GLOBALISATION, LOCALISATION AND GLOCALISATION IN ROMANIAN COMMERCIAL ONOMASTICS

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Abstract: The present paper aims at analysing the case of commercial onomastics in contemporary Romanian public space as regards some of the effects that globalisation, localisation and glocalisation (as sociolinguistic and sociocultural phenomena) have had on the development of this onomastic branch. Thus, the study discusses in what way the three aforementioned processes determine the functioning of the commercial onomastic behaviour in relation to the two main stages of the act of naming, i.e., name attribution and name interpretation, as well as the corresponding actors, i.e., the name giver(s) and the name user(s). Methodologically, this article explores trade names from the perspective of sociolinguistics, but also by using precepts and concepts pertaining to semiotics and semantics (pointing out that trade names often behave as unconventional names, as they identify, individualise and describe their bearers). As illustration, the paper provides examples from a personal corpus of trade names (shop names in particular) collected from the northwestern part of Romania, namely from urban and rural settlements in the Maramureş County.

Keywords: globalisation, localisation, glocalisation, onomastics, shop names

1. Introduction

This study proposes an onomastic illustration of the concepts *globalisation*, *localisation* and *glocalisation*, with respect to shop names in the Maramureş County, northwest Romania. The three notions are defined and characterised from the perspective of sociolinguistics, underlining their interdependence and their effect on the field of Romanian trade names, especially in relation to names of shops. The article aims at highlighting the specific nature of commercial name-giving in contemporary Romanian public space with reference to the two main parties that are involved in this process, i.e., name giver(s) and name user(s). In addition, the theoretical framework of the paper consists of principles from semiotics and semantics, as the research points out that most shop names – and most trade names, by extension – are unconventional names[1] due to the fact that they identify, individualise and describe their bearers.

The onomastic items exemplified pertain to a corpus of shop names (comprising more than 500 elements) collected in September 2010-May 2013 by means of research on the field, from mostly from urban localities, but also from rural settlements, in the Maramureş County. The business establishments whose names are discussed are, on the one hand, wholesalers and large retailers and, on the other, small and medium-sized retailers.

2. Conceptual delimitations: *globalisation*, *localisation* and *glocalisation*

Given the complex movements and transformations that are reunited under the umbrella of the concept of *globalisation*, one may construe this term as "shorthand for the intensified flows of capital, goods, people, images and discourses around the globe, driven by technological innovations mainly in the field of media and information and communication technology, and resulting in new patterns of global activity, community

[1] This approach to commercial names is related to a broader-scoped research, developed under Unconventional Romanian Anthroponyms in European Context: Formation Patterns and Discursive Function, a research project funded by CNCS, code PN-II-RU-TE-2011-3-0007, contract number 103/2011 (project manager: Associate Professor Daiana Felecan).

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organization and culture" (Blommaert 2011: 13). Globalisation is tightly linked to the English language and the sociocultural, socioeconomic and sociopolitical values that it stands for, especially (verging on exclusively) in relation to American space. What Latin underwent during the Middle Ages (and in some parts of Europe even later on) and French throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, English massively undergoes today. The status of English as a *lingua franca* has been established in time, over centuries of social mobility (Crystal 2010: 13), and it is presently a truly undeniable fact. According to Schneider (2007: 1),

> For centuries scholars have dreamt of a single, universal language which would allow all of mankind to communicate with each other directly, but all attempts at constructing such a code artificially have failed in practice. Now, it seems, one has emerged quite naturally. The English language has spread into precisely this role without any strategic planning behind this process – it is the world's lingua franca and the language of international communication, politics, commerce, travel, the media, and so on.

Moreover, whereas up to the seventeenth century, English proved to be "one of the most hospitable languages in its acceptance of foreign loans" (Stojković 2005: 106)[2], due to the cultural and economic changes it witnessed, it has become today's primary donor language. According to Stojković (ibid.), "In nearly all fields of human knowledge there is a very free and versatile linguistic borrowing of English words by other languages".

Besides triggering ardent debates on the aspects of globalisation, the prevalence of the English language also calls our attention to the issue of *localisation*. The two processes are interdependent and their development is recorded simultaneously. Thus, "In times of social changes and during processes of globalisation from which proceeds a threat of social alienation, people show a growing interest in their own local and regional history" (Boerrigter 2007: 56). The disappearance of economic and political borders leaves people searching for their own identities, a quest that most often shipwrecks in either one of two extreme poles. If this identity is discovered in the embracing of an extensional reference frame (i.e., beyond local circumscription), the native culture is abandoned in favour of a global, cosmopolitan one that promises permanent and unhindered communication. Nevertheless, if identity means being locally connected, one cannot help but notice that localism pervades the individuals' mindsets, being almost like a revolutionary statement, "the feeling to be part of one firm society in which individuals can find their desired collective regional conceptions and symbols" (Boerrigter 2007: 56).

