution of research outputs reveals that the top nations in terms of publication volume and citation impact are the United States, England, the Netherlands, China, and Canada. These findings indicate a strong academic infrastructure and global collaborative networks. Türkiye's position, ranked 26th in terms of increasing scholarly engagement, indicates its growing participation in global idiom research. Thirdly, at the document level, highly cited publications such as Polinsky (2018) and McNally et al. (2015) make fundamental contributions that influence the field's theoretical and methodological approaches. Finally, the keyword co-occurrence analysis highlights the dominance of terms such as *idiom*, *phraseology*, *figurative language*, and *translation*, suggesting that idiom research is closely connected with broader inquiries into figurative meaning, phraseological studies, and applied linguistics. These findings collectively demonstrate the interdisciplinary and evolving nature of idiom scholarship.

Significant conceptual coherence throughout the subject was further demonstrated by the bibliographic coupling studies of documents and authors, which identified overlapping theoretical frameworks and common reference bases. Strong coupling clusters show that idiomatic studies remain open to new subfields such as computational linguistics and translation studies while coming together around fundamental topics in cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and education.

From a meta-scientific perspective, this study not only documents the structural patterns of existing research but also points towards future directions. Linguistic comparisons, idioms in digital discourse, and pedagogical applications in various linguistic and cultural contexts are among the underrepresented areas that could be given greater emphasis. Furthermore, strengthening international collaboration, particularly encompassing new research areas, will further enrich the diversity and impact of this field.

Finally, by providing a systematic, data-driven summary of idiom research carried out during the last ten years, this bibliometric mapping adds to the body of literature. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no bibliometric study has yet been done on idioms. This study offers important insights into the scope and development of idiom research over the past 10 years, despite several limitations detailed below. By bringing together diverse findings within a coherent framework, it lays the foundation for more focused and collaborative work in the fields of idiom studies and figurative language. Furthermore, it is an indispensable tool for academics seeking to understand the conceptual framework of this field, identify significant contributions, and explore new avenues for future research.

5. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study can be discussed in two main aspects: the process of constructing the dataset and the software employed for analysis.

Firstly, the dataset is restricted to publications indexed in the Web of Science database. Articles from other databases, such as Scopus, TRDizin, YÖKTEZ, PubMed, or EBSCO, were not included, and their inclusion could potentially influence the findings. Secondly, the analysis was conducted using VOSviewer, a free and user-friendly tool. While this software is widely used, alternative tools such as CiteSpace, Bibliometrix(R), or Litmap could be employed, and the results may differ depending on the chosen method to some extent.

Future research could benefit from using datasets from multiple databases and conducting comparative analyses across different software tools to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the field.

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