

“LIVING” (UNOFFICIAL) PERSONAL NAMES AND THEIR RESEARCH IN SLOVAKIA*

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Abstract: The paper deals with the definition of the Slovak onomastic term *živé meno* (“living name”) and with the origin of this group of anthroponyms. Further, a detailed overview of the development of the theory and methodology of the research into these unofficial personal names is presented. The emphasis is put on the results of the examination of Slovak “living names”, on the ways of their functioning in language communication and on their development tendencies. Last but not least, further possibilities of their study along with causes impeding their research are outlined.

Keywords: anthroponomastics, official personal names, living (unofficial) personal names.

The definition of the Slovak onomastic term *živé meno* (“living name”)

A *living name* is in general an unofficial (non-official, unconventional) personal name designating an individual, individuals, or the whole family in colloquial speech, where it fulfils functions of an official name. Living names are, for example, *living personal names* (unofficial names of persons), *living family names* (unofficial names of families), *living house names* (unofficial names of houses, homesteads and, at the same time, its residents as well)¹ and *living inhabitant names* (inhabitants’ nicknames). Living, unofficial names are anthroponyms used in unofficial or semi-official communication. Vincent Blanár systematically elaborated the theory of official and unofficial names and the methodology of their research in Slovak onomastics (Blanár and Matejčík 1978; Blanár 1996², 2008³, 2001c). His theory is based on the contentual and functional understanding of a proper name, on the binary character of proper names and the integrity of the linguistic and onomastic status of a proper name. It is one of the fundamental principles of the Slovak onomastic school.

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¹ An intermediate type of proper names between anthroponyms and toponyms.

² Published in German in 2001 (Blanár 2001a).

³ The edition with English translation was published in 2009.

In Slovak onomastics, the abbreviated term *living names* has become usual in the strict sense also for living personal names designating individuals. The author of this term, typical of Slovak onomastics, is V. Blanár. The adjective *living* means not only ‘unofficial’ and ‘functioning in communication’, but mainly, according to Blanár, ‘living motivation’. It means that users of living names are still aware of the original motivation of a living name, the so-called *onymic motivation*. This motivation is irrelevant with regard to the usage and functioning not only other subgroups of anthroponyms (e.g. first names, surnames) but also other kinds of proper names in communication: “When surnames were formed from (many) nicknames within the binary naming system, their original motivation was lost due to their heredity. The lexical meaning of the derivational basis diminishes and becomes irrelevant. In an ordinary communication, the original meaning of the anthropolexeme becomes noticeable only with significantly expressive words (e.g. *Serenko, Vreštiak, Bachor, Grazel*), although it has significance as far as identification is concerned. The situation is different, however, in unofficial naming. The motivation of names is alive (which is why we use the term *living names*): e.g. *Šubíček* (‘who polished shoes’), *Icika* (‘who was very short’), *Dollároš* (‘who was in America’). For surnames, the feature of expressiveness refers to the form of the name; for unofficial names the living motivation refers to the person named” (Blanár 2009: 106).

However, to the users of living names, onymic motivation is already unknown in many cases (Valentová 2009: 241). Therefore, it would be more appropriate to put ‘unofficial character’ and ‘functioning in communication’ on the first place in the meaning of *living* in the term *living name*. The usage of this term has gradually expanded into other branches of onomastics (e.g. *living toponym*) not only in Slovak, but also in Czech onomastics, for instance.⁴

Differences between the terms *living name* and *nickname*

One of the kinds of living names tallies with individual personal nicknames. Nicknames originate and are used in minor social groups (school or student classes, various hobby groups, etc.), but most living names are unofficial, unconventional anthroponyms, which originate especially in villages and are known and used by all (or some) members of the local society (so-called narrower social ‘local’ usage). The fundamental difference is that living names in villages and towns originate because of necessity of socially determined identification and differentiation because official personal names stopped fulfilling these basic functions (identification and differentiation), whereas nicknames in minor social groups, in which official personal names sufficiently fulfil these basic functions, originate mainly from psychosocial reasons and the need for individualisation.⁵

The topic of this paper is the theory, methodology and research of living,

⁴ E.g. studies of the Czech onomastician David (latest David and Mácha 2014: 18–23).

⁵ For more differences, see Valentová (2012: 113–122).

unofficial names. The history of the research of living names in Slovakia, the results of this research, the origin and development of the theory of living names are indicated as well.

