THE SPECIFICITY OF ROMANIAN COMPOUND ANTHROPONYMS CONTAINING PREPOSITIONS

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Abstract:

In the present paper we propose to analyze the occurrences of the prepositions in the Romanian anthroponymic structures in relation to the situation in other Romance languages: French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Our research aims to establish the typology of the anthroponyms, focussing on prepositional occurrences in those onomastic structures and to classify the compound anthroponyms into several structural patterns, taking into account their components (the lexical – grammatical classes the preposition combines with) and the place of the preposition in that structure (in initial or medial position) etc.

Starting from an inventory of compound anthroponyms containing prepositions, the present research seeks to highlight the specificity of Romanian anthroponomy: a great number of prepositions functioning as anthroponymic components as well as a wide range of combinations at the level of structure.

Keywords:

Preposition, onomastics, anthroponyms, compounds, Romanian language

I. Preliminaries

The occurrence of the preposition in anthroponymic structures is only briefly discussed in the literature on this topic. The purpose of the present paper is to realize an inventory of names of persons which have in their composition one or more prepositions and to establish the role of the preposition in the phrase that it belongs to, starting from its place in that structure. Therefore, the main aim of this article is to analyze the preposition as part of compound anthroponymic structures in the Romanian language in relation to the presence of the preposition in anthroponyms of other Romance languages: French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese.

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II. Defining the concepts of *preposition, onomastics, anthroponyms*

Prepositions make up a lexical-grammatical class which has a connecting role at the level of the simple sentence, establishing relationships of dependency between a subordinate term and its regent. The preposition is generally mainly acknowledged for its syntactic role and much less for its semantic aspects, since they are not so obvious in the case of this class of words. In addition, certain prepositions occur as formative elements in compounds.

Onomastics is a controversial issue among the linguists, especially from the viewpoint of the different meanings of this term. Thus, some linguists define *onomastics* as the study of place names, called *toponyms*, and names of people known as *anthroponyms*[1]. Besides the two mentioned onomastic categories, N. A. Constantinescu includes the class of "*the proper names of other living beings, zoonyms*"[2]. Moreover, according to other sources, onomastics includes proper names of celestial objects (*astronyms*), mythological things (*mitonyms*), watercourses (*hydronyms*), mountains (*oronyms*), the names of literary works, companies or institutions etc.

Enciclopedia Limbii Române does not define the term *onomastics*, although it mentions it in the definition of certain onomastic categories. In this research paper we use the narrow sense of the term, i.e. its reference to all proper names of persons associated to *antroponymy*.

III. Typology and prepositional occurrences in anthroponymic compounds.

Contrastivity between Romanian and other Romance languages

Anthroponyms are characterized by a varied typology: there are individual anthroponyms first names, i.e. Christian names, surnames, appellatives (nicknames, bynames, pseudonyms) and collective anthroponyms (denoting the referent's inclusion into a certain family or social group)[3]. On the structure of anthroponyms, in *Enciclopedia Limbii Române* it states that composed anthroponyms are rarer than derivatives or simple forms: they are hardly found with first names and they are relatively well represented with surnames and nicknames.[4]

First names / Christian names, hypocoristics

In Romanian, first names / Christian names don't contain prepositional structures. This statement comes from the fact that there are no

[1] See Al. Graur, *Nume de persoane*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1965, p. 5.
[2] Cf. N. A. Constantinescu, *Dicţionar onomastic romînesc*, Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romîne, 1963, p. IX.
[3] *Enciclopedia limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2001, p.49.
[4] *Ibidem*.

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prepositional compounds registered in the dictionaries dealing with these types of anthroponyms. In *Dictionar enciclopedic al numelor de botez*[5], Tatiana Petrache makes some clarifications on the etymology and meaning of Christian names, the list including simple, derived or compound forms, among which there is not even a situation with a preposition as a constitutive morpheme. Moreover, there are not registered any onomastic structures with prepositions in specialized dictionaries: *Dicţionar de onomastică*[6], *Mică enciclopedie onomastică*[7], *Dicţionar onomastic*[8].

