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Slovak and ICOS onomastic terminologies

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Abstract: Terminology is one of the goals of scientific research, since its uniformity facilitates communication in scientific disciplines. However, the development of any scientific discipline, along with the formation of new theories and methodological approaches, leads to the creation of new and synonymous terms and to changes in the definitions of some commonly used terms. Instability in the usage of terms is a significant reason for renewed efforts to unify terminology, and this has driven the Terminology Group of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) to develop a list of key onomastic terms that includes definitions and examples in English, French, and German. This paper briefly describes how the list was created, it characterises Slovak onomastic terminology, and analyses some important differences in terminology and how the definitions of terms in the ICOS list of key onomastic terms differ from Slovak onomastic terminology. Finally, it suggests how these differences in the Slovak version of the list can be resolved.

Keywords: Slovak onomastic terminology, international onomastic terminology, ICOS List of Key Onomastic Terms.

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La terminologie onomastique slovaque et celle établie par l'ICOS

Résumé : L'un des objectifs de la recherche scientifique est aussi la terminologie, car son uniformité facilite la communication dans chaque discipline scientifique. Cependant, le développement des disciplines scientifiques, ainsi que la formation de nouvelles théories et approches méthodologiques, conduit à la création de termes nouveaux et leurs synonymes, mais aussi à des changements dans les définitions de certains termes couramment utilisés. Une grande instabilité dans l'utilisation des termes est une raison importante des efforts renouvelés pour unifier la terminologie, ce qui a conduit le groupe terminologique de l'ICOS (International Council of Onomastic Sciences) à établir une liste de termes onomastiques avec des définitions et des exemples en anglais, en français et en allemand. Cet article présente un bref aperçu de la création de cette liste, il caractérise la terminologie onomastique slovaque et analyse certaines différences importantes dans la terminologie et dans les définitions des termes clés de la liste établie par l'ICOS qui varient de la terminologie onomastique slovaque. Enfin, il suggère ainsi comment résoudre ces différences dans la version slovaque de la liste.

Mots-clés : Terminologie onomastique slovaque, terminologie onomastique internationale, liste des mots-clefs en onomastique de l'ICOS.

Die slowakische onomastische Terminologie und die Terminologie des ICOS

Zusammenfassung: Terminologie ist eines der Ziele der wissenschaftlichen Forschung, da eine diesbezügliche Einheitlichkeit die Kommunikation innerhalb der wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen erleichtert. Die Entwicklung jeder wissenschaftlichen Disziplin führt jedoch zusammen mit der Bildung neuer Theorien und methodischer Ansätze zur Entstehung neuer und synonymen Termini und zu Veränderungen in den Definitionen einiger häufig verwendeter Termini. Die Instabilität bei der Verwendung von Termini ist ein wesentlicher Grund für neuerliche Bemühungen zur Vereinheitlichung der Terminologie. Aus diesem Grund hat die Terminologie-Gruppe des International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) eine Liste onomastischer Schlüsseltermini mit ihren Definitionen und Beispielen in englischer, französischer und deutscher Sprache erstellt. Der vorliegende Beitrag beschreibt kurz, wie die Liste erstellt wurde und charakterisiert die slowakische onomastische Terminologie: Weiterhin analysiert er einige wichtige Unterschiede zwischen der slowakischen und der ICOS-Terminologie im Allgemeinen sowie einzelne Unterschiede zwischen bestimmten Definitionen von Termini in der ICOS-Liste und in der slowakischen onomastischen Terminologie. Schließlich wird vorgeschlagen, wie diese Unterschiede in der slowakischen Version der Liste nivelliert werden können.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Slowakische onomastische Terminologie, internationale onomastische Terminologie, ICOS-Liste onomastischer Schlüsseltermini.

Slovak and ICOS onomastic terminologies

IVETA VALENTOVÁ

1. Introduction

Research and any communication of new scientific knowledge require precise, established, and correct terminology. It is the terminology itself that is one of the objectives of both onomastic and linguistic research, as it enables knowledge to be disseminated more broadly. Each scientific discipline's development of its own terminology depends on how the science develops, as well as on conceptual knowledge and the knowledge of the object. Developments in any scientific discipline cause divergence through the emergence of new and synonymous terms. On the other hand, there are convergent efforts evident for reasons of clarity, in order to satisfy the need to unify and approximate terms in a non-unified practice, when, for example, one of two terms for the same phenomenon or object is not recommended for usage due to certain criteria for creating the terminology. Of course, there will always be some synonymy because most of the basic terms have international and domestic equivalents. International terms are necessary for scientific communication internationally, while domestic terms are predominantly intended for domestic audience and for articles popularising science.

Terms are mostly unified, codified and recommended by national and international terminology committees in the discipline, by the relevant institutions, or possibly by a group of scientific authorities involved in the discipline. In the case of onomastic terms, these are mostly the national onomastic commissions, the Commission for Slavic Onomastics of the International Committee of Slavists, and the highest onomastic authority, the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS). Codification must be undertaken in full compliance with the general principles of terminology and it is necessary for the development and stability of terms to be covered as well. The codified and recommended terms should be properly formed, established, and used, while remaining comparable and acceptable by the scientific community within the discipline. Here national terminology should be integrated into the global, international terminology.

