Bibliometric Trends in Intertextuality and Its Application in Literary Theory

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of intertextuality and its application within literary theory, drawing on data from the Scopus database spanning the years 1980 to 2024. Using VOSviewer, the research identifies key thematic clusters, influential scholars, citation networks, and global collaboration patterns. The analysis reveals that intertextuality remains a central and evolving concept, strongly linked to postmodernism, parody, metafiction, and reception theory, while also expanding into contemporary fields such as media studies, multimodality, and identity politics. Co-citation analysis highlights the foundational influence of theorists like Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Gérard Genette, while also uncovering interdisciplinary linkages with critical discourse analysis through scholars such as Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk. The temporal and density maps illustrate a shift from classical literary references to more socio-cultural and digital applications. Additionally, the geographical collaboration network underscores the dominance of Anglophone countries, with emerging scholarly contributions from China, Italy, and Eastern Europe. This study affirms intertextuality's sustained relevance as both a theoretical lens and a methodological tool across diverse literary and cultural contexts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of intertextuality has been pivotal in shaping the discourse of literary theory over the past five decades. First coined by Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s, intertextuality refers to the way texts are interconnected and how meaning is shaped through their interaction with other texts [1]. This theoretical framework challenged the structuralist notion of textual autonomy and emphasized the dialogic and relational nature of textual production, heavily drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of dialogism. As

literary theory increasingly embraced poststructuralist and deconstructivism paradigms in the 1970s and intertextuality became a critical lens through which scholars examined meaning, authorship, and reader response [2].

Since its inception, intertextuality has evolved from a narrowly linguistic and philosophical concept into a multidisciplinary paradigm applied across literary studies, cultural studies, media theory, and even legal and political discourse. Scholars have used it to explore how canonical and popular texts alike engage with and reinterpret preexisting

texts, thereby foregrounding the multiplicity of meanings and the instability of the text itself [3]. In literature, this has enabled a reevaluation of genre boundaries, the function of literary allusion, and the nature of literary innovation. Intertextuality is not merely a literary technique but a theoretical construct that redefines textual boundaries and authorship [4], [5].

With the proliferation of digital computational humanities and analysis in recent decades, the study of intertextuality has taken on new dimensions. Tools such as textual analysis software, stylometry, and citation mapping have enabled researchers to trace intertextual relationships at a macro scale, uncovering patterns that were previously undetectable through traditional hermeneutic methods [6]. This shift has opened opportunities to not examine individual instances intertextual reference but also to map the structural dynamics of intertextual influence across literary canons, time periods, and linguistic boundaries. Consequently, can bibliometric approach provide complementary perspective to the conceptual and interpretive frameworks traditionally used in intertextuality studies [7].

Despite the growing interest in intertextuality as a methodological and theoretical paradigm, a comprehensive understanding of the scholarly landscapeespecially in terms of its publication trends, key contributors, dominant themes, and intellectual structure-remains underdeveloped. Bibliometric analysis offers a powerful means of uncovering such patterns. It allows researchers to quantify the evolution of scholarly attention, identify influential publications and authors, and understand how intertextuality intersected with other theoretical currents such postmodernism, semiotics, narratology, and cultural theory [8], [9]. Moreover, bibliometric methods can highlight shifts in geographical and institutional centers of research, thereby contextualizing the global intellectual dynamics surrounding intertextuality.

Given these trends, it becomes imperative to apply bibliometric techniques to systematically examine how the discourse of intertextuality has developed and how it functions as a theoretical and analytical tool in literary studies. By doing so, this study seeks to reveal not only the quantity of research but also the qualitative directions in which the concept has evolved. It aims to contribute a meta-analytical perspective to the field, mapping its intellectual trajectory, identifying emergent subfields, and highlighting key scholarly networks. In this sense, bibliometric mapping becomes both a methodological intervention and a critical gesture, enabling scholars to reassess the role and scope of intertextuality within literary theory.