The origin and formation of living names

Living names began to form after Joseph's reforms in the Austrian monarchy (until then, all personal names had had an unofficial character so that, without the existence of the binary opposition *official vs. unofficial names*, we cannot talk about living names, since their typical feature is the opposition to official names). Emperor Joseph II codified surnames through a patent in 1780. Surnames have become heritable and socially obligatory. The principles of the origin of living names were identical to those used in the process of the forming of additional non-heritable names (predecessors of today's surnames) in the Slovak territory from the 13th century onwards. The formation and use of living names resulted from necessity of social communication in a similar way to the formation of surnames. The enactment of surnames caused only rarely the creation of new surnames, as was in the case of first names. Especially in rural societies, the official naming system stopped fulfilling its basic function of identification, as more and more persons (related or not) had the same surname, sometimes even the same first name. Living names solved the problem. Their formation and usage has been developing since, as well as their research and theory, which are, thanks to Vincent Blanár, unique not only in Slovak linguistics, but also worldwide.

The results of the research of Slovak living names

One of the first Slovak scholars who studied unofficial naming systems was František Šujanský. His work *Osobné a rodné mená slovenské* [Slovak personal and first names] (1893) dealt with unofficial forms of surnames and first names and with possessive suffixes: *-ov, -ových, -oviech, -oje, -eje, -ojo, -ové*.⁶

Another Slovak researcher in the field of living names was Ján Leška, the author of the study *O rodinných menách brezovských* [On the family names of the inhabitants of Brezová village] (1900). Despite the fact that surnames were already established⁷ by the time of his research, he found out that they could still change under the influence of nicknames if there were more bearers of the same surname in a village. He explained it based on the example of the surname *Horniak* in the village of Vrbovce in Western Slovakia.

The Slovak term *living name* with the meaning 'personal name used in colloquial speech, designating an individual, more individuals or the whole family and replacing

⁶ These suffixes were used for forming personal names denoting an individual (e.g. father *Adam* > son *Adamov*, cf. English *Adams*) or the family as a whole (e.g. family name/surname *Adam* > members of the family in question are called *Adameje, Adamoje, Adamových* etc.; the use of particular suffixes depends on local dialects and geographical areas).

⁷ The binary naming system with two anthroponymic members (first name + hereditary surname) was established approximately two centuries before the patent by Joseph II.

the functions of an official name' first occurred (in a published work) in the study *Živé mená* [Living names] by Jozef Boldiš (1948). Boldiš described and classified living names from the villages of Červený Hrádok, Nevidzany and Tajná (Central Slovakia).

Vincent Blanár created and introduced the Slovak term *živé meno* ('living name') in his unpublished thesis *Osobné mená. K základom semiologickej onomastiky* [Personal names. On the bases of semiological onomastics] (1945). In his monograph *Príspevok ku štúdiu slovenských osobných a pomiestnych mien v Maďarsku* [Contribution to the study of Slovak personal names and minor place names (microtoponyms) in Hungary] (1950), Blanár divided personal names into *official personal names* (used in spoken and written language) and *living personal names* (used in small communities where members know each other). He distinguished six types of living names: (1) more or less modified forms of first names, e.g. *Jozef⁸, Jožo, Jožino*, (2) surnames, (3) first names and nicknames, (4) first names and denotation of family membership, (5) nicknames, (6) nicknames and denotation of family membership. Vincent Blanár stated in his study *Vznik sekundárnej dvojmennej sústavy* [Formation of the secondary binominal system] (1969) that system of living names, consisting of a certain number of naming models, manifests dynamic features (e.g. heredity) in its functioning. The study *Špecifikum onomastiky* [Specificity of onomastics] (Blanár 1970) deals with, among others, the theory of naming models; anthroponymic models are created based on personal names with the same semantic functions. Four functions can be termed specifically anthroponymic: denoting family relationships, characterisation (e.g. the characterisation of a person by means of a nickname based on his/her physical or psychical features, cf. *Bitkár* 'fighter'), social function (e.g. *ujo Lubo* – literally 'uncle Lubo'; the expression *ujo* is in Slovak widely used not only for a brother or brother-in-law of one's parent, but also for any adult male) and origin (*Fajkoš z Riadku* 'Fajkoš from Riadok'; a person called *Fajkoš* coming from or living in *Riadok*⁹). A system of living names is understood as a system of anthroponymic models with specific onomastic features (Blanár 1971). In his study *K jazykovej výstavbe slovenských osobných mien* [On the linguistic formation of Slovak personal names] (1973), Blanár outlines considerations on the grammar of anthroponomastics. An inevitable precondition was for him to determine specifically anthroponymic means of expression, which are typical of naming persons in comparison with the appellative language sphere, along with a confrontation of a language structure of official and unofficial names. The study of living names opens possibilities to analyse the functions of suffixes used in the process of their formation – e.g. *-ov* and *-ák* are patronymic suffixes, *-in* is a metronymic suffix, the suffixes *-ých, -eje, -iech* reflect membership to the family as a whole, the suffixes *-ský* and *-an* denote origin or residence ('where the person is from or where the person lives').

