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The Current State and Perspectives of Onomastic Terminology

Research and every presentation of new scientific knowledge require a precise, stable and correct terminology. At the same time, terminology represents one of the goals of onomastic and linguistic research, as well as all research, because it is the means to disseminating knowledge. The development of the terminology depends on the development of the scientific discipline and on the term and object knowledge and this causes divergence and the creation of new terms which then become established and begin to be increasingly used. On the other hand, efforts aimed at convergence also appear in order to ensure comprehensibility, i.e. the need for unification and coalescence in vacillating practice, when, for example, one of two terms for the same object is abandoned on the basis of certain fundamental criteria for the creation of terminology.

The significance ascribed to onomastic terminology is also borne out by the fact that works which have a wider primary focus or are even focussed on a different area entirely also concern themselves with this terminology. It was also the subject of attention in the international onomastic encyclopaedia, Namenforschung/Name Studies/Les noms propres (ZGUSTA 1996).

The establishment of a special onomastic committee at the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS), whose goal would be to compile an international handbook of the used onomastic terms and their definitions, was proposed at the 21st International Congress of the Onomastic Sciences in Uppsala in 2002 in the interests of achieving simpler orientation within the individual national onomastic terminologies and also with the goal of achieving the mutual coordination of the used terms among individual languages and onomastic schools, but always with a view to the existing usage and with respect for the right to pluralism (HARVALÍK 2005a). This terminological group, which works at the ICOS Board of Directors, was established at a meeting of the ICOS Board of Directors in Prague in 2004 (26th–27th March) and it currently has 20 members who represent the individual languages, countries, regions and onomastic schools.

The causes and genesis of the preparations for the compilation of an international onomastic terminology which culminated in the creation of the ICOS terminological group and the group's working procedures along with the problems associated with the differences in the onomastic terminologies of different countries and their differing degrees of elaboration, which the committee members had to face, have been characterised in a number of studies

(HARVALÍK 2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2008, 2014). The list of the key terms and definitions in English, French and German which has been prepared to date is available online at the ICOS website (https://icosweb.net/ drupal/terminology).

Some of the visions of the international terminology group include, among others, the processing of more terms, the need to focus on the theory and methodology of onomastics and on the terms from literary onomastics, the creation of other language versions of the set of key terms and their definitions, the achievement of correspondence between international and domestic terms, the elimination of term ambiguities. A wider team of experts and correspondents from different countries, who will prepare the national versions of the terminology, should be created in the future. It is therefore the task of the individual national onomastic committees to translate the basic list of key onomastic terms which is published on the ICOS website into their national languages in a way which ensures that the original definition is preserved as accurately as possible. If a specific term is understood or used differently and/or the definition of the terms in the official ICOS languages differs from the definitions which are common in the individual national languages, these divergences will be resolved in the form of comments in the additional notes for the individual terms.

The individual national versions of the list of key onomastic terms will be published on the ICOS website. Work is currently underway on the Macedonian version (Meri Iosifovska), while the Czech (Milan Harvalík), Hungarian (Andrea Bölcskei, Mariann Slíz, Tamás Farkas), Polish (Artur Gałkowski, Urszula Bijak) and Slovak (Iveta Valentová) versions are already finished.

There has long been a strong emphasis on building a highly uniform system of onomastic terminology in Slavic onomastics.

Slavic onomastic terminology had two levels of development. The first period took place from the 1960s to the 1980s. The task of preparing a standardised Slavic linguistic terminology was set as early as at the 4th International Congress of Slavists in Moscow in 1958. Onomasticians also responded to this idea and a decision was taken to unify the Slavic onomastic terminology, which had been characterised by instability and ambiguity, at the 1st Slavic onomastic conference in Krakow in 1959. The aforementioned instability and ambiguity were not only prevalent in Slavic onomastic terminology, but also in non-Slavic languages and in the use of international terms.

Jan Svoboda, who had been charged with preparing the proposal for the unification of the onomastic terminology, compiled the system of the basic Czech onomastic terms (SVOBODA 1960). The members of the individual national onomastic committees discussed this very well-prepared system of onomastic terms. J. Svoboda published the comments of some linguists and

the principles for the further work on the onomastic terminology in 1961.[1] Once the comments had been incorporated into the work and terms had been added in other Slavic and non-Slavic languages which were concerned with Slavic onomastics, the official Slavic onomastic terminology (with German equivalent terms) was published as *Základní systém a terminologie slovanské onomastiky* (The Basic System and Terminology of Slavic Onomastics) in *Zpravodaj Místopisné komise ČSAV* (Bulletin of the Topographic Board of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences) in 1973 (SVOBODA et al. 1973). Another handbook of Slavic onomastic terminology entitled *Osnoven sistem i terminologija na slovenskata onomastika* (The Basic System and Terminology of Slavic Onomastics) (SVOBODA et al. 1983) involved a newer version of the original publication, but it was only updated minimally. For example, the term *exonym* was added, but not *endonym*. On the other hand, the term *geonym* was removed, for example. The terminological system was conceived in order to enable the system to remain open and to ensure the possibility of supplementing it in the future in connection with any future developments in onomastics.