2. Slovak onomastic terminology

Slovak onomastic terminology developed in two stages. The first period ran from the 1960s to the 1980s where, in the first two decades, the principles of theoretical onomastics were shaped to specifically focus on the formal and conceptual aspects of the terms. The creation of terminology was also affected by efforts to internationalise the character of terms commonly used as a consequence of the need for scientific communication on an international scale. The development of Slovak onomastics and onomastic terminology at this stage was not rapid, but had been only gradually developing, where it enhanced and broadened Vincent Blanár's theory of a functional approach and the characteristics of the designative aspect in the proper name, taking into account its binary status and specific onymic signs.¹ Slovak onomastic terms have often been taken from Czech terminology (e.g. Czech *pomístní jméno* > Slovak *pomiestne meno*), although efforts were later made to replace them with more appropriate Slovak and international terms (*pomiestne meno* > *chotárny názov*, *mikrotoponymum*, even as *terénny názov* and *anojkonymum* are terms still used today).

The second phase started developing in the 1990s and continues today, where the concept elucidated by Vincent Blanár has become the theoretical and methodological foundation of the Slovak onomastic school and is still intensifying. More vigorous development of the scientific discipline has led to more hectic development of onomastic terminology, accompanied by individual creativity, divergence, and non-unified practice. As a result, some misapplication and uncertainty has arisen, again reflected in the attempt to unify terminology and inspired the Slovak Onomastic Commission at the Ľudovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava (SOC) to initiate a project whose goal is to compile a list of taxonomical terms in Slovak which designate the particular types of proper names and terms associated with the state of the theory (see e.g. Valentová 2014, 2015 for more details). Significant studies by Milan Majtán (1976, 1979, 1986, 1989, 2012) include a highly systematic analysis of the taxonomic terminology of individual onomastic disciplines, mainly of toponomastics and chrematonomastics. The issue of anthroponomastic terminology has been discussed, for example, by Blanár (1973). Other Slovak linguists have also expressed their views about individual terms and groups of terms.

3. International terminology and the terminological work of ICOS

A number of studies (Harvalík 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2014; Harvalík & Caffarelli 2007) have discussed the origins of the desire for an international onomastic terminology and the preparations undertaken to compile it, which

¹ Vincent Blanár published his theory and methodology in numerous studies, which he summed up in two monographs (1996, 2008; the English version was published in 2009).

culminated in the creation of the ICOS Terminology Group at a meeting of the ICOS Board of Directors in Prague in 2004² and the group's working procedures, along with the problems associated with differences in each country's onomastic terminologies and the differing degrees of elaboration the committee members had to face.

To date, the terminological group has produced a list of key, fundamental onomastic terms including definitions and examples. There are 70 entries, of which 19 cross-reference other synonymous terms with the same definition. The key terms, definitions, and examples in English, French, and German which have been listed to date are available online at the ICOS website (<https://icosweb.net/publications/onomastic-terminology/>), where some important processing principles are pointed out.

In the present, a wider team of experts and correspondents from different countries for preparing the national versions of the terminology is being created. The ICOS Terminology Group has been extended and representatives of particular countries are working on lists of equivalents of the ICOS terminology in their native languages (cf. also Gałkowski 2019). Some of the national lists have already been published, e.g. see Bölcskei & Farkas & Slíz (2017). Nevertheless, it is therefore the individual national onomastic committees that are in charge of translating the basic list of key onomastic terms published on the ICOS website into their national languages, using a methodology that ensures the most accurate preservation of the original definition. If a specific term were to be either understood or applied differently or were the definition of the terms in the official ICOS languages to differ from the definitions common in a national language, these divergences would be resolved through comments made in the notes accompanying the individual terms. Each of the national versions of the list of key onomastic terms will then be published on the ICOS website.

The [ICOS list of key onomastic terms](#) in the Slovak language was prepared by the present author and approved by the members of the board of the Slovak Onomastic Commission. Differences exist between some of the terms listed and the definitions drawn up by the ICOS Terminology Group and the terms used in Slovak onomastics. This study seeks to analyse the most important of these differences and point out some divergences between the terms in the [ICOS list of key onomastic terms](#) and the Slovak onomastic terminology. I will show how these disparities have been eliminated and issues in the Slovak version of the [ICOS list](#) have been resolved.

4. *Macrotoponym – microtoponym versus oikonym – anoikonym*

In Slavic and international onomastics, *macrotoponym* and *microtoponym*

² Information on the members of the terminology group is available on the ICOS website (<https://icosweb.net/about-icos/icos-terminology-group/>).

(in Slovak *makrotoponymum* and *mikrotoponymum*) are the main usage terms. The international terminology group defined *microtoponym* (in English also *minor name*) as a “name referring to smaller objects like fields, pastures, fences, stones, marshes, bogs, ditches etc., and in general used locally by only a limited group of people – e.g. Lange Wiese (meadow), Further Piece (field)”. The term *macrotoponym* is defined as a synonym of *choronym* – the “proper name of a larger geographical or administrative unit of land – e.g. *Africa, Sibir*’ (*Siberia*), *Suomi, Dalmacija, Toscana, Bretagne, Steiermark, Castilla, La Mancha*. (NOTE: In some languages the term *macrotoponym* is used for an inhabited large area.)”