When analysing the content of living names, Vincent Blanár initiated the application of the theory of anthroponomastic semantic features he had developed. In his point of view, the substance of proper names is the integrity of general, unique and

⁸ Living names may also contain the official form of a first name.

⁹ *Fajkoš* is a nickname, *Riadok* is a toponym.

specific signs. His theory was based on semantic functions. On the basis of basic semantic signs, he elaborated the algorithm of the anthroponymic contentual model (Blanár 1975). He characterised individual functional components based on relevant semantic signs: a first name (or a Christian name), a surname, an individual characteristic, an appellative component, a family living name, a living house name (Blanár and Matejčík 1978: 26).

The research of designation, the way of modelling and the territorial distribution of living names from Central Slovakia are thoroughly described in two volumes of the monograph *Živé mená na strednom Slovensku. I. 1. Designácia osobného mena, I. 2. Distribúcia obsahových modelov* [Living personal names in Central Slovakia. I.1 Designation of personal names, I.2 Distribution of contentual models] (Blanár and Matejčík 1978, 1983).

Blanár's studies are particularly dedicated to the contentual model (Blanár 1989) and the motivational model (Blanár 1990). In his monograph, *Teória vlastného mena* [Theory of proper names] (Blanár 1996), he outlined rules for the description of word-formation models and word-formation types important for the classification of anthroponyms. He systematised the contentual model, motivational model and naming model from an integrated perspective in the study *Onymická nominácia* [Onymic nomination] (Blanár 1995), in which he discussed the problems of onymic nomination not only from a semasiological viewpoint, but also from an onomasiological perspective.

Vincent Blanár accentuated the integrity of the linguistic and onomastic status of proper names¹⁰ in the study *(Slovenská) onomastika dnes a zajtra* [(Slovak) onomastics today and tomorrow] (Blanár 2000). As Blanár said, creating a card register with two millions items of living personal names from Central Slovakia¹¹ is a great success of Slovak onomastic and it is unique worldwide. The functional and structural viewpoints were also remarkable in the study *Problematika vývinu pomenúvania osôb* [The issue of the development of personal naming] (Blanár 2001b), in which Blanár returned to the description of his understanding of the content of a binary onymic sign, to the designation of functional members of personal names from the mononymous anthroponymic system until today and to anthroponymic signs and motivation of functional members of personal names. In his work *Vlastné meno v komunikácii (Teoretické východiská)* [Proper name in communication (theoretical bases)] (2003), Blanár dealt with the concept that knowledge of an onymic object is important for the status of a proper name and with the structuring of onymic systems in official and unofficial naming. The study *Morfologické kategórie vlastných mien* [Morphological categories of proper names] (2005) characterises morphological aspects of different types of proper names

¹⁰ The integrity of the linguistic and onomastic status of proper names means that each proper name is understood as an element of the vocabulary of a particular language and simultaneously as an element of an onymic set. Proper names are viewed from the positions of linguistics and onomastics.

¹¹ The register is held at Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Mateja Bela / the Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (Central Slovakia).

(including living names) as components of particular onymic subsystems, taking into account the onomastic status of proper names. It is the most extensive work about the grammatical aspects of Slovak proper names.

Blanár's theoretical concepts were summarised in his monographs *Teória vlastného mena* [Theory of proper names] (1996 and in German in 2001) and *Vlastné meno vo svetle teoretickej onomastiky / Proper Names in the Light of Theoretical Onomastics* (2008, parallel Slovak-English edition from 2009).