The reason why some terms from the area of onomastic theory and methodology were not included into the handbooks was that many of the principles of theoretical onomastics were still being shaped in the 1960s and 1970s and the handbooks in question therefore focussed more on the formal aspect of the terms rather than the conceptual one. They were also influenced by an effort to achieve an international character for the terms which significantly resonated with the entire expert terminology as a consequence of the need for scientific communication on an international scale.

The second stage of development began in the 1990s and it is still ongoing. The onomastic terminology not only expanded in the scientific onomastic community, but also among the non-onomastic community where it has continued to develop and deepen. The personalities of Slavic onomastics, whose work is known both at home and abroad, were formed.

The status and development of onomastic terminology in the Slavic languages has been collectively characterised in the encyclopaedia of *Słowiańska onomastyka* (Slavic Onomastics) (2002–2003). In addition to the aforementioned *Osnoven sistem i terminologija na slovenskata onomastika,* the Russian terminology was lexicographically presented in book form in N. V. PODOLSKAYA's dictionary (1978[1], 1988[2]), while most recently the Ukrainian onomastic terminology has been published in the *Slovnyk ukrainskoi onomastichnoi terminolohii* (Dictionary of Ukrainian Onomastic Terminology) (2012) by the authors DMYTRO BUCHKO and NATALIA TKACHOVA. The basic Polish onomastic terms,

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[1] V. BLANÁR (1962) also published the genesis of the work on the Slavic onomastic terminology, its characteristics and his comments on J. Svoboda's proposal.

which have been compiled by ARTUR GAŁKOWSKI (2012), are available online on the website of the Commission for Slavic Onomastics at the International Committee of Slavists,[2] where there is also a selected bibliography of the works concerned with onomastic terminology.[3] A number of other contributions dedicated to the problems of onomastic terminology in the individual Slavic languages have been published in the form of articles and studies.

The more rapid development of onomastics also caused the more hectic development of the onomastic terminology which has been accompanied by individual creativity, divergence and fluctuation, the result of which has led to a certain confusion and loss of certainty which has once again begun to manifest itself in the need for unification and efforts to achieve it. V. BLANÁR also pointed to the need to supplement onomastic terminology in association with the development of onomastic theory, with questions of the content (semantic) aspects of proper names, with the area of the system-forming elements in the onymic system, including the definition of their onymic validity, and with the dimensions of the onymic system in the first part of the encyclopaedia *Słowiańska onomastyka* (Slavic Onomastics) (2002: 84–85). He stated terms which were absent in these handbooks (e.g. *linguistic status of the proper name, onomastic status of the proper name, onymic (proprial) semantics, naming model, identification/differentiation of the proper name, referential identification, presuppositional identification, dimensions of the onymic system, average anthroponymic system*, *sociolinguistic aspect of onomastics*) as well as those, which no longer corresponded to the latest state of knowledge.

Some of the terms did not pass into common usage after the publication of the Slavic onomastic terminological handbooks (e.g. *pseudoandronym, pseudo-gynym*), while others began to be used in different contexts, underwent their own development and changed their contents (e.g. the Slovak term *terénny názov* (lit. 'terrain name') was originally used as the equivalent of the international term *oronym,* but its meaning has gradually shifted and in contemporary works it is used as the Slovak synonym of the term *anoikonym*). The development of the discipline and the individual onomastic schools, the establishment of new theories, the interdisciplinary nature of onomastics, international cooperation, individual creativity and non-standard classification criteria and analytical and synthetic approaches when processing onymic material caused changes in the terminological systems and the creation of new both suitable and less suitable terms. It was not easy to unify the Slavic and German onomastic terminologies

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[2] http://onomastyka.uni.lodz.pl/strona-glowna/terminologia-polska (cited 19.11.2016.)

[3] http://onomastyka.uni.lodz.pl/strona-glowna/publikacje (cited 20.4.2016.). It is also accessible on the ICOS website (http://icosweb.net/drupal/terminology), within the framework of the file ICOS-Terms-en.pdf (cited 20.4.2016.)