In this multi-dimensional picture, it might seem superfluous to affirm that language plays a significant part; it is both the element that unites, as well as the element that separates groups of people. A language is the repository of human knowledge, of social and cultural values, and therefore fulfils a vital role in the "establishment and preservation of national, group and individual identity" (Stojković 2005: 107), by primarily (but not absolutely) distinguishing a community of speakers from another. In the wake of globalisation, people discover their lives have become increasingly monitored by authorities beyond the grasp of those local institutions that, in one way or another, nurtured in them a sense of authenticity. Steadily, their feeling of "belonging to a secure culture is eroded"

[2] The second edition of the Oxford Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases (2010) proves that English still is a borrowing-friendly language. In the "Preface", Delahunty quotes and expands David Crystal's description of the English language as "'a vacuum cleaner… It sucks words in from any language it makes contact with.' And quite a large vacuum-cleaner – English has sucked words from over 350 languages around the world – working at an even faster rate" (Delahunty 2010: vii). Likewise, Schneider (2007: 2) and Crystal (2002: 270-271; 2005: 13) underline how much English has diversified as a result of its global use.

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(Stojković 2005: 108). At the same time, it is utterly idealistic to believe that a culture could elude integration into the socioeconomic landscape of the "global capitalist market". The only viable option is to adapt the influences coming from the donor culture to one's own needs and tastes, to best suit one's own cultural identity. According to Stojković (2005: 111), as long as we discriminate between "language for communication" and "language for identification", there is no need to fear that we might have to deal with linguistic colonisation. In this context, identity assumes the existence of an individual speaking more than a language and, for that individual, the linguistically determined identity is "not unitary and fixed", but "multi-faceted, non-unitary and contradictory" (Stojković 2005: 111, with reference to Norton, B. 2000. *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited).

One further point needs to be highlighted with regard to the concepts/phenomena of globalisation and localisation. At their crossroads, there lies the process of *glocalisation*, which denotes the context-bound variegation of the English language (along with the sociocultural implications that derive thereon) as a predictable consequence of its worldwide dissemination. As Schneider (2007: 316) puts it, "some degree of fragmentation of English, the emergence of local vernaculars utilized to encode subtle social messages, is going on at the same time" with the global spread of the language. While it is accurate to state that, in contemporary Romanian space, the use of English conveys a certain social status and belonging that differs depending on the community where it is practised, it would be far fetched to claim that it gives way to a new dialect of English, resulting from the mixture with Romanian. Thus, the localisation of English does not come about in the shape of "fusing with indigenous language input to yield new dialects suitable for the expression of local people's hearts and minds" (Schneider 2011: 229), but by means of borrowings in specific fields or in colloquial and phatic discourse.

3. Romanian shop names as indices of globalisation, localisation and glocalisation

Sjöblom (2013: 2) claims that "local and global are not antipodes but rather different perspectives to interpret different socio-cultural phenomena", "two sides of the same coin" (id.: 4). In what commercial names are concerned, the adjectives "local" and "global" describe names in relation to the target consumership of the named entities (whether one refers to business establishments, products or brands). Therefore, "*Glocalisation* means that global and local features reach their meaning and identity only in relation to each other. Local is not a counterpart to the concept of global but rather an aspect of globalisation, and globalisation is a kind of hybridisation process" (ibid., italics in the original).

The language choice visible in trade names is a crucial indicator of the aforementioned three orientations. According to Sjöblom (2013: 9), names of business entities that are aimed at a global market may be in English (as the *lingua franca* of globalisation), Latin or Greek (as "universal languages"), or quasi-words and internationalisms (words that can easily be understood in several languages). Contrariwise, locally-oriented names are meant to be decoded only by a specific language group, which is why they may be based on dialectal language items (id.: 8). Consequently, glocal trade names meet both prerequisites: are locally meaningful and "globally functional" (ibid.). Nonetheless, Sjöblom (ibid.) underlines that "the globality or locality of name depends on the context where the name is used".

Thus, against the background of contemporary Romanian public space, trade names and, in this case, shop names prove to be globally-minded not only when they are in English, but also when they are in other easily distinguishable languages, such as French, Italian or German, especially if one takes into account the recent wave of migration. The same

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function is fulfilled by international geographical and cultural names and sometimes even by foreign personal names. Shop names that can be linked to localism are in Romanian; within this group, shop names consisting of categorial appellative terms are considered to be reminiscent of the pre-1989 period, when commercial names were generally inconspicuous and did not express individualisation or originality. Glocal designations of shops follow English models or combine items from various languages, one of which is necessarily Romanian.