In *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice* there are very few compound names, of which only one contains a preposition, which is represented by a Christian name in Portuguese: *João de Deus*.[9]

Surnames

Surnames are used especially in the official denomination to form ***full names***, together with first names, but they also take part in "*the formation of popular and familiar names*"[10]. In the article *Onomasticonul românesc actual: structură, surse formative, registre funcţionale*, Ion Toma refers to the existence of some pseudonyms among certain Romanian names, "*nicknames chosen by their bearers and used in parallel with their official names, especially by artists, writers, journalists a.s.o.*"[11]. One way to create these pseudonyms mentioned by the author is "*the place of origin*"[12] and a representative example for the category described above is *Delavrancea.* The name is registred by Iorgu Iordan in *Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti*[13], together with the explanation of its structure "*de la* + toponym *Vrancea*"[14] and in *DOOM*[15], under 'Proper Nouns', more

[5] Tatiana Petrache, *Dicţionar enciclopedic al numelor de botez*, Bucureşti, Editura Anastasia, 1998.
[6] Cristian Ionescu, *Dicţionar de onomastică*, Editura Elion, 2001.
[7] Christian Ionescu, *Mică enciclopedie onomastică*, Bucureşti, Editura Enciclopedică Română, 1975.
[8] Mircea Horia Simionescu, *Dicţionar onomastic*, Ediţia a III-a, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2008, in which there are only fragments of literary texts with those lists names.
[9] *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1989, p. 253.
[10] Ion Toma, "Onomasticonul românesc actual: structură, surse formative, registre funcţionale", in *Symposion: Probleme şi metode actuale în cercetarea ştiinţifică socio-umană*, Roxana Lupu (coord.), Cernica, Editura Institutului Teologic Adventist, 2014, p. 342.
[11] *Ibidem*, p. 343.
[12] *Ibidem*.
[13] Iorgu Iordan, *Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1983, p. 169.
[14] *Ibidem*.

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precisely under 'Surnames' made up of *preposition + noun*. The above-mentioned name also occurs in *Dicţionar ortografic, ortoepic, morfologic şi explicativ de nume proprii româneşti şi străine* that provides some information about the full name in which it occurs, but also about its owner: "*Delavrancea Barbu m. n. (pseudonym of Barbu Ştefănescu) playwriter, lawyer and Romanian politician*"[16].

The most productive pattern found in the structure of Romanian surnames is represented by *the compound preposition* ***de la*** *+ a noun – placename (toponym). Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti* gives the following examples,[17] which fit the pattern mentioned above:

Delabeta: de la + n. top. *Beta (Ardeal)*;
Delacuca: de la + n. top. *Cuca*;
Delagreaca: de la + n. top. *Greaca*;
Delameea: de la + n. top. *Meia*;
Delapeta: de la + n. top. *Petea (Ardeal)*;
Delarăscruci: de la + n. top. *Răscrusci (Ardeal)*;
Delateişani: de la + n. top. *Teişani*;
Delatopîrcea: de la + n. top. *Topîrcea*.

Only one example corresponds to the pattern *compound preposition* ***de la*** *+ a common noun: Delaport.* This surname occurs in the dictionary mentioned above and the only explanation given by Iorgu Iordan concerns the components of the name: "*de la port*".[18]

In surnames, the composed preposition *de la* also collocates with a proper noun - name of person, thus forming another pattern: *the compound preposition* ***de la*** *+ a proper noun - name of person (anthroponym).*[19] This pattern is not as well represented as the previous one:

Delamarian: de la + masculine anthroponym *Marian* (?);
Delamarina: de la + feminine anthroponym *Marina* (?).[20]

Another pattern is *the simple preposition* ***de*** *+ a noun / a pronoun*, forming unfrequent surnames:

"*Detot: de + tot*;
Devechi: de + Vecchi 'de-ai lui Vecchi';

[15] See *DOOM*², Bucureşti, Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2010, 4.2.8.2. Substantive proprii, LXXIII.
[16] Ion Toma, Ana-Maria Botnaru, *Dicţionar ortografic, ortoepic, morfologic şi explicativ de nume proprii româneşti şi străine*, Bucureşti, Editura Niculescu, 2007.
[17] Iorgu Iordan, *op. cit*., p. 169.
[18] *Ibidem*.
[19] *Ibidem*.
[20] The author is uncertain about the etymology of these compounds.