This understanding would divide toponyms by the size of the toponymic object they name (and also in terms of length, in the case of watercourses) and from the user’s point of view of the names. However, the definitions for these terms still remain ambiguous and have often been the subject of expert discussions that to some extent are continuing today. For example, the size of an object (such as the length of a watercourse) has not been determined and, accordingly, it might not be possible to classify the object unambiguously. The relevant criterion for including the name in one of these two groups cannot even be the object’s significance because even a small object can be significant or vice versa. When formulating the Slavic onomastic terminology, [Vladimír Šmilauer](#) recommended *microtoponym* to be used as a synonym for only one group of non-settlement geographical names, namely *field names* (Slovak *chotárne názvy*,³ Czech *tráťová jména*⁴), a term which used to define the names of strips of land, namely plots, fields, agricultural areas, pastures, forests, sections of forests, etc. (see [Šmilauer 1963: 8](#)). In some onomastic schools, for example in Macedonian, Russian, Serbian, and Croatian, the term *microtoponym*, written in these languages as *mikrotoponim/микротопоним*, is used in this meaning ([Svoboda et al. 1983: 113](#)).

Toward the end of the 1960s and into the following decade, the term *mikrotoponymum* ‘microtoponym’ was also stabilised in Slovak onomastics. [Blanár \(1965/66: 259–260\)](#) understood *chotárne názvy* ‘field names’ to be the names of unpopulated places in terrain of limited local usage, including the “names of lands and their parts (which are known as *mikrotoponymá* ‘microtoponyms’, while minor place names of wider social validity are *makrotoponymá* ‘macrotoponyms’), names of various terrain formations according to their vertical and horizontal diversity (hills, hillocks, hillsides, plains, etc.), of waters and rivers and of more important objects in the terrain that are important for orientation or other purposes (monuments, grave-

³ A literal translation into English would be *cadastral names*, but this term is not used in English onomastics.

⁴ A literal translation into English would be *estate* or *land names*, but neither of these terms is used in English onomastics.

mounds, rocks, ruins, and others).”

Like in Slavic onomastics, Slovak onomasticians were holding discussions about the term *microtoponym* and how to define it, but the members of the Slovak Onomastic Commission would eventually not accept the term even though it had been used for some time. The reason why they rejected it was because the definition was not unambiguous – the limit of the size or length of the object could not be determined by consensus and the names of the objects in question could therefore not be clearly classified as microtoponyms.

Majtán (1976: 115) considered *mikrotoponymum* ‘microtoponym’, and its usage in Slovak onomastics, as synonymous with the traditional domestic term *chotárny názov* ‘field name’ in accordance with Czech linguist Vladimír Šmilauer’s understanding that it was too narrow for usage in referring to the entire group of names of non-residential objects, i.e. anoikonyms. The inappropriate usage of this term is also supported by the fact that no one applies the term *makrotoponymum* ‘macrotoponym’ in Slovak onomastics anymore, its usage having virtually ceased since 1973.

The term *macrotoponym* is not defined in the ICOS list, but there is a reference to it in the entry for the term *choronym*, defined as the “proper name of a larger geographical or administrative unit of land – for example *Africa*, *Sibir* (*Siberia*), *Suomi*, *Dalmatia*, *Toscana*, *Bretagne*, *Steiermark*, *Castilla*, *La Mancha*. (NOTE: In some languages the term macrotoponym is used for an inhabited large area.)” Since this definition corresponds to the definition in both Slovak and Slavic onomastics, it is translated into Slovak literally, with only added examples from Slovakia. It would be worthwhile for members of the ICOS Terminology Group to extend the definition to a “horizontal segmentation perspective”, as stated in Slavic terminology handbooks (Svoboda et al. 1973: 57, 1983: 101).

Šrámek (1987: 98–99) understood *microtoponym* to be all the names of non-residential objects in a particular local society (in a certain cadastral district; the function of microtoponyms can be fulfilled in a specific area by appellative lexical units and other types of proper names, although the characteristics of their (proprial) system are other than microtoponymic). Despite the problem of what is the component *micro-* and that the term *microtoponym* is difficult and indistinct in its significance and definition, the term still exists in the literature and all onomastics (not just those in the Slavic languages) and all linguists (not just Slavists) know about *nazwy terenowe*, *Flurnamen*, *chotárne názvy*, and *pozemková jména* (Šrámek 2003: 38). More recently, in 2012, Rudolf Šrámek described the origin, definition, and extension of *microtoponym* and *macrotoponym* at the 18th International and Polish Conference in Łódź.