In continuation of Sjöblom's (2013) apprehension of the terms in question, this study interprets commercial names with reference to contemporary Romanian public space; thus, *glocal, local* and *glocal* do not describe the contexts in which the names are meant to function, but the effect that they are meant to have on potential customers in the present-day Maramureş County; therefore, they also characterise the name giver's intention. Global names convey the semantic value [Western], which implicitly means [+high class] and perhaps even [+exotic]; therefore, a shop bearing a global name may assure potential customers of the high quality of the products sold. By contrast, local names are particularly significant in the micro- or macro-society of the autochthonous space, which does not mean that they could not be decoded in a foreign environment (see, for instance, shop names that include names of important Romanian writers). Some shop names in Romanian have a marked practical function: they indicate the type of business establishment either directly (by stating the type of shop: e.g., *farmacie* 'pharmacy') or indirectly (by indicating products sold by a certain kind of shop, e.g., *Aspirina* 'the aspirin'). Finally, glocal names aim both at being locally decodable (through the Romanian component) and at establishing a positive connection with the Western world.

3.1. Globally-minded names of shops

In the commercial landscape of the public space of the Maramureş County, Romania, shop names are sometimes derived from other foreign proper names, such as first names of various origins: English (*Emilly, Helena, Jasmine, Sally*), French (*Mathilde, Mireille*) or Italian (*Massimo, Matteo*). While the English names can be explained by claiming that they are meant to give an unspecific Western air to the business, the French and Italian ones are linked to sociocultural stereotypes. Thus, a shop name like *Mathilde* or *Mireille* can be considered suggestive of the French prestige norm in matters of women's fashion, which is widely acknowledged throughout the world (the same can be said about *Massimo* and *Matteo*, but in relation to the Italian high standard in men's fashion).

Besides anthroponyms, global shop names may consist of international geographical names, which suffer de- and re-semanticisation, as in this context (i.e., of commercial naming), they cease to denote "unique reference" (Pârlog 2002: 228) and become indices of certain cultural dimensions. The associations that they convey are related to Western values, sophistication, high class and power, as the names cross Romania's borders. Thus, shop names comprise place names: *Alaska Outdoor Shop, Bahama, Daytona* (a beach in Florida, the USA), *El Passo* (< *El Paso*, the name of a city in the American state of Texas), *London Outlet, Luxor* and *Venezia* (the last two names designate jewellery stores; thus, the original toponyms are meant to suggest richness, class and prestige).

Cultural names undergo a de-/re-semanticisation comparable to that of geographical names. Semiotically, they function especially as symbols, as the name-giving is essentially arbitrary: i.e., there is no similarity between the referent of the cultural name and the referent of the homonymous shop name. Whatever associative meanings might be construed, they are presuppositional and established by the name giver, in order to make his/her business stand out in the very competitive market economy. Moreover, as a cultural name is already

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established and recognisable at the level of encyclopaedic knowledge in a community, it is more easily remembered by potential customers.

Cultural names included in shop names in the contemporary public space of the Maramureş County may be related to:

- mythology: *Artemis*, *Cora* (part of an international chain), *Helios*, *Ramaiana* (< *Ramayana*);

- films and cartoons: *Al Bundy* (the name of the main character in the American sitcom *Married with Children*), *Full Monty*, *Pet Shop Scooby Doo*, *Roadrunner* (< *The Road Runner*, the partner of Wile E. Coyote from a series of *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* cartoons), *Stargate*;

- other brand names: *Armany Fashion* (< *Armani*, the brand name or the family name of the brand's creator and renowned fashion designer, Giorgio Armani), *Lafayete* (< *Lafayette*, a famous French department store), *Lotus Jeans*, *Outlet Sport Puma*, *Royal Canin* (an international brand of pet food, founded in France), *Tiffany* (< *Tiffany's*, or *Tiffany & Co.*, a luxury American jewellery store).