A large part of the monograph *Osobné mená bývalej Tekovskej stolice* [Personal names in the former Tekov district] (1969) by Štefan Krištof deals with living names. Krištof mostly understood living names just as nicknames. According to him, living names are personal names that originated after the binary naming system had been enacted by law in the late 18th century. He understood living inhabitant names,¹² characterising also a society of unrelated persons, as a special group of living names. For the names with one component in official form and the second component in unofficial form (e.g. the official name *Katarína Mäsiarová* > the living name *Kata Mäsiarová*), he introduced the term *semi-official names*. At that time (1969), Krištof did not use the method of modelling and, therefore, he did not consider living names as a combination of functional components. An important discovery made by Krištof was that the creation of living names began in some villages, e.g. in Valaská Belá (Central Slovakia), already before the 18th century. He also observed that living names were disappearing in towns and in suburban villages in the explored area of the former Tekov district (Central Slovakia).

Izidor Kotulič (1964) analysed living names from the village of Sedlice in south-west Šariš (Eastern Slovakia). He came to the conclusion that the reasons for creating living names are a continual reproduction along with a natural expansion of the number of individuals and an insufficient number of official names (certain family names/surnames are relatively stable, but the number of first/Christian names is more flexible, mainly among the youngest generation) for the unambiguous identification of the inhabitants of a village. He included first names among the components of living names, defined their official (legal), hypocoristic and dialectal forms and described the content and form of seven types of living names found in the explored village, already using a simplified modelling of living names. He defined and characterised *living house names* as names of 'family environment' (houses, dwellings with accessories) and *family living names* as names of several or all family members (collective names). Another study by Kotulič (*K jednému typu tvorenia živých mien* [A means of forming living names], 1973) deals with forming historical surnames and contemporary patronymic living names of young men. He called the suffixes which formed patronymic names of sons *junior suffixes* (e.g. father *Adam* > son *Adamík*; *-ík* is a junior suffix). Izidor Kotulič studied living names also in other localities of Eastern Slovakia (Kotulič 1976). He

¹² Today the term *inhabitant nicknames* is used. Such nicknames unofficially denote inhabitants of towns, villages and their parts.

characterised formal and semantic aspects of basic types of living names on the territory of southwest Šariš and in further selected villages of Eastern Slovakia.

Works by Ján Matejčík are immediately related to the heuristic research of living names in Central Slovakia, initiated in 1965. The research was organised by Matejčík with the help of students of the Department of Slovak Language and Literature of the former Faculty of Education in Banská Bystrica.¹³ Together with V. Blanár, Matejčík published the monograph on living names in Central Slovakia. He is also the author of many studies on living names from this region. Ján Matejčík participated in the preparation of the questionnaire for the research of living names and also contributed to the description of the model of living names obtained on the territory of Central Slovakia. The study *Pokus o klasifikáciu prezývok vo východnom Novohrade* [An attempt to classify nicknames in Eastern Novohrad] (Matejčík 1968) deals with nicknames in Eastern Novohrad (Central Slovakia) and explains their creation as a result of an aversion to unmarked, already neutral surnames and the necessity to distinguish individuals with the same surname. Nicknames, according to Matejčík, used to arise at a later stage in one's life and, therefore, they do not have the same social and legal validity as official (legal) names. He also focused on the formal structure of nicknames, on the influence of dialect and language elements from foreign languages and on the classification of nicknames from the viewpoint of semantic analysis. Using Vincent Blanár's theory of proper names and six previously described semantic functions of living names,¹⁴ Ján Matejčík characterised anthroponymic models of living names in the villages of Cinobaňa and Málinec in the Lučenec district (south of Central Slovakia); he analysed the living names of 1500 people. Matejčík's study *Z jazykovej výstavby ženských pomenovaní* [Lingual form of female names] (1973) is based on the distributional analysis of the frequency of women's or girls' contentual models of official and living names from 15 localities (2000 female names) from the entire area of Central Slovakia. Ján Matejčík was interested in synonymous relations, in the lingual depiction of models, and he also described anthroponymic suffixes typical of the area studied. A part of his study is dedicated to the language form of children's unofficial names. He also applied Blanár's theory of proper names to names from 16 villages in the Novohrad, Liptov and Zvolen territories, where he mapped the frequency and the distribution of contentual models of living names. He examined word-formation models only marginally (Matejčík 1976). The study *Vyjadrenie obsahových modelov* [Expression of contentual models] (1983) deals with the dependence of the linguistic form of contentual models

¹³ Today the Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University, in Banská Bystrica (Central Slovakia).