He did not associate the attributes of ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ with the quantitative characteristics (smallness or largeness) of the object, but understood the role of ‘micro’ as ‘micro-use’, i.e. in impacting proprial

functions on a restricted, limited ‘micro-communication’ situation (Šrámek 2014). In his opinion, the communication radius of the microtoponym is limited locally to people requiring its usage in their everyday lives and for whom the microtoponym fulfils its proprial functions. Despite the accumulation in onomastics of terms prefixed with ‘micro-’ and ‘macro-’ (e.g. *microtoponym*, *macrotoponym*), especially in onomastic theory, Šrámek (2014) stated, referring to Debus (2012: 27), that there is still a lack of stability in defining what they mean, what proprially relevant phenomena are related, and what their systemic value is.

Especially in Czech and Slovak onomastics, the classification of toponyms according to the feature of residency/non-residency has been established into *oikonymá* ‘oikonyms’ and *anoikonymá* ‘anoikonyms’. Oikonyms are geographical names of settlements, specifically the names of residential features, while the current synonymous domestic Slovak terms are *osadné názvy* and *miestne názvy*, ‘settlement names’. Anoikonyms are non-settlement geographical names, specifically the names of non-residential features, for which the domestic term *terénne názvy* has stabilized in Slovak onomastics in recent years. Oikonyms and anoikonyms also include the names of extinct, corresponding type sites.

The ICOS list of key terms contains *oikonym* and its English synonym *settlement name*. This term is defined as the “proper name of all kinds of human settlement (cities, towns, villages, hamlets, farms, ranches, houses, etc.) – e.g. *Paris*, *Turku*, *Yokohama*, †*Troia*, *Nofim* (a house)”. According to Slavic terminology handbooks (Svoboda et al. 1973: 60, 1983: 104), oikonyms, in addition to the above-mentioned proper names of cities and villages, also include proper names of their parts, both groups of houses and individual houses (solitary houses, farm buildings, gamekeeper’s lodges, castles, sawmills, mills, castles, ruins, tourist lodges, hotels, pharmacies, cinemas, churches, monasteries, etc.), as well as the proper names of the rooms in a building (living room, hall, lecture room, music hall, etc.). In terms of understanding the term oikonym and although the definition is more detailed, there is no difference between the two definitions. Older Slovak onomastic literature allows for the usage of domestic terms such as *miestne mená*, *miestopisné názvy*, *názvy sídlištných objektov* and *názvy osídlených objektov*, *sídelné mená* to be encountered (cf. Majtán 1976: 114). While in the 1960s *osadný názov* was used mainly by Rudolf Krajčovič and not yet established, today it is (alongside *miestny názov*) commonly applied as the domestic equivalent of an oikonym.

The term *anoikonym* (Slovak *anoikonymum*) is absent from the ICOS list. According to Slavic onomastic handbooks (Svoboda et al. 1973: 62, 1983: 107), it is defined as “the proper name of an inanimate natural object and phenomenon on Earth and that man-made object on Earth which is not intended for living and is firmly fixed in the country”, noting that in Russian this term is understood differently, where anoikonyms are defined as the names of non-residential objects created by man. According to Šrámek (2010: 21),

anoikonymic objects are of two types of origin:

- (a) Objects that have been unsettled since their origin as natural features (mountains, hills, rocks, plains, valleys, rivers, seas, aboriginal forests, floodplain meadows, etc.), the names of which are primarily associated with the phenomena, characteristics, and signs of the natural environment and terrain, i.e. with geomorphological characteristics.
- (b) The characteristic of its non-residential nature is secondary; it has been created by human intervention: the transformation of the terrain into a field, the formation of a pasture on the site of a defunct house, a place in an extinct or relocated settlement or a village, a road through an abandoned railway line, a new object (e.g. a pond, wayside column, mill, castle, factory, bridge or television tower) motivating the need for a new name (*Nesyt* 'Unsatiated', *Mlýnská louka* 'Mill meadow', *Za fabrikou* 'Behind the factory', *U televize* 'At the television transmission tower').

In Czech onomastics, the names of isolated houses and hamlets and their parts are also assigned anoikonyms, although they are inhabited, because many of them took their names from the original anoikonyms. As a result of the influence of Czech onomastics in Slovakia, this view was also partially accepted in the country, for example with a group of settlement names that do not form a separate administrative unit. The same spelling rules apply when writing capital letters as for non-settlement names. In general, however, the names of isolated houses and hamlets and their parts are not included in anoikonyms and are not processed within the anoikonymic lexis dictionary (cf. [Valentová 2018: 15–16](#)). In Slovak onomastics, they belong among the oikonyms.

While *oikonym* is relatively widespread in both Slavic and international onomastics, *anoikonym* is mostly used only in Czech, Slovak and rather rarely in German onomastics, although it is also known in other languages. This was the reason for its non-inclusion in the [ICOS list](#) because, when the list was being compiled, it was necessary to consider the extension of the term worldwide.