Apart from proper names, shop names may also consist of foreign non-proprial constructions. In such cases, there is a preponderance of English-based names: *Beauty Shoes*, *Blue Jeans*, *Bike Shop*, *Boneshaker*, *Casual*, *Cheap Shop*, *Country Sofa*, *Cream & Pink*, *Crowns*, *Family Service*, *4Friends* (English preposition *for*, expressed by the number *4*, due to their homophony), *Happy*, *Home Computers*, *Jolly*, *Marks*, *Mr Decoration*, *Music Center*, *Needs*, *Outlet*, *Power Tools*, *Women Princess* (*princess* was initially spelled *princes*, but the form was corrected by the owners), and others. Foreign non-proprial shop names in the Maramureş County were also found in French (*Boutique; Carrefour*, part of an international chain; *Chez Leroi*, with *leroi* instead of *le roi*; *Matmazel*, based on *Mademoiselle*, spelled according to its approximately perceived pronunciation), Latin (*Ave*, *Domus*, *Ex Libris*, *Simplicitas*, *Universitas*), Italian (*Benvenuti*, *Pavimenti*, *Prima Bella*) or German (*Praktiker*, *Profi* – both stores are part of international chains).

3.2. Shop names under the influence of localism

As it was already mentioned, names that are indices of localisation instead of globalisation are always in standard or dialectal Romanian. As in the case of globally-oriented names, locally-minded ones may be derived from anthroponyms, that is, from first names (*Ana*, *Anca*, *Andra*, *Dorina*, *Viorel*), family names (*Anghiuş, Pănescu, Someşan*) or full names (first name + family name: *Ion Moş*). Anthroponyms may also be combined with appellatives, which usually identify the type of shop designated: *Farmacia Dulfu* (*farmacie* 'pharmacy'), *Florăria Renata* (*florărie* 'flower shop'), *Magazin Ionuţ* (*magazin* 'shop'). Geographical names used as names of shops are scarce: *Centrul Comercial Maramureşul* (*centru comercial* 'shopping centre'), *Dacia*. A similar situation is that of shop names including culturally significant proper names; the source names belonged to important Romanian writers (poets, in particular): *George Coşbuc, Librăria Mihai Eminescu* (*librărie* 'bookstore'), *Librăria Vasile Alecsandri*.

Shop names that fall under the scope of localism are often based on non-proprial constructions. In most cases, non-proprial elements comprised in such commercial names are indicative of the type of shop, by identifying a variety of products (e.g., *Amidonul* < *amidon* 'starch'; *Aspirina* < *aspirină* 'aspirin'; *Ferestre şi uşi* 'windows and doors'; *Încălţăminte* 'footwear'; *Legume fructe* 'vegetables fruit'; *Mobilă* 'furniture'; *Perla neagră* 'the black pearl') or the actual business category (e.g., *Feronerie* 'ironmonger's'; *Magazin naturist* 'shop selling alternative medicine products'; *Mercerie* 'small wares shop'; *Pescărie* 'fishmonger's').

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One can easily notice the high frequency of names that are derived from appellatives referring to the animal world: *Albatros* ('albatross'), *Cameleon* ('chameleon'; there are two instances of this name: a shop selling women's clothing and another selling building materials), *Cormoran* ('cormorant'), *Libelula* (*libelulă* 'dragonfly'), *Licurici* ('firefly'), *Mamut* ('mammoth'; the name sometimes appears with the Romanian appellative *electrocasnice* 'household appliances')[3], *Rândunica* (*rândunică* 'swallow'), *Stupina* (*stupină* 'bee house/beehive'), *Vidra* (*vidră* 'otter'). It is interesting that most of these names are related to winged creatures.

3.3. Glocalism and Romanian shop names

The examples listed in the following paragraphs can be considered to illustrate the effect of glocalisation on Romanian commercial onomastics. Most of the shop names combine English and Romanian words, resulting in structures that make sense locally, while they may also be understood in non-Romanian contexts or by non-Romanian speakers. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the values the names are meant to convey rather pertain to globalisation ([Western], [+ high class]). Often enough, the association between the Romanian and English component is unusual, underlining the distinct linguistic appurtenance; this trick is felicitous, as it easily draws the attention of prospective customers.