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Deveghe: de + veghe."[21]

In DOOM² there is one more surname in the structure of which the preposition occupies the first position. It is *the simple preposition* ***din***, which, together with *the noun* ***vale*** it forms the surname *Dinvale* obtained by the fusion of its elements as in the examples given above. However, the name also occurs in *Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti,*[22] where Iorgu Iordan offers a double explanation for it: *din + vale*, ("*creation*" of its bearer) or *din* + toponym *Vale (a).*

The cases of surnames in which the preposition occurs in middle position are less common. The representative pattern is: *noun + preposition + noun.* For this pattern we identified three examples: *Capdebou*, *Capdefier* and *Gît de gîscă*. The first surname, *Capdebo (u)*, is registered in DOOM² as an example of the mentioned structure. The name is listed by Iorgu Iordan in the quoted dictionary, where the author makes reference to the elements of the compound: "*Capdebou: cap de bou*"[23]. A more elaborate explanation for this surname is given by Al. Graur:

"*The Capdebou family is known in Transylvania: certainly the name does not make reference to stupidity or something similar, but to a coat of arms belonging to an ancestor of the family and representing an Aurochs ox*."[24].

In addition to the etymological and semantic clarifications, Graur also refers to the other variant of this surname, *Capdebo*:

"*but today the descendants don't feel confortable with this idea, and prefer to change the name, spelling it Capdebo with the stress on e*."[25].

The second surname, *Capdefier*, is registered only in *Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti* which provides only some explanations regarding its structure: "*Capdefier: cap de fier.*"[26]. We notice that the two surnames *Capdebo (u)* and *Capdefier* were obtained by means of the fusion of the elements.

The third surname of this pattern was formed by juxtaposition preserving the autonomy of the components in spelling. The name is registered only by Iorgu Iordan in the quoted dictionary: "*Gît de gîscă: gît de gîscă*"[27].

[21] Iorgu Iordan, *op. cit*., p. 170.
[22] *Ibidem*.
[23] *Ibidem*, p. 98.
[24] Al. Graur, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[25] *Ibidem*.
[26] Iorgu Iordan, *op. cit*., p. 98.
[27] *Ibidem*, p. 226.

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In *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice* there is a discussion about the issue of the existence of prepositional forms in the structure of surnames:

"*the prepositional forms (with or without the definite article), largely eliminated, are specific to the Western surnames of patronymic origin (it. De Felice, fr. Dehue), matronymic origin (it. Della Giovanna) and toponymic origin (fr. Destaing)*" [28]. Another situation encountered with the French anthroponyms with prepositions is represented by the antroponymic pattern[29] formed by *first name (+ preposition **de**) + toponym.* The most representative example is Vefve Martin *Iean de France*.

Nicknames

Nicknames are defined by some linguists as words that usually have a pejorative connotation, being inspired by "*someone's bad habit or flaw*".[30] In Romanian there are few cases of nicknames whose structure should contain prepositions.

In *Dicţionar al numelor de familie româneşti*[31] we find a name formed by the fusion of its elements, according to the *pattern preposition + preposition + noun*: *Decusară* with the variant *Decuseară*, consisting of *de + cu + seară*. Iorgu Iordan mentions that this appellative is a nickname.

Examples illustrating the structure *noun + preposition + noun* are also to be found in *Porecle şi supranume în comuna Vîrvor, Judeţul Dolj*, in which Dumitru Ivănuş[32] provides some explanations regarding the structure of this type. The author also gives some details about their phonetic transcription and stress: *Ĉoc de bárză, Glúga de coĉéni, Maşínă de răzbói.*[33]. The author also gives an example illustrating the pattern *preposition + noun: Îng'éte*.