Both the Slovak domestic term *terénny názov* and the international term *anoikonymum* have undergone certain developments both in Slovak onomastics and in other national onomastic schools. Other terms that used to be applied name the entire set of non-settlement objects. A loanword from Czech, *pomiestne meno*, appeared in editions of [Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu](#) [Rules of Slovak orthography] published in 1931, 1940, and 1949. In the 1950s, Vincent Blanár began using *pomiestny názov* and Ján Stanislav *chotárny názov*. Several linguists such as Rudolf Krajčovič, Vincent Blanár, Milan Majtán, Štefan Krištof and Štefan Lipták started in the 1960s to prefer the domestic term *chotárny názov*, although at that time it did not include hydronyms and therefore covered only a part of anoikonymy. While *chotárny názov* was widely used in this meaning during this period, [Majtán \(1976: 115\)](#) pointed out that the term was too narrow to name a whole class of non-settlement names, like in the case of *microtoponym*. The specific

Slovak term *chotárny názov* still exists today, but narrower to designate the names of agriculturally formed and exploited geographic objects (Majtán 2003: 143).

In the ICOS list, the Slovak term *chotárny názov* corresponds to the English term *field name*, which is defined as the “name of a small piece of rural land”. This definition is based on the prevailing understanding of this term in world onomastics, with the exception of Slavic onomastics. This definition does not specify the nature of rural land and does not include important attributes such as the non-residential nature and agricultural usability of the named object and the relationship to the hyperonymic term. When defining an object that is identified through its name, the size of the object is not important in Slovak onomastics. What is important is its usage for agricultural purposes, that it is located in the cadastral district of a village, and usage of its name mostly by the inhabitants of the village. The Slovak version of the list has a note to the definition that mentions the definition in Slovak onomastics as the proper name of agriculturally utilised land (such as a field, meadow, pasture, forest or vineyard), e.g. a field called *Adamovská* ‘Adam’s’ or a forest named *Babí vrch* ‘Old Woman’s Hill’. The field names are a subgroup of *anoikonyms*.

The Slovak Onomastic Commission had approved the domestic term *terénny názov* for an entire class of non-settlement names as early as 1966, but only since the 1970s has usage in this context prevailed in Slovak onomastics, similarly to the Polish tradition (Majtán 2003: 143). Nevertheless, even a newer Slavic onomastic terminology handbook (Svoboda et al. 1983: 110) failed to capture this change and *terénny názov* was only mentioned therein as the domestic equivalent of the term *oronym*.

The term *anoikonym* has only recently become established in Slovak onomastics. Especially in the context of building a concept involving systematic lexicographical processing of Slovak *anoikonyms*, usage has become more common in recent years. The fact that usage of its pendant *oikonym* has been common in Slovakia for a long time has certainly been a factor. Even though *microtoponym* is no longer used, it is still known among Slovak onomasticians. In general, the domestic term *terénny názov* ‘minor place name’ and the international terms *anoikonymum* ‘*anoikonym*’ and *mikrotoponymum* ‘*microtoponym*’ are considered synonymous, while the terms *mikrotoponymum* ‘*microtoponym*’ and *chotárny názov* ‘*field name*’ tend to be equated. However, ICOS only lists *microtoponym* and *minor name* as synonymous (they refer to each other), whereas *field name* is defined separately and does not refer to either of these terms. The Slovak equivalent of the ICOS list addresses this discrepancy by including within the definition of the Slovak equivalent of *mikrotoponymum* (English *microtoponym*) a statement to the effect that it is no longer applied in Slovak onomastics. “Toponyms are classified into proper names of residential objects (*osadné, miestne názvy, ojkonymá*, English *oikonyms*) and proper names of non-residential objects (*terénne názvy, anojkonymá*, English *anoikonyms*), e.g. *Gerlachovský štít* (hill), *Danube* (river), *Babinec* (field).”

Although *microtoponym* and, in general, the division of toponyms into macrotoponyms and microtoponyms is not considered appropriate in Slovak and Czech onomastics, it is so widely used, mainly in the non-Slavic onomastic community, that it would be difficult to persuade the ICOS Terminology Group to recommend not using it. Staffan Nyström (2014: 54) even recommended it for inclusion in the list of toponymic terminology *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (Kadmon (Convenor) & Working Group on Toponymic Terminology (eds.) 2002, 2007, hereinafter the *UNGEGN glossary*)⁵: “There are some important terms in the ICOS list that are not found in the *UNGEGN glossary*, but may well be inserted there. Terms like *field name*, *microtoponym* and *settlement name* are a bit tricky to define but they are useful. Good definitions are needed since the phenomena they cover are often treated by geographers, cartographers and onomasticians.”

5. *Oronym*

The ICOS list defines *oronym* as “proper name of an elevated formation of the terrain (i.e. name of a mountain, mountain range, highland, upland, hill, rock etc.) – *Aconcagua*, *Elbrus*, *Rocky Mountains*, *die Alpen*. (NOTE: By geographers the term *oronym* is sometimes used in a broader sense and includes also proper names of valleys, lowlands etc.)”. According to this definition, proper names of valleys, lowlands and other, similar features are not regarded as oronyms in international onomastics.