¹⁴ The functions: (1) the denotation of gender (male/female) as such, (2) the denotation of family relationships, (3) the proprietary function (denoting proprietary relations), (4) the characterisation function (an individual characteristic of a person), (5) the denotation of the situation of the house in the village, where the bearer of the living name in question lives, naming after the previous owner of the living name bearer's residence, naming after his/her previous residence, naming after the place of his/her origin, (6) the denotation of social status (Blanár 1972: 14–20).

on the denotation of family relationships and analyses the role of the environment on the formation of living names, as well as the conditions underlying this formation. He discovered that morphemes are preferred to fulfil the differentiating function in the official naming system, but it is whole antroponymic lexemes that have the same function in living names. The subject of the study *Apelatívá v živých osobných menách* [Appellatives in living personal names] (1987) is onymisation, the characteristics of appellative bases in some layers of the vocabulary occurring in contentual models, the onomasiological structure of contentual models and the variability of word-formation models. A special study by Ján Matejčík was devoted to interjectional models of living personal names (Matejčík 1994). He analysed the process of onymisation of interjections or interjectional roots. In another paper (1983), Matejčík examined living personal names on the territories of Kremnica, Banská Štiavnica, Nitrianske Pravno (Central Slovakia) and their environs, where German immigrants settled in the 13th century, and described the behaviour of living names in the areas inhabited by various ethnics that speak different languages. One of his last studies also deals with psycholinguistic aspects of living names (Matejčík 1991).

A prominent Slovak onomastician, Milan Majtán, substantially contributed to the research into living names in his study published in 1972 (Majtán 1972). He highlighted the importance of the external factors influencing the formation of naming and classified them into: a) generational and social factors; b) factors regarding the presence or absence of a person referred to by means of his/her living name when the living name is used or whether s/he is addressed by that living name; c) neutral and expressive circumstances. Last but not least, he mentioned the position of appellatives in naming models.

In order to supplement the concept of Blanár's naming models with linguistic characteristic, Mária Ivanová-Šalingová (1972) published a paper on this subject.

Ludovít Šmelík (1972) researched living names in Záhorie (south-western Slovakia). He viewed living names in the context of the development of personal names (from the mononymous system), first (Christian) names, gradual constituting non-heritable secondary names and the enactment of hereditary family names (surnames) to contemporary living names, which represent the continuation of this natural development. Šmelík illustrated this development of personal names with historical names from Záhorie and studied parallels with reasons and processes of formation of contemporary living names in the village of Kúty (the Záhorie region).

Elena Krasnovská (1973) analysed living names in the Gemer region (Central Slovakia) in several, mainly small villages of the Rožňava district. She described the most frequent naming models used for naming married men, married women and children. She primarily studied distinctive features of living names and came to the conclusion that the most frequent distinctive feature in the explored territory was the proprietorial feature (i.e. the living name in question is based on the living name of a house where the person lived or was born). Krasnovská (1970) analysed 8 types of living names used for men, 8 types of living names used for women and 5 types of living

house names in the village of Brdárka (Eastern Gemer). Moreover, she characterised individual functional components of living names from 6 villages in Eastern Gemer (Krasnovská 1972). Using the modelling method, she discovered 42 naming models in the researched locality. One of her studies (Krasnovská 1976) was concentrated on semantic and word-formation types of living house names in 7 villages in Eastern Gemer.

Júlia Kriššáková (1973) researched living names in the Goral area of the Spiš region (Eastern Slovakia). She analysed living names formed from settlement names; there were 10.22% such names in the explored territory. In another study (Kriššáková 1983) she paid attention to living names of married women and of daughters and found that one of the most productive ways of their formation is deriving feminine names from masculine ones; she particularly dealt with the suffix *-ula*, which is often used in dialectal, unofficial communication in contrast to the literary word-formation system.¹⁵

Miloslav Smatana (1994) studied living names in the village of Rajec (north of Central Slovakia). The findings of his research have confirmed the known fact that living names are mainly used to identify people with the same surnames. These living names are hereditary and are typical of old Rajec families, not of newcomers. In the case of more recent living names, the characterisation function with strong expressive character comes to the fore and such living names do not primarily originate from identification needs, as it was in the case of older layers of living names.