(since both *Základní systém a terminologie slovanské onomastiky* (SVOBODA et al. 1973) and *Osnoven sistem i terminologija na slovenskata onomastika* (SVOBODA et al. 1983) comprise onomastic terms in eleven Slavic languages and in German), let alone to do so at a much wider international level, because the terminological apparatus is dependent upon many factors such as the status and level of development of the onomastics in the given country, the theoretical and methodological starting points of the different onomastic schools and the individual scientific personalities and the scope of the collected onymic material and its analysis and subsequent synthetic processing.
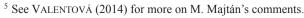
All of these circumstances have led the members of the Slovak Onomastic Commission (SOC) to rework the Slovak onomastic terminology. The SOC organised three working meetings with Slovak and Czech onomasticians, the aim of which was to become acquainted with the state of the international and Slavic onomastic terminology and with the current terminological problems and to formulate the principles and concept for the preparation of the Slovak onomastic terminology. The Slovak onomastic terminology is being prepared in two phases. The first phase involves the compilation of an electronic database which represents an inventory of the Slovak onomastic terms. The material in the Slavic handbook from 1983 has been used as the starting point and the basic list of terms, because, despite the development which has occurred since its publication, it still constitutes the most advanced system of onomastic terminology on to date on a global scale. Taxonomical terms, which designate types of proper names, and terms which are associated with the state of the theory are being processed. The digital database alphabetically records all the onomastic terms which have appeared to date in Slovak onomastics, which is in line with R. ŠRÁMEK's (2003: 38) recommendation that the dictionary of onomastic terms should be an open inventory of whatever is being used which would respect the state in which onomastics finds itself. The processing of terms, which are no longer used, as well as contemporary terms depicts the way that things have developed. The individual terms are recorded in digital forms which contain the entries: *term, synonyms, superior term, origin of term, equivalents in other languages, definition, examples, bibliography, notes* and *discussion.* Synonyms and partial synonyms for terms will have a separate digital card with a "click link" option. The statement of the superior term indicates the terminological system. In the case of the equivalents in other languages, terms in English, German and Hungarian are listed in addition to the terms in the Slavic languages; other languages are under consideration for the future. The English equivalents are mainly based on the terminology which has already been processed and published on the ICOS website. The requirement for Hungarian equivalents was mainly based on the needs of the Slovak linguists from the Research Institute of the Slovaks in Békéscsaba, Hungary,

with whom the Ľ. Štúr Linguistic Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences is cooperating on the onomastic project.[4] Cooperation with onomasticians from other countries is anticipated when entering the equivalents in other languages. In the future, it will also be possible to enter equivalents in other non-Slavic languages. The *notes* column is used for a commentary on the term, for example any differing understanding of the term in a different language or languages, the suitability – unsuitability of the term or its formation along with justification as to why it is unsuitable or has been unsuitably formed, any limitations to its use, the accepted usage in Slovak onomastics or in other onomastic schools, older synonymous terms, whether or not the term is still used, the period when it was used, how its content has shifted, who first used the term, etc. This involves an acceptance of the comments of M. Majtán, who emphasised the depiction of the development and stability of the terms and the need for the accepted usage and comparability of new terms and for the Slovak terminology to gel with the Slavic and world terminologies. He proposed that everything which had been used should be depicted when processing the terminology, because terminology is also subject to development, but he emphasised that it would be necessary to decide what to prefer and also to consider the recommendations of some newly formed terms (for example *literaronym, orohodonym, socioorohodonym, genderoanthroponomastics, skionym*) which have appeared in Slovak onomastic literature. These are often the creations of the aforementioned individual creativity and they usually only appear in the work or works of a single author.[5] However, some have proved themselves to be necessary and they have come into common usage (for example, *logonym*). The most important works (monographs, studies) where the term has been used or the work in which the term was defined for the first time are listed in the *bibliography* column. The *discussion* field is used for the other members of the SOC to make comments on the processing of the given term.

The advantage of the primarily digital processing in the form of a database is also the option of subsequently adding terms and the updating of the contents of the individual database entries in association with further developments in onomastics. The Slovak onomastic terminological database will be accessible on the website of the Ľ. Štúr Linguistics Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences as part of the Slovak terminological database of the Slovak National

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[4] The project involves research into the origins of the surnames of families of Slovak origin in Hungary. At present, the first output is the collective monograph entitled *Čabianske priezviská* (Surnames in Békéscsaba) (2015).

[5] See VALENTOVÁ (2014) for more on M. Majtán's comments.

Corpus which contains similarly conceived databases with terms from other fields.[6]

In the second phase, a systematic codifying handbook will be compiled in digital and book form on the basis of the database. It will only contain the recommended terms in acceptance of M. Majtán's recommendation that the prepared Slovak onomastic terminological handbook should not only be informative, but also normative. The compilation of this handbook should be based on the main principles set out by J. SVOBODA which were also used during the conception of the two onomastic handbooks (SVOBODA et al. 1973: 10, 1983: 12–13): "1. Do not deviate from the international terminology in the basic terminology and consistently state *-onym* (*antrop-, top-,* etc.) for one proper name, *-onymy* for a set of proper names and *-onomastics* for the discipline involved in researching them. 2. Pay attention to the conformity with the linguistic and geographical terminology. 3. Do not overload the terminology with special terms for all types of objects (urbanonyms, limnonyms, etc.); some newly established terms (bionyms, abionyms) usually only have the character of generic designations." On the other hand, it will also be necessary to consider criteria such as common usage, stability, comparability, the correctness of the term's formation and whether or not the term has been accepted by the scientific fraternity when assessing the selection of the terms. The terminological system will also be able to be highlighted using a graphic computer program. The most important principle of the systematic division should mainly be the relationship to the object.