Although intertextuality has been widely discussed and applied in literary criticism, there is a lack of systematic, datadriven understanding of how the concept has evolved over time within academic literature. Existing studies largely focus on theoretical expositions or specific textual analyses without considering the broader intellectual and institutional patterns shaping discourse. This gap hinders scholars from gaining a macroscopic view of the field's development, including the identification of dominant themes, citation dynamics, and regional contributions. Moreover, as literary studies increasingly adopt digital and quantitative methodologies, there remains an underutilization of bibliometric tools to analyze foundational concepts such as intertextuality. Consequently, the absence of a comprehensive bibliometric overview limits the ability to critically evaluate the trajectory, relevance, and interdisciplinary reach of intertextuality in contemporary literary theory. This study aims to conduct a bibliometric analysis of academic publications on intertextuality and its application within literary theory.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative bibliometric approach to examine the scholarly discourse on intertextuality and its application in literary theory. The method was designed to provide a comprehensive

overview of the intellectual landscape surrounding intertextuality by identifying patterns, trends, and structural relationships academic literature. within bibliometric analysis included four main components: publication trend keyword co-occurrence mapping, authorship and institutional collaboration analysis, and citation/co-citation network analysis. These components were selected to collectively uncover both the diachronic development and the contemporary thematic orientation of the field.

2.1 Data Source and Search Strategy

The primary data source for this study was the Scopus database, selected for its extensive coverage of peerpublications reviewed across humanities and social sciences. Scopus was deemed appropriate due to its reliable indexing, citation tracking capabilities, and its compatibility with bibliometric analysis tools such as VOSviewer. A structured search was conducted using the kevword "intertextuality" in the title, abstract, and keywords fields. To narrow the focus to relevant scholarly works, the search was further filtered by subject area, selecting documents categorized under "Literature and Literary Theory," "Cultural Studies," and "Humanities." To ensure quality and relevance, only journal articles, book chapters, and papers were conference included, excluding editorials, notes, and book reviews. The initial search yielded over 1,000 records. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion criteria, namely, the explicit discussion of intertextuality in theoretical or applied literary contexts. A final sample of 856 documents was retained for analysis. The publication time frame spanned from 1980 to 2024, allowing the study to trace the evolution of the discourse from its early adoption to its present configurations.

2.2 Analytical Tools and Techniques

To process and visualize the bibliometric data, the study utilized VOSviewer (version 1.6.x), a widely

accepted software tool designed for constructing and interpreting bibliometric maps. The program supports a variety of analyses, including co-authorship, keyword co-occurrence, citation, bibliographic coupling, and co-citation. Each of these analyses was used to address specific dimensions of the research objectives.

1. Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

A co-occurrence map of author keywords and indexed keywords was constructed using VOSviewer's full counting method. Only terms that occurred at least five times across the dataset were included in the final visualization. This helped identify clusters frequently associated concepts, thereby revealing the thematic structure and research frontiers within discourse the intertextuality. Clusters were identified by color, while the proximity of terms indicated thematic closeness.

2. Co-authorship and Country Analysis

co-authorship network was generated explore patterns of scholarly collaboration at the author and country levels. Authors with at least three publications intertextuality were included. This analysis provided insights into the formation of academic communities and the global distribution of research output. The countries analysis revealed which country have played a central role in the development of intertextuality studies.

3. Citation Analysis

Citation analysis was performed to identify the most cited authors and documents, indicating foundational works and key influencers in the field. This was particularly important for understanding how intertextuality has been situated within broader conversations in literary theory, including semiotics, structuralism, postmodernism, and digital humanities.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

a. Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis

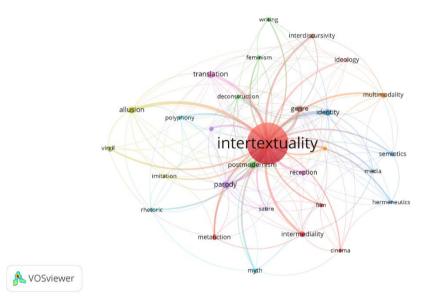


Figure 1. Network Visualization Source: Data Analysis

At the center of the network lies intertextuality, visually dominant due to its centrality and high cooccurrence frequency. This confirms that the concept serves as the primary node around which all other thematic keywords orbit. The density and variety of direct connections to other keywords signify intertextuality's wide-ranging applicability in literary studies and related fields. Its central placement suggests not only frequent use but also its role as a bridging that connects otherwise concept distinct theoretical strands. significant cluster, seen in red, connects intertextuality with concepts parody, such as postmodernism, satire, metafiction, myth, intermediality, cinema, and film. This grouping reflects the strong association of intertextuality with postmodern literary theory, where fragmentation, parody, and pastiche are central techniques. Intermediality and cinema's presence within this cluster indicates the expansion of intertextual theory into visual media and cross-platform storytelling, highlighting intertextuality's influence beyond traditional literary texts.

On the right side of the map, a blue cluster emerges around terms like semiotics, media, hermeneutics, and identity. This thematic an interpretive points to signification-oriented approach intertextuality, where scholars explore how texts generate meaning through systems of signs and cultural codes. Hermeneutics further emphasizes the interpretive nature of textual analysis, suggesting intertextuality is often examined through the lens of reader reception and meaning construction, especially media studies and narrative discourse. To the left, we find keywords like allusion, rhetoric, polyphony, imitation, and Virgil, forming a yellow and light blue cluster. This grouping indicates the classical roots of intertextual studies, rhetorical where allusion and imitation are prominent modes of textual engagement. The inclusion of Virgil as a node further emphasizes how canonical authors are central to discussions of intertextual reference, supporting historical and philological explorations. The presence polyphony, a Bakhtinian concept, connects this cluster to dialogic approaches in literary theory.

A smaller but significant green cluster links intertextuality with ideology, feminism, genre,

writing, translation, and interdiscursivity. These terms point toward critical theory and sociocultural approaches to intertextuality, wherein texts are not only dialogic but also ideological and political constructs. The presence of feminism and translation suggests intertextuality is being employed to interrogate power dynamics language, authorship, and global textual circulation. This cluster highlights the use of intertextuality as a critical tool to examine marginality, voice, and textual ethics.

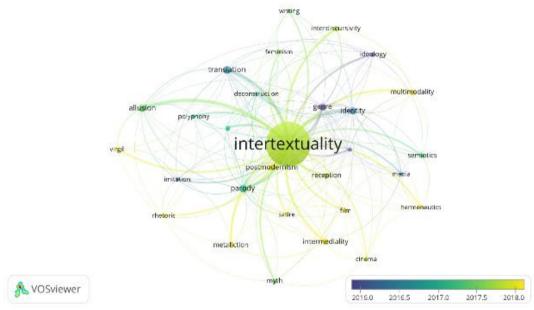


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization Source: Data Analysis

This visualization represents a temporal keyword co-occurrence of intertextuality-related research, where the color gradient (from dark blue to yellow) indicates the average publication year of documents in which keywords appear. Central to the map is intertextuality, shown in green, signifying that it has been consistently discussed around the mid-point of the dataset (approximately 2017). visualization reveals not only the thematic structure of the field but also

its temporal evolution, showing how specific topics have emerged or declined over time. On the left side of the map, keywords like allusion, *imitation, rhetoric, polyphony,* and Virgil appear in darker green or blue tones, indicating that these classical and philological themes were more prominent in earlier works (circa 2016). These keywords represent a more traditional strand of intertextual research focused on classical literature, rhetorical techniques, and historical referentiality. Their earlier temporal color suggests that while foundational, they are no longer at the center of more recent scholarly attention, having given way to newer theoretical developments. In contrast, terms such as *identity, multimodality, ideology, genre,* and *media* appear in lighter green to yellow shades, suggesting that they are emerging or recently intensifying themes in the discourse on intertextuality. The increasing prominence of

multimodality and media points to a growing scholarly interest in how intertextuality operates in digital, audiovisual, and transmedia environments. Meanwhile, terms like ideology and identity highlight a shift toward sociocultural and critical theory approaches, reflecting broader trends in literary studies that intersect with feminism, postcolonialism, and cultural studies.