Living names have also captured the attention of Slovak linguists who have not primarily dealt with onomastics (or, more precisely, anthroponomastics) – e.g. Ján Oravec (1973) and Gejza Horák (1955, 1973) wrote several studies on this issue. Ferdinand Buffa incorporated unofficial forms of surnames in the dialect dictionary in his monograph *Nárečie Dlhej Lúky v Bardejovskom okrese* [The dialect of Dlhá Lúka in the Bardejov district] (Eastern Slovakia) (1953) and included several questions concerning word-formation means denoting family relationships in Slovak dialects into the questionnaire for *Atlas slovenského jazyka* [The atlas of the Slovak language] (1968–1984). In his further research (Buffa 1973), he followed the frequency of the suffixes of the functional components of living names on the entire Slovak territory and studied which suffixes are used for forming names of wives from names of their husbands, names of daughters and sons from names of their fathers, names of minors and names for the family as a whole from the name of the father.

Iveta Valentová (Šlabjarová 1994, 1996, 1999; Valentová 1996, 2009) researched living names in two neighbouring villages in the Upper Nitra region in Central Slovakia. Her work was based on the theory and research by Vincent Blanár and Ján Matejčík, but instead of adopting their concept of pure designation (i.e. the contentual model), she created the concept of the naming model including all the relevant features

¹⁵ In literary Slovak, noun feminine surnames are derived from masculine surnames with the word-formation suffix *-ová* (*Kováč* > *Kováčová*) and adjectival feminine surnames with the suffix *-á* (*Plachý* > *Plachá*).

of contentual, motivational and linguistic aspects of living names. Such a method enabled her to conduct the research in a more complex way and to analyse the system of living names in the explored territory more thoroughly. On the basis of a socio-anthroponymic questionnaire, she (Valentová 2009, 2010) found out which types of living names are used by particular generations. In her following papers she paid special attention to the linguistic aspect of living names (Valentová 2000, 2003) and to their onymic motivation (Valentová 2011).

Her monograph *Živé osobné mená v hornonitrianskej oblasti* [Living personal names in the Upper Nitra region] (Valentová 2009) deals with the content, motivation and language features of living names in two villages in the Upper Nitra region (Central Slovakia). Despite the growing population in both villages, which causes less familiarity of their inhabitants with each other, and regardless of the increase of migration, which leads to greater variety of official surnames, the system of living names is still functional and relatively rich as far as the contentual, motivational and linguistic aspects are concerned. A high frequency of those naming models of living names that are to a large extent motivated by official names indicates the decreasing tendency to use the system of living names in everyday communication.

Anita Holá (2000) researched and described surnames and living house names in the village of Janova Lehota (Central Slovakia) up to 1944. She pointed out the existence and functioning of living names in the town of Nová Baňa (Central Slovakia) and discovered that the most frequent functional component in that locality was the individual characteristic. The decrease in using living names was documented mainly for the city centre. Thanks to the use of the modelling method, Holá could compare the results of her research with those by Blanár and Matejčík.

Miroslav Kazík (2003) was interested in living names in the settlement of Topolecká, a part of the town of Stará Turá (Western Slovakia). A characteristic feature of this locality is its isolation, which has fundamentally affected its unofficial naming system. As a result of a high frequency of identical surnames, official names have completely lost their identification function and it was the system of living names based predominantly on individual characteristics that started fulfilling this function. Kazík (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) also published recorded living names and their content models from the village of Paprad near Stará Turá, but these partial research data unconditionally require systematic processing.

Ivana Kopásková (2007, 2008, 2010), with the use of the modelling method, characterised the types of living names in a little town, Krásno nad Kysucou, in north-western Slovakia. She came to the conclusion that the system of living names in this town is relatively rich and varied and anticipated good perspectives as to the functioning of living names in the future.

