Hungarian onomastic research has long-standing traditions in the exploration of a body of place names within given, small geographical units. The linguistic–onomastic studies of such complex corpora of names have made it possible to make more general theoretical observations as well.

In compliance with this tradition, on the one hand, I made efforts to compile the corpus of field names of a given settlement, Hajdúnánás, through the processing of all the available sources, working in archives and on the field. Based on this register of place names, I discuss theoretical issues that emerged during the collection of this body of names, and others that have been little discussed in Hungarian onomastics up to this point.

First, terminological issues are addressed in the paper, that are related to the expressions used in earlier onomastic works: names of vineyard slopes, place names, geographical names, field names, periphery names or microtoponyms.

The name usage and onomastic source value of the sources containing field names (maps and perambulation documents) are also outlined, together with a discussion of the methodological problems of field work and place name collection from spoken language, and a description of the methodology of the current collecting process. On the basis of the observations made during this field work, I established that in the case of settlements with a large area of peripheral fields, it is rather the people being in connection with a given area of the fields that can be considered as a single name community, that is, the study of a settlement as a system of place names is basically the study of all of the users’ knowledge of these names altogether.

A peculiar phenomenon of the modern Hungarian place name system, name clustering, is discussed in detail. On the one hand, the structural characteristics of a special group of name clusters, name families having been developed from the names of wasted, disappeared mediæval settlements, are described; on the other hand, the applicability of name clusters in onomastics and settlement history is calculated through a concrete example.

Finally, the results of microstudies on two name types, water names and hill names are presented. These studies are structurally oriented and they also investigate the propensity of the names to change. They are intended to make future comparative onomastic research possible.
In the fifth, closing chapter of the dissertation the register containing the field names of the studied settlement, Hajdúnánás is published. This comprises 5475 name variants of 2406 natural objects in a dictionary-entry format. Data coming from historical sources (manuscript and land-register maps, records of general assemblies, documents of witch hunts, censuses etc.) is the basis of the corpus of names: more than 200 sources were consulted for it to be completed. The corpus thus compiled was the basis for the collecting field work from the spoken language, the fruit of which is also contained by the register.

The framework for the description of the studied phenomena is ISTVÁN HOFFMANN’s place name typology, but certain aspects of name sociology were also taken into consideration during the study. I hope that the here addressed issues will serve as a starting point for future research to other branches of science (historical studies, archaeology etc.) through interdisciplinarity.