Such an understanding of *oronym* exists e.g. in English and German onomastics, but in Slavic onomastics the Slavic onomastic terminology handbooks (Svoboda et al. 1973: 65, 1983: 110) define an oronym as “the proper name of a rugged vertical surface of the earth and the sea (orographic unit, mountain range, highlands, hills, downs, ridge, single mountain, hill, rock, slope and valley form, valley, glen, trough, depression, pass, mountain saddle, gorge, ravine, lowland, plain, plateau, mountain table, basin, etc.)”. It is mentioned in a note that “oronyms in German are only the proper names of

⁵ The Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names was published in 2002. In Resolution VIII/3 (Berlin, 2002) the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names recognised that “terminology is not at a standstill, and that future developments will require additions and/or amendments to the definitions of terms”, recommending the working group on toponymic terminology to continue operating. At the ninth conference in New York (2007), a total of 23 entries were approved for insertion into the glossary. 12 of these were terms whose definitions had been amended and the other 11 were additional terms that had not included in the 2002 glossary at all. Both the glossary and the addendum are now posted on the UNGEGN website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/default.html> (Nyström 2014, where there is also more about the UNGEGN terminology).

mountain ranges, mountains, hillocks, hills, etc. not the proper names of valleys, plains, ravines, etc.”

The [UNGEKN glossary](#) ([Addendum 2007](#)) defines the term as “the name of a vertically structured formation of the terrain (including the sea bed), for example, names of mountains, mountain ranges, sea mounts, hills or highlands. Examples include *The Matterhorn*, *Gaurišankar*, *Fuji San*, *the Sierra Madre* and *the Mid-Atlantic Ridge*.”

It follows from this definition that geographers use *oronym* in the same meaning as Slavic onomasticians, although the definition in the [UNGEKN glossary](#) does not refer to examples of proper names of valleys and lowlands, even though this is indicated by the phrase “vertically structured”. The irregularity in the definition found in the [UNGEKN glossary](#) has already been pointed out by [Staffan Nyström](#) (2014: 56): “This notion (in the note) that ‘vertically structured’ also can include valleys, ravines and the like is not actually mentioned in the approved definition in the UNGEKN glossary. It emanates from discussions we have had for instance within the UNGEKN working group.”

It has been noted in the Slovak version of the [ICOS list](#) that Slavic and Slovak onomastics use *oronym* in a broader sense and include the names of lowlands and valleys. In the definition, *elevated formation* has been replaced by *vertikálna členitosť* ‘vertical structured formation’ and the examples include the name of a valley in Slovakia.

6. English *name* = Slovak *meno* or *názov*

The [ICOS list](#) does not define the general terms *name* and *onym*, but refer to them with the term *proper name*. The English “*name*”, however, can be translated into Slovak as either *meno* or *názov*. In general, the usage of *name* is common in Slovak linguistic terminology, especially when denoting types of nouns such as *podstatné meno* ‘substantive, noun’, *všeobecné podstatné meno* ‘appellative name, generic noun’, *vlastné podstatné meno*, *vlastné meno* ‘proper name, proper noun’. Older Czech linguistic literature distinguishes *vlastní jméno* and *vlastní název* (cf., e.g. *Pravidla českého pravopisu* [The Rules of Czech Orthography] 1957). The term *vlastné mená* refers to names not considered generic, but rather designating an individual within a given kind, while *vlastné názvy* should be understood as designations that by their nature name a kind and merely substitute the true *vlastné mená*. The Slovak linguist [Vincent Blanár](#) disagreed with the distinction between *vlastné mená* and *vlastné názvy* and recommended the preparation of an inventory of onomastic terminology based on the standardisation of onomastic terms from the general principles of linguistic terminology ([Blanár 1962: 279, 182](#), cf. [Dvonč 1966](#)). In his notes on the inventory of Slavic onomastic terminology,

[Svoboda \(1963: 262\)](#) recommended considering the terminological application of the meaningfully close words *meno* ‘name’, *názov* ‘name’, and *pomenovanie* ‘naming’ and corresponding equivalents in other languages. In Czech linguistic literature, [Dokulil \(1960, 1977\)](#) discussed these terms, while [Dvonč \(1966\)](#) had further described their usage to designate individual kinds of names in the Slovak linguistic literature of the 1960s, as well as in earlier works, manuals, and orthographic rules. He found usage of these terms in the period under analysis to be highly unstable, although in recent works *meno* was increasingly used to denote people and living beings. Rudolf Krajčovič, in particular, disagreed with using the term *meno* when meaning settlement and place names ([Dvonč 1966: 222](#)). These findings were followed by [Blanár \(1967: 163\)](#), who, in drafting the basic Slovak onomastic terminology for the handbook of Slavic onomastic terminology, distinguished *meno* (in relation to persons, e.g. *osobné meno* ‘personal name’) and *názov* (in relation to things, e.g. *geografický názov* ‘geographical name’).

[Majtán \(1976: 113\)](#) believed *meno* (when referring to persons) and *názov* (when referring to geographic objects or other named objects, institutions, etc.) to have already been used by onomasticians, but those not involved in toponomastics and were only occasionally coming into contact with it still made no sharp distinction between the terms. It can be concluded that this state has to some extent continued to this day. In both Slavic handbooks of onomastic terminology ([Svoboda et al. 1973, 1983](#)) and in Slovak onomastic terminology *meno* and *názov* are consistently distinguished by the earlier mentioned meanings and are established among Slovak onomasticians. Although the entries *bionym* (the proper name of a living organism or an organism imagined by a human being to be living) and *abionym* (the proper name of an inanimate object and a natural or man-made phenomenon) do not include Slavic equivalents in both Slavic handbooks of onomastic terminology, it would be possible in Slovak onomastics to assign *meno* and *názov* to *bionym* and *abionym* respectively. This basic dichotomous structure of onyms is functional in principle, even though the terms *bionym* and *abionym* were originally formed when the first handbook of Slavic onomastic terminology was compiled merely from a systemic point of view and have the nature of umbrella terms ([Svoboda et al. 1973: 10](#)).