Anita Holá (2006, 2007) conducted a recent research of living names of Slovaks in Hungary. She studied the influence of the bilingual environment on the system of living names in the village of Nyíregyháza (Slovak *Níredháza*) and its surroundings in north-western Hungary and mentioned some peculiarities of living names in the

villages of Pilisszentkereszt (Slovak *Mlynky*), Pilisszantó (Slovak *Santov*) and Pilisczév (Slovak *Čív*) near Budapest. Miroslav Kazík, Tünde Tušková and Alžbeta Uhrínová (2011) researched unofficial naming in Sára (Slovak *Šára*), a part of the town of Dabas (Slovak *Dabaš*) near Budapest, whose inhabitants are mostly Slovaks.

Other studies concerning contemporary unofficial anthroponymy are primarily focused on the research and characteristic of students' nicknames, more recently also Internet nicks. Among them, the study *Živé mená žiakov a študentov z motivačného a slovotvorného hľadiska* [The living names of pupils and students from the viewpoints of motivation and word-formation] (2006) by Michal Jozefovič is worth mentioning. The author further elaborated and supplemented Blanár's modelling method mainly in its motivational and linguistic aspects. Jozefovič proposed a classification of motivational factors based on the opposition *appellative – proprium* (proper name) and dealt with a more detailed classification of anthroponymic suffixes in word-formation models, because the rich diversity of suffixes is a characteristic of students' nicknames. The aim of Jozefovič's work (2010) was to deepen the modelling method of living names.

The results of recent research show that thanks to various factors the use of living names in some localities has declined and new living names do not arise. This is proved, for instance, by the fact that to a large extent living names are motivated through official names. It means that various unofficial forms (hypocoristics, shortened, dialectal or deformed forms) of official first names and surnames are more and more used for identifying persons in unofficial communication as well. For example, the growing migration of people and increasing number of inhabitants in some settlements have allowed for the introduction of new surnames in those localities. These surnames have a sufficient identification value and therefore they also serve as a motive for the creation of family living names and living house names in intensions of language forms used in the territory in question. Thus, it is no longer necessary to identify a person or a family having a unique surname in a village by an additional or distinct name. Despite these and other social and economical factors, the system of living names remains functional in the territories investigated. This is confirmed by the figures of the average frequency distribution of living names, i.e., how many living names on average refer to one person in the village: e.g., the average frequency distribution of living names was 1.6 in the village of Diviacka Nová Ves in Central Slovakia in 1993 and 1.51 in the town of Krásno nad Kysoucou in north-western Slovakia in 2006. Areal comparative research can be done thanks to the living names model method.

Possibilities and perspectives for further research

The research of living names should continue particularly in Eastern and Central Slovakia. In the villages of Central Slovakia where the research was conducted more than thirty years ago, it would be worth seeing the functioning of the unofficial naming system today, what changes have occurred in unofficial naming and what has caused them. Although the research of living names as such includes sociolinguistic

viewpoints, finding out which naming models of living names are preferred, e.g., by particular generations is valuable. Similar socio-anthropomastic research is inevitable.

Computer processing opens new possibilities, particularly in areal comparative anthropomastics. Creating a digital database of living names (from the already existing paper card files of Central Slovak living names and from recent material of living names gained during the research in other parts of Slovakia) should enable to compare naming models with respect to individual regions and areas, to analyse the functioning of living names in communication, to study to what extent the official anthroponymic system interferes in the system of living names and to reveal the development, trends and changes in content, motivation and language structure of living names.

Currently, despite the above-mentioned needs and possibilities, the research of living personal names in Slovakia has slowed down and rather declines. This may be caused by two basic factors. The research of living anthroponyms as opposed to the research of dialects is a much more complicated matter. Despite the fact that in normal unofficial communication living names are spontaneously used as neutral forms, due to various factors, such as the influence of literary language and the higher education of population etc., they seem to be markedly socially inappropriate for language users, especially when dealing with unknown persons (researchers). One of the specific features of research and processing unofficial personal names is also working with personal data.

The second fundamental problem that complicates the research is the currently valid law concerning the protection of personal data, because municipal authorities are reluctant to supply necessary personal data and lists of official names of inhabitants of villages to researchers. The examination of any unofficial naming system is considerably more complicated and restricted without knowing official personal names of inhabitants, their addresses (house numbers are important for the research of living house names) and at least, without the year of birth (an important information for socio-anthropomastic research when finding out differences between particular age categories).

Let us hope that these problems will not discourage future researchers and that the research of unofficial anthroponymic systems that has such a long tradition in Slovakia will continue.

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