Most of the nicknames containing prepositions are listed by I. A. Candrea.[34] His examples illustrate the following structural typologies:

[28] *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice*, loc. cit., p. 215.

[29] See Aude Wirth, "Noms de famille composés ou composites? L'exemple de la Lorraine romane", in *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Onomastic Sciences*, Toronto, Canada, Editura York University, 2009. The author points out that this is quite a rare pattern in French.

[30] I. A. Candrea, *Poreclele la români*, Bucureşti, Editura Librăriei Socecŭ & Comp., 1895, p.8.

[31] *Ibidem*, p. 168.

[32] Dumitru Ivănuş, *Porecle şi supranume în comuna Vîrvor, Judeţul Dolj*, Craiova, Academia Republicii Socialiste România, 1969, p. 17.

[33] *Ibidem*.

[34] See I. A. Candrea, op. cit.

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- *verb + preposition + noun*: *Calcă-'n-străchini* 'a clumsy person', *Fluieră-'n-bute* 'drunk', *Fluieră-'n-biserică* 'booby', *Latră-'n-lu*nă 'speaking in vain, sometimes denigrating other people'.

- *noun + preposition + noun*: *Brânză-'n-bete* 'stupid or incompetent man', *Butoiu fără fund* 'drunk', *Mură-'n-gură* 'expecting to get everything without work, taking everything for granted', *Puiu de viperă* 'a mean person'.

- *complex structures containing a noun + prepositional determination*: *Fecior de bani gata, Taler cu două feţe.*

In addition to the above nicknames, I. A. Candrea refers to a nickname usually given to Moldavians by Wallachians and Oltenians in a pejorative sense: *Cap de bou*.

Bynames

The most common method to make a difference between names is the addition of a toponym, the name of the village, which often doubles the first name or the surname. This is the general definition of a *byname.*

In *Nume de persoane*[35], Al. Graur gives the example *Ionescu de la Brad* and discusses a common type of *bynames*: the bearers preferred to add to their family name the name of their birthplace or the name of the village whose fame they contributed to.

In *Enciclopedia Limbii Române* we find a prepositional form for "*the toponymic bynames that indicate the bearer's birthplace: Ion dela Vale*"[36]. What draws our attention is the spelling of the compound preposition *de la* in one word, which is not common.

Another Romanian linguist, N. A. Constantinescu, points out that, in the past, one of the ways for somebody to get his *byname* was to use the name of his estate and either attach to it the suffix *-ianul*, *-anul* or precede it by the prepositions "*de, de la, din: Stan de Codru, Gligorescu de Grumăzoae, Stan de Cîne.*"[37].

Another example of *bynames* could be found in the introduction to *Dicţionar onomastic romînesc*: *Iancu Vodă de Huniad*, its structure containing the preposition *de* as a connective, like in the examples given above.[38]

In addition to the above pattern, in the composition of bynames we can find the structure *noun + preposition + adverb of place*. This pattern is illustrated by Ilie Dan in *Studii de onomastică*[39], where the author points out

[35] Al Graur, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[36] See *Enciclopedia limbii române*, p. 553.
[37] N. A. Constantinescu, *op. cit.*, p. XXIV.
[38] *Ibidem*, loc. cit.
[39] Ilie Dan, *Studii de onomastică*, Iaşi, Editura Vasiliana'98, 2007, p. 143.

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that the surnames of several Romanian boyars of Ţara Oltului are of this type: [...] *Arpăşanu de Jos*.

Nowadays the process of adding a byname to the first name is very common. This linguistic fashion appears especially among artists: *Adi de la Vâlcea, Adi de Vito, Alex de la Orăştie, Coco de la Slatina, Jean de la Craiova, Leo de la Strehaia* etc. This method of individualization by attaching a byname to the first name was also frequently used in the past in the case of names of Middle Ages princes or representative people: *Vlad din Mălăieşti* (scribe), *Radu de la Afumaţi* (Radu the fifth, son of Radu cel Mare a prince who reigned Ţara Românească and whose estate included the village called Afumaţi, in Ilfov county).