This problem was resolved in the Slovak version of the [ICOS list](#) by stating both Slovak terms, i.e. *meno* and *názov*, and providing separate definitions of each of them:

- *meno* (English *name*) – proper name of a living being (even fictitious), e.g. man, animal;
- *názov* (English *name*) – proper name of an inanimate object, e.g. city, river, product, company.

7. Chrematonymic terms

As mentioned already above, Slavic onomastic terminology handbooks basically divide onomastic terms into bionymic and abionymic terms, with the abionyms divided into toponyms and chematonyms, according to the objects and phenomena to which these terms refer. Obviously, the system of onomastic terms can be different depending on the various onomastic schools and authorities. Czech onomastics, such as in Šrámek (1999: 16), have established three major onymic groups from the point of view of onomastics classified by the nature of the onymic objects into geonymic, bionymic, and chromatonymic groups.

In Slovak onomastics, Milan Majtán (1979, 1986) divided the terms as suggested by Natalya Podolskaya (1978) into proper names of objects that really exist and proper names of non-existent objects, with chrematonyms included among the group of names denoting objects on Earth. The term *chrematonym* has long been applied in Slavic onomastics, as evidenced in a special chapter in the Slavic onomastic encyclopaedia *Ślowiańska onomastyka* [Slavic onomastics] devoted to research on chrematonymy by individual Slavic countries (2003: 369–410). The term *names of things (chrematonymy)* was used for these kinds of proper names in *Names of Things, Animals, and Institutions*, a chapter found in the international handbook of onomastics *Name Studies* (volume 2, 1996), and the term *chrematonym* in the chapter by Ladislav Zgusta (1996: 1888).

Unlike Slavic onomastics, where *chrématonymum* has a stable place and chrematonyms are considered to be one of the main categories of proper names that are further divided into particular chrematonym subgroups, non-Slavic onomastic schools consider it too vague and broad (a prominent onomastician, Willy Van Langendonck, even said that the term *chrematonym* was strange, comprised names from the wastebasket, and was useless in his view; Harvalík & Caffarelli 2007). For this reason, it is preferable to divide proper names, which Slavic onomastics classifies as chrematonyms, into several separate groups without the umbrella term that in Slavic onomastics is chrematonym. Therefore, *chrematonym* has not been included as a separate entry in the ICOS list and is only mentioned in the note within the definition of the term *ergonym*: “*ergonym* – name of a product or a brand; NOTE: The term chrematonym in some languages is used in this sense, but can also have a broader meaning (inter alia proper names of social events, institutions, organisations...)”.

Since *ergonym* is not applied in Slovak onomastics, and the definition of *chrematonym* in the ICOS list is inadequate, not only for Slovak but also for Slavic onomastics, an additional note was added to the original one, saying:

“The term *ergonym* is not established in Slovak onomastics. The term *pragmatonymum* (English *pragmatonym*) – proper name of the type, model, kind of type, version, trademark, or series of a product produced serially (*serionym*), for example *Toyota Avensis*, *Škoda Felicia* (cars), *Jawa 500* (motorcycle) or the

proper name of an individual product (*unicatonym*), i.e. the proper name of a unique product, item, such as of a ship, aircraft or bell, for example *Titanic* (ship). Pragmatonyms are a subgroup of chrematonyms. *Chrématonymum* (English *chrematonym*) is the proper name of a human creation that is not fixed in the country, for example a social phenomenon, holiday, medal, artwork, institution, company, item and unique product or brand, model, series or type of a serially produced item.”

There are two more terms in the [ICOS list](#) from the field of chrematonomastics: *brand name* and *product name*. *Brand name* is defined as the “proper name of a brand, e.g. Toyota”, where in this sense the term *logonymum* is used in Slovak onomastics. Logonyms are defined as the names of companies, businesses, organisations, manufacturers and trading companies that are established in an administrative-legal framework and relate to a single object. *Logonomastics* started to develop in Slovakia in the 1990s and under other designations in other post-socialist countries after the fall of the Iron Curtain as the concept of private ownership took hold and new firms with trade names emerged ([Imrichová 2000: 105](#)). [Horecký \(1994: 76\)](#) was the first to define logonomastics in the Slovak language as a separate discipline. While [Imrichová \(2003: 270\)](#) mentioned the previous processing of logonyms as a subset of institutionyms, it might be better to refer to them as synonymous terms. However, the term *inštitucionymum* ‘institutionym’ applied by [Majtán \(1989: 11–12\)](#) to classify chrematonyms by object has not yet taken firm root in Slovak onomastics. On the basis of the above facts, the following words were included in the note on the definition of *brand name*: “In this sense, the term *logonym* is also used in Slovak onomastics. Logonyms are a subgroup of chrematonyms.”