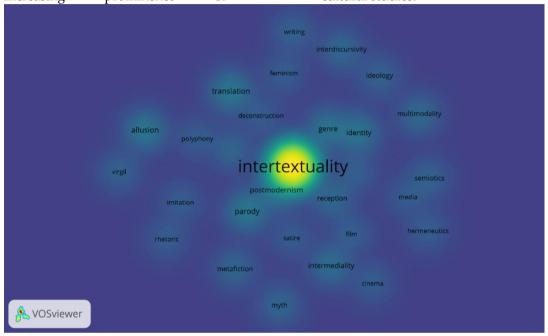


Figure 3. Density Visualization Source: Data Analysis

The heatmap visualization provides a density-based overview of most intensively discussed themes in the field of intertextuality. At the core of the map, intertextuality appears as the brightest and most concentrated node, signifying its dominant presence and central role across the scholarly corpus. Surrounding it are other highly relevant concepts postmodernism, parody, genre, reception, and intermediality, all depicted in lighter shades, indicating frequent co-occurrence and consistent scholarly interest. These closely tied

terms reflect the central theoretical frameworks and applications through intertextuality is often which explored, particularly in discussions narrative structure, textual hybridity, and media convergence. As we move outward from the core, the density of keywords decreases, indicated by cooler shades of blue. Terms such as allusion, rhetoric, virgil, and polyphony are positioned at the map's periphery, suggesting that while they remain thematically connected to intertextuality, they occur less frequently in the recent discourse.

b. Co-Authorship and Country Analysis

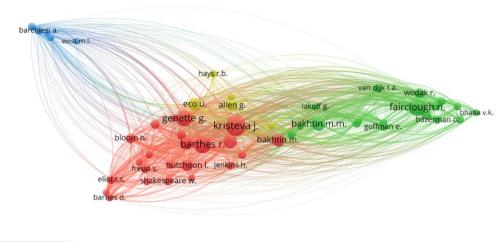




Figure 4. Author Visualization Source: Data Analysis

The co-citation network visualization highlights the intellectual structure of intertextuality studies by mapping frequently cited authors and their interrelationships. Central figures such as Kristeva J., Barthes R., and Genette G. (marked in red) form the core of the literary and semiotic theory cluster, reflecting their foundational influence intertextuality discourse. Adjacent in yellow and red hues are thinkers like Bakhtin M.M., Eco U., and Hutcheon

L., who bridge literary theory with broader cultural and narrative frameworks. On the right, the green scholars cluster represents Fairclough N., van Dijk T.A., and Wodak R., indicating a strong link to critical discourse analysis sociolinguistics. The blue cluster at the far left, featuring figures like Barchiesi A. and West M.L., suggests a peripheral yet connected body of classical or historical textual scholarship.

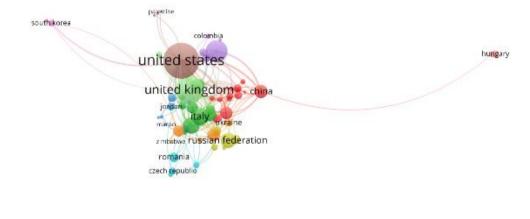


Figure 5. Country Visualization Source: Data Analysis

This map displays the

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geographical collaboration network

in intertextuality research, highlighting countries that have significantly contributed to the discourse and their patterns of coauthorship. The United States and the Kingdom dominate network, forming the central hubs of global collaboration, as shown by their large node sizes and dense linkages to multiple countries. They are closely connected to other key contributors such as China, Italy, and

the Russian Federation, which form part of a tight, interlinked core. Peripheral countries like South Korea and Hungary appear on the outskirts, with fewer but targeted international collaborations. The visualization underscores the field's concentration Western and Anglophone academia. while also revealing growing involvement from Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Global South.