This type of bynames (*preposition + a place name / a patronymic name*) is also found in Italian. The most common bynames are formed with the prepositions *da, de, d': Leonardo da Vinci* (where *Vinci* is the name of origin), *Enrico De Nicola, Pedro de Lorenzo, Peppino de Filipo, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Masimo d'Azeglio* etc. In *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice*[40] there are some examples of bynames made up of preposition or preposition and definite article and a place name: *Di Francia, Dalla Costa, Dell Colle.*

The process mentioned above is also found in the formation of Spanish bynames. A relevant example in this case is *Maria de la Mercedes de Borbón. Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice*[41] mentions that toponyms used as bynames, with or without preposition, are predominant in Spanish and Portuguese: Sp. *Severo de Calceata*, Pg. *Arias de Retoria*".

In French there are some bynames of the type *preposition (+ definite article) + place names*: *Dufresnoy, Defresnoy*.[42]

Pseudonyms

Most of the Romanian pseudonyms occur in humanities and in sports as we shall see in the following examples. The pseudonyms from the first field of activity were chosen by their berarers: *Bardul de la Mirceşti* (Vasile Alecsandri), *De la Braniştea* (Dimitrie Nanu), *Delabrăila* (Panait Istrati), *Delaolt* (C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea), *De pe plai* (Artur Gorovei), *De pe Văcărea* (George Maior), *De sub salcîmi* (Alexandru A. Naum) etc. There are also many types of pseudonyms in sports: *Cap de chibrit / Cap de zmeu* (Cătălin Munteanu), *Moartea din Carpaţi* (Cătălin Moroşanu), *Prinţul din Trivale* (Nicolae Dobrin) etc.

The compound anthroponyms containing prepositions could be structurally classified into several patterns, taking into account the inventory above:

[40] *Enciclopedia Limbilor Romanice*, loc. cit, p. 299.
[41] *Ibidem*.
[42] *Ibidem*.

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- preposition + noun;
  - the simple preposition *de* + a noun / a pronoun;
  - the simple preposition *din* + a toponym;
  - the compound preposition *de la* + a common noun;
  - the compound preposition *de la* + a proper noun - name of place (toponym);
  - the compound preposition *de la* + a proper noun - name of person (anthroponym);
- preposition + preposition + noun;
- noun + preposition + noun;
- first name + preposition *de* + toponym;
- noun + preposition + adverb of place;
- verb + preposition + noun;
- complex structures: noun + prepositional determination.

Conclusions

With most Romanian compound anthroponyms having a preposition in their structure, the preposition is either in initial position (*Dinvale*) or in medial position, between the first name and the surname (*Ion dela Vale*). The pattern is similar in other Romance Languages: Fr. *Defresnoy, Jean de la Bruyère,* It. *Peppino de Filippo*, Sp. *Maria de la Mercedes de Borbón*, Pg. *João de Deus.*

Prepositions functioning as a part of compound anthroponyms can be simple or compound, as in the examples above. It is also possible for two prepositions to be joined together: *Decuseară, Desubsalcâmi*.

The process of forming compound anthroponyms with prepositions has two variants: composition by the fusion of the elements in one word (*Delavrancea*) or juxtaposition preserving the autonomy of the components in spelling (*Radu de la Afumaţi*). Both variants are well represented in French: *Dubois, Dupont*, on the one hand, and *Jean de la Fontaine*, *Jehan de Veau*, on the other hand.

As a part of Romanian compound anthroponyms, the prepositions *de, de la,* or *din* occur more frequently, whereas the prepositions *cu, în, fără, sub* rarely occur in such onomastic structures.

One of the main differences between Romanian anthroponomy and the anthroponomy of the other Romance languages is the highest number of prepositions functioning as anthroponymic components in Romanian and many posibilities of combination.

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