The [ICOS list](#) defines *product name* as the “proper name of a product (e.g. a chocolate, car, cigarette, etc.), e.g. the car *Avensis* by Toyota”. In Slovak onomastics, the international term *pragmatonymum* ‘pragmatonym’ is used rather than the domestic term *názov výrobku* ‘product name’, because *názov výrobku* and its definition are not precise, as it is not clear whether it is the proper name of a single product (*unikátonymum* ‘unicatonym’) or the proper name of a series or a model, type, or version of mass-produced products (*serionymum* ‘serionym’). However, in non-Slavic onomastic schools, the international term *pragmatonym* is little known and applied. Rather, domestic equivalents of this term are preferred, and therefore the term *pragmatonym* is not found in the [ICOS list](#). Following the Slovak practice, we have added a similar note to this definition as in the entry *ergonymum* ‘ergonym’: “In this sense, *pragmatonymum* (English *pragmatonym*) is used in Slovak onomastics – the proper name of a type, model, kind of type, version, trademark, or series of a product manufactured serially (*serionym*), e.g. *Toyota Avensis*, *Škoda Felícia* (cars), *Jawa 500* (motorcycle) or the proper name of an individual product (*unicatonym*) such as the proper name of a unique product or item, for example of a ship, aircraft or bell like *Titanic* (ship). Pragmatonyms are a subgroup of chrematonyms.”

8. *Cryptonym – fictonym – pseudonym*

Only one of the onomastic terms that denote what are called secret names, namely *cryptonym* (Slovak *kryptonymum*), is found in the [ICOS list](#): “*cryptonym* – a secret name used for the protection of its bearer”. This definition is general regarding usage of the term in non-Slavic onomastics. From the point of view of Slavic onomastics it is imprecise because it does not clearly state whether the bearer is a person or an inanimate object. In general, in Slavic onomastics, these types are given specific terms and *cryptonym* is used only to conceal the actual name of an inanimate object such as a place or thing. Despite having translated the definition precisely into the Slovak language, the following note was added in accordance with how terms in Slavic onomastic terminology manuals are defined: “In Slovak onomastics, either the general term *fiktonymum* (English *fictonym*) or the domestic term *krycie meno* ‘secret name’ are used in the meaning ‘a name accepted to conceal the real proper name’. *Fiktonymum* (*krycie meno*) is divided into *pseudonym* (a name accepted to conceal the real name of a person) and *kryptonymum* (a name accepted to conceal the name of a place, thing, etc., but not a person).”

Despite the fact that the term *pseudonym* (the form *pseudonymum* with *-onymum* is not used in Slovak⁶) is the most widely applied term in Slovak onomastics and not just in professional onomastic terminology, the terms in Slavic onomastic manuals and their definition and classification are more precise. The reason why the terms *cryptonym* and *fictonym* are not so well known and applied is that proper names of these kinds are not studied and analysed as much as other kinds of onyms are.

9. Conclusion

By increasing the number of studies and monographs in English and German, the theories of Slavic onomastic schools enrich Western onomastics with new terms, but the converse is also true. The unification of onomastic terminology at the international level would not necessarily create artificial and often improper terms for phenomena for which a more appropriate and established term already exists in other national onomastic schools. For example, *onymický komunikačný register* ‘onymic communication register’ ([Krško 2016](#)) is by the present author considered redundant in Slovak onomastics because *mental onomasticon* (Slovak *mentálny onomastikon*), which is also known in some other Slavic onomastic schools,⁷ has long been applied with the same meaning.

⁶ The Slovak language had earlier borrowed the word *pseudonym* in that form *pseudonymum* even before Slovak onomastic terminology started forming. Since the form with *-onym* was already being used, it has remained in this form as the onomastic term.

⁷ Cf. for example the study of [Andersson \(2009\)](#) in the Czech proceedings *Teoretické a komunikační aspekty proprií* [Theoretical and communication aspects of proper names].

There are signs from the creation of the Slovak version for the [ICOS list of key onomastic terms](#) that it will not be easy for the international and domestic terms to correspond with each other, especially terms used in the non-Slavic and Slavic onomastic schools. Despite some divergences in terms and definitions that have emerged in creating the Slovak version of the [ICOS list](#) and will certainly appear in translations into other national languages, particularly the Slavic ones, the work needs to be continued. The degree in which the terminology has developed also shows the level of the discipline and it should be continued in line with the other objectives of the ICOS Terminology Group in order to extend the list to additional taxonomic terms in areas currently being processed and to terms in literary onomastics as well as in onomastic theory and methodology. The next step should be not only to create an alphabetical list of terms, but also to classify them systematically.

Another option for comprehensively processing onomastic terminology could be to process onomastic terminology in individual languages within linked digital databases. These databases would be an inventory of terms in national onomastic schools and would form the basis for unifying terminology at the international level. The Slovak Onomastic Commission project earlier mentioned in this paper is firmly on the path towards reaching this objective, which, in addition to processing Slovak onomastic terminology, offers the possibility of processing terminology in other languages, too.

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