c. Citation Analysis

Table 1. Most Cited Article

Citations	Author and Year	Title
844	[10]	Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse
773	[11]	Genre, Intertextuality, and Social Power
643	[12]	Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis
415	[13]	(Re)reading the landscape
328	[14]	Axes of evals: Token versus type interdiscursivity
312	[15]	Intertextuality in critical discourse analysis
285	[16]	Interdiscursivity in professional communication
254	[17]	A World of Others' Words: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Intertextuality
244	[18]	A communicative theory of the firm: Developing an alternative perspective on intra-organizational power and stakeholder relationships
234	[19]	The social circulation of media discourse and the mediation of communities

Source: Scopus, 2025

3.2 Discussion

The findings from this provide bibliometric study comprehensive understanding of how the concept of intertextuality has evolved and been deployed across literary theory and related disciplines. As the keyword cooccurrence map reveals, intertextuality remains a highly central and generative concept, embedded within a diverse constellation of theoretical concerns. Its frequent co-occurrence with terms such as postmodernism, genre, parody, reception, and intermediality indicates that the discourse surrounding intertextuality is not static but continually engaging with evolving literary and cultural paradigms. The dense connections among these terms highlight how intertextuality serves as both a method of reading and a theoretical framework for understanding how texts derive meaning in relation to one another.

One of the most striking insights the close association between is intertextuality and postmodern literary theory. Concepts like metafiction, satire, parody, and myth, which cluster tightly around intertextuality, reaffirm its role as critical tool in interpreting the fragmented, self-referential, hybridized textualities that characterize postmodern narratives. This finding is consistent with previous scholarship that emphasizes intertextuality's importance in identifying the mechanics of literary pastiche and genre subversion postmodernism (Hutcheon, 1988). Moreover, the presence of film, cinema,

and intermediality signals a transmedia expansion of intertextual analysis, showing that scholars increasingly study intertextual phenomena beyond print literature and into digital, audiovisual, and multimedia narratives.

temporal The map further enhances our understanding of the field's evolution by indicating when specific gained scholarly attention. Classical concepts such as allusion, imitation, rhetoric, and references to canonical authors like Virgil Shakespeare are shown in cooler tones (circa 2016), suggesting their earlier prominence in intertextuality studies. These terms likely reflect a traditional philological approach that focused on literary influence and source studies, a mode of analysis that predated the poststructuralist redefinition intertextuality by Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes. In contrast, newer terms such as identity, multimodality, and media appear in yellow tones, suggesting a shift in focus toward socio-cultural dimensions and digital textual practices. This change indicates that scholars now emphasize not just textual relationships, but also how intertextuality intersects with contemporary concerns such as representation, ideology, and digital communication.

The visualization heatmap reinforces this pattern by showing the densest thematic activity around intertextuality, postmodernism, and parody, confirming their status as the conceptual core of the field. However, the declining density in peripheral areas, such as polyphony, translation, and rhetoric, implies a growing differentiation in scholarly interests. While these themes remain relevant, they are no longer the driving forces of the discourse. Instead, more recent foci such as genre and reception shift suggest a audience-centered and narrative-centered analysis. This aligns with broader movements in literary studies, particularly the growing interest in reader-response criticism, narratology, and media studies, all of which frame the text not as an isolated artifact but as part of a complex communicative and interpretive network.

Equally important are the insights gained from the co-citation network, which highlights the intellectual genealogy of intertextuality research. Central figures such as Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Gérard Genette dominate the red cluster, reinforcing their foundational role in theorizing intertextuality from a semiotic and poststructuralist standpoint. Kristeva's formulation of intertextuality as a dialogic process in which every text is a mosaic of quotations, and Barthes' critique of authorial sovereignty, have deeply influenced the ways scholars conceptualize textual relationships. Genette's later contributions, particularly his theory of transtextuality, expanded lexicon classification the and intertextual phenomena, providing useful tools for textual typology and structural analysis.