The researchers involved in the project have divided the individual terminological areas and are entering the given terms into the digital forms.[7] Of the taxonomical terms which designate the types of proper names according to named objects, some terms from anthroponomastics and toponomastics have so far been elaborated, while it is mainly Vincent Blanár's terms, which arise from his theory of proper names (e.g. *functional member of the proper name, onomastic status of the proper name, linguistic status of the proper name,*

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[6] For more information about its characteristics, concept and the individual terminological databases, see https://terminologickyportal.sk/, https://terminologickyportal.sk/wiki/Hlavn%C3%A1_str%C3%A1nka, https://terminologickyportal.sk/wiki/Kateg%C3%B3ria:Kateg%C3%B3rie.

[7] The thematic areas which are being processed by the individual project researchers in their current composition: *oikonymy, urbanonymy* (J. HLADKÝ, A. ZÁVODNÝ), *anoikonymy, literary onymy* (J. KRŠKO), *chrematonymy* (P. ODALOŠ, A. GAŁKOWSKI), *anthroponymy, general terms of V. Blanár* (I. VALENTOVÁ). The editing and addition of equivalents in other languages: J. BAUKO – Hungarian equivalents, A. GAŁKOWSKI – Polish equivalents, M. HARVALÍK – Czech and English equivalents.

content model, onymic motivational model), which have so far been processed from the terms which are associated with the state of the theory.

Problematic terms and definitions are discussed at the working meetings of Slovak, Czech and lately also Polish and Croatian onomasticians (VALENTOVÁ 2014, 2015).

The area of processing onomastic terminology is complicated and it will continue to require the discussion of many other ambiguous terms and their inclusion in the terminological system, as well as any other conceptual principles. The prerequisite is the continuation of the processing of the Slovak onomastic terminology within the framework of the independent grant task.

The vision of the future involves the processing of parallel onomastic terminological databases in other languages while taking into account the specific characteristics of the national onomastics and onomastic schools and with the option of "clicking" on links (using the principle of Wikipedia from a technical point of view) to the individual databases via the equivalents in other languages. At present, databases of English (M. HARVALÍK), Czech (M. HARVALÍK) and Polish (A. GAŁKOWSKI) onomastic terminology are being prepared in cooperation with the Slovak National Corpus, while discussions on the preparation of Croatian (A. FRANČIĆ, A. ČILAŠ ŠIPRAGA) and Hungarian (J. BAUKO in cooperation with Hungarian onomasticians) databases are currently ongoing. The simple and commonly used method of searching in digital media will enable the user to easily find the definitions of the individual terms in the given languages, which would remove many of the misunderstandings caused by different ways of understanding certain terms and would assist those beginning in onomastics to orient themselves in the terminology, including on an international scale, and would teach them to use the correct and appropriate terms. The digital corpus of onomastic terminology would play a significant role during the translation of onomastic publications and would also be of assistance to other linguists.

In this way, the compilation of the Slavic and possibly also non-Slavic onomastic terminology would take into account the specific nature of the terms in the individual languages and onomastic schools and show the convergences in the individual national onomastic terminologies, as well as any divergences where it will be necessary to look for consensus in the sense of synergy and integration when unifying both the Slavic and international terminologies. The creation of the digital corpus of onomastic terminology would form a good basis for updating and modifying the system of Slavic onomastic terminology and for the formation of a system of international onomastic terminology.

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Abstract

Recent years have brought an intensive interest in onomastic terminology, which is closely connected with the development of onomastic as such and, especially, with the general theory of onomastics.

The first part of the paper briefly discusses the activities of the Terminology Group of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences and its efforts to unify the basic onomastic terminology. Further, the paper informs about the contemporary state of Slavic onomastic terminology and about its main features and problems.

In the next part, the authors characterise the latest project of the Slovak Onomastic Commission at the Ľ. Štúr Linguistic Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. The aim of this project is the alphabetical and systematic processing of taxonomic terms that designate particular kinds of proper names along with the processing of terms connected with general onomastic theory in a digital database.

A possible further step would be creating parallel digital databases of onomastic terms in both Slavic and non-Slavic languages and interconnecting them. Such a project would form a springboard for the updating of the system of Slavic onomastic terminology and for unifying international onomastic terminology.

Keywords: Onomastics, terminology, digital database