There is an increasing presence of anglicised Romanian names used as shop names. Most of the times, this process implies the use of final *–y* instead of Romanian *–i* in truncated hypocoristic forms (*Aly*, *Andy*, *Boby*, *Lumy*, *Oly*) or the doubling of consonants (*Ella*). Similarly, in the example *Ady & Ana*, the use of final *–y* instead of *–i* in the first truncation and of the *and* symbol, "&", to coordinate the linguistic units is meant to anglicise the onomastic expression, to bestow upon it the prestige that the use and alleged knowledge of English entail. A prepositional phrase can sometimes appear after the proper name: *Deea For You* (*Deea*, a hypocoristic form of the Romanian female first name *Andreea* + *for you*). More often, however, it is English categorial terms or markers (i.e., terms that are indicative of the field to which the referent belongs without clearly stating it) that appear with Westernised or unmarked Romanian first names: *Dany & Lya Design* (< *Dany*, a hypocoristic of the Romanian male forename *Daniel* or the female forename *Daniela* + the *and* symbol, "&" + *Lya*, from *Lia*, a Romanian female first name + *design*. Along with the anglicised forms of the two anthroponyms and the use of the *and* symbol, one could easily infer that the appellative is used to create the impression of a commercial establishment where customers are sure to find products that live up to the Western standards of fashion.), *Nicolae Company* (< Romanian male first name *Nicolae* + *company*), *Veronique Style* (< French female first name, instead of Romanian *Veronica* + *style*). Some shop names are based on constructions with the synthetical genitive (*'s*): *Dan's Market* (Romanian or English male first name *Dan*, a truncated form from *Daniel*, with the synthetical genitive *'s* + *market*, the head of the noun phrase), *Lilly's Vintage* (English female hypocoristic *Lilly*, with the synthetical genitive *'s*; the name is a diminutive of *Elisabeth*, but it could also be the English correspondent of the Romanian hypocoristic *Lili*, which is usually derived from *Elena* or *Liliana* + *vintage*, from the phrase *vintage clothing shop* or *vintage shop*). Sometimes, Romanian first names may also be preceded by English appellatives that are suggestive of the type of shop: e.g., *Blue Jeans Ionuţ* (English *blue jeans* + Romanian male hypocoristic *Ionuț*, derived from the Romanian male first name *Ion*. The use of the hypocoristic, which is a traditional onomastic element, conveying familiarity and closeness,

[3] The owner's preference in this case imitates a successful model found in France, according to Felecan (2013: 137). However, the French model is not transparent unless customers have knowledge of the original name bearer and, therefore, the name may be construed as being in Romanian.

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clashes with the English phrase, which is indicative of the present-day thoroughly Americanised Romanian public space, and gives way to humorous semantic associations.).

English categorial terms may co-occur with Romanian interjections: *Cucubau Toystore* (< Romanian interjection *cucu bau*, used during the children's game of *hide-and-seek* + English compound noun *toy store*). Likewise, they are also found with portmanteau words: *Animania Shop* (< portmanteau word *animania* [Romanian *animal* + Romanian *manie* 'hobby, passion'] + English *shop*).

4. Concluding remarks

Shop names in contemporary Romanian public space, as well as trade names in general, delineate a language domain that is highly suitable for assessing the effects of globalisation, localisation and glocalisation on the society. As the examples offered have shown, the first two phenomena are interdependent, whereas the third results from the intersection of the other ones (Sjöblom 2013: 4). Thus, these processes do not exclude but complete one another.

As regards the distinctiveness that name givers vie to achieve in commercial onomastics (in this respect, see Schack 2008: 61-63 and his discussion of the "spectrum of distinctiveness" of trademarks), the shop names analysed make it difficult for a researcher to answer the question that is on one's mind whenever the field of trade names is dealt with: 'What linguistic elements and extralinguistic parameters guarantee the efficiency of a name?' ["Quels éléments linguistiques et quells paramètres extralinguistiques garantissent l'efficience du nom?" (Laurent 2007: 35, my translation). Should one follow strictly the aforementioned direction of study, it would soon be obvious that only very few of the shop names in the Maramureș County are "registration-material", as most of them tend to be highly suggestive, but in a transparent manner (especially when they consist of non-proprial or mixed structures). This mainly happens because the majority of the shop names discussed designate small and medium-sized retailers, which aim at getting a stable consumership, mainly in the neighbourhood, village or town where they are located. Thus, the issue of distinctiveness as a legal concept is construed as a secondary and less necessary quality.

The shop names illustrated in this paper are unconventional names of commercial establishments, which identify, individualise and describe their denotata. In relation to globalisation, shop names in English, French, Italian, German, or Latin are aimed at attributing some of the prestige stereotypically associated with the source language and culture to the business establishments designated. Shop names motivated by localism are, more often than not, practicality-driven, as they are supposed to be decoded with ease by the local community. Glocal shop names mix languages (one of the components is always in Romanian or has got a Romanian basis, as in the case of anglicised Romanian first names) and aim at endowing the autochthonous language items with the positive qualities credited to the foreign language context.

Names of shops like the ones exemplified in the previous sections are established *through* and *in* use, within the community where they exist, as a result of a negotiation of associative/presuppositional meanings that may occur between business owners (i.e., name givers) and consumers (i.e., name users): "When participants hear a new linguistic item, they generally associate it with the typical context in which it occurs or with the person who uses it. Only a few instances are needed to enable participants to carry out such a task. This is generally the manner in which individuals acquire their competence in the social use of language" (Apte 2001: 39) and in the global, local or glocal use of names.

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