Surrounding this core is a transitional cluster that includes thinkers such as Umberto Eco, M.M. Bakhtin, and Linda Hutcheon, whose works bridge literary theory with cultural studies, aesthetics, and reception theory. Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and polyphony, for anticipate many of instance, the intertextual concerns formalized Kristeva and Barthes. Hutcheon's writings on parody and historiographic metafiction further demonstrate political and ethical dimensions of intertextuality, particularly postmodern contexts. These thinkers form intellectual nexus that links intertextuality with broader discourses on meaning, identity, and ideology.

Interestingly, the green cluster in the co-citation map reveals a parallel but distinct trajectory: the integration of intertextual analysis within critical discourse studies. Here, authors such as Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak dominate, showing that intertextuality has also become methodological tool in analyzing political rhetoric, institutional discourse, and communication. This finding confirms that intertextuality is no longer confined to literary theory but has been successfully applied to real-world texts, including news articles, policy and online documents, media. highlights the methodological versatility of intertextuality and its ability to inform textual analysis both close sociolinguistic critique.

Geographically, the collaboration illustrates the dominance Anglophone countries, most notably the United States and the United Kingdom, in producing and disseminating intertextuality research. These countries not only generate the largest volume of scholarship but also act as central nodes in global collaboration networks. prominence of countries like China, Italy, and the Russian Federation within tightly knit clusters indicates growing scholarly interest and contributions from non-Western contexts, suggesting diversification in the epistemological and cultural bases of intertextuality studies. However, some nations, such as Hungary South Korea, appear isolated, indicating either a niche specialization or limited international integration. This geographic disparity implies that while intertextuality is a global concept, its academic infrastructure is still concentrated in a few dominant regions.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that intertextuality remains a vibrant and multifaceted field of inquiry, with strong theoretical roots and expansive interdisciplinary branches. The field has successfully evolved from its early focus on classical literary references and structuralist analysis to embrace contemporary concerns such as digital media, identity politics, and ideological critique. The continued centrality of foundational theorists suggests a stable core, but the emergence of new themes

and cross-disciplinary applications indicates that intertextuality is not static, it is reflexive, responsive, and generative. As literary studies increasingly engage with transmedia narratives, global cultural flows, and multimodal texts, intertextuality is likely to remain a critical conceptual tool for both interpretation and critique.

Nevertheless, the field faces several challenges. One is the potential dilution of the concept itself: intertextuality becomes more broadly applied, there is a risk that it may lose its analytical precision. Another is the uneven global distribution of scholarship, which raises questions about whose texts, traditions, and theories are most visible in the academic discourse. Future research would benefit from incorporating underrepresented literary traditions and expanding the methodological toolkit to include machine learning, corpus linguistics, and computational humanities approaches to further enrich intertextual analysis. Moreover, greater collaboration between scholars from the Global South and Global North could lead to a more inclusive and diversified understanding of how intertextuality functions across cultures and media.

4. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric analysis of intertextuality within literary theory reveals a dynamic and evolving field rooted in foundational poststructuralist thought yet continuously expanding across interdisciplinary domains. The central role of theorists such as Kristeva, Barthes, and Genette underscores the enduring influence of semiotic and structural frameworks, while the emergence of themes like multimodality, identity, and ideology reflects the field's responsiveness to contemporary cultural and media environments. The integration of intertextuality into critical discourse analysis media studies demonstrates methodological versatility beyond traditional contexts. Furthermore, literary

geographical mapping shows a concentration of scholarly activity in Anglophone countries, but with increasing global contributions from regions such as Asia and Eastern Europe. Overall, the findings affirm that intertextuality remains a vital conceptual and analytical tool, enabling scholars to explore the layered relationships between texts, authors, readers, and cultural contexts in an increasingly interconnected academic landscape.

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