THE DISCUSSION ON TERMINOLOGY OF THE TERMS EXONYM AND ENDONYM

Zsombor BARTOS-ELEKES*

*University of Babeş-Bolyai, Faculty of Geography, Clinicilor, no. 5-7, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract: *The discussion on terminology of the terms Exonym and Endonym.* The endonym and the exonym are important notions for United Nation's workgroups and conferences on geographical names. In the last decades a discussion has developed around these two technical terms within the UN sessions, but as definitions were altered several times, so the related sets of geographical names were modified as well. The 2007 conference adopted definitions that managed to solve the problem. This paper follows the changes of the two definitions and the usage of the notions from their first attempts until today.

Rezumat: *Discuţie privind semnificaţia termenilor Exonim şi Endonim* Endonimul şi Exonimul sunt noţiuni importante ale grupurilor de lucru ale Naţiunilor Unite şi ale conferinţelor referitoare la numele geografice. În ultimii ani, s-a dezvoltat o discuţie în jurul acestor doi termini tehnici în cadrul sesiunilor Naţiunilor Unite: definiţiile lor au fost modificate de câteva ori, astfel încât şi setul de nume geografice care aparţineau acestor noţiuni, a suferit modificări. În cadrul conferinţei din 2007 au fost adoptate definiţii care au stârnit dispută. Lucrarea urmăreşte schimbările celor două definiţii şi utilizarea noţiunilor de la primele lor definiri până în prezent.

1. THE FIRST DEFINITIONS (1957, 1975)

Aurousseau (the former secretary of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names of UN) used for the first time the term exonym. He divided the English geographical names in two: first the English place-names and second the English exonyms. The English place-name is the expression which refers to a place inside England. Aurousseau used the jargon exonym for a word which refers to a place outside England. (Aurousseau 1957: 17)

Aurousseau didn't use the term endonym. The first occurrence was later: Kronsteiner defined it in 1975 as a complementary notion of the exonym. In his opinion the endonym is the geographical name used in a local official language. (Kronsteiner 1975)

So the first definitions divide the geographical names in two sets without overlapping. The limit of the two sets of notions is determined by being official or non-official in the denominated language. If the geographical name is denominated by the local official language, then the word is endonym otherwise the word is exonym. E.g.: the Romanian name Cluj-Napoca or Cluj is endonym, but the Hungarian name Kolozsvár, the German name Klausenburg, the Latin Claudiopolis, or the Polish Koloszwar is exonym.

Aurousseau expresses the incontestable use of the exonyms. His arguments: we can memorize them easier, it fits into the language, there are no spelling problems, we have to write them only one time on maps (only the word Danube, and no Dunărea, Donau, Duna and so on), the word is unchanging whether a frontier changes. (Aurousseau 1957: 24)

2. THE DEFINITIONS AND THE USAGE OF THE NOTIONS UNTIL 1989: THE LIMIT IS TO BECOME OFFICIAL

The UN in the seventies used the notions without defining them, only by using synonyms (conventional name and traditional name for exonym) so they adopted the notions without changes (so endonyms are the names in local official languages, exonyms are the names in other languages) but the UN modified their usage. The UN – in contrary with Aurousseau's aided opinion – adopted resolutions against the usage of exonym because they considered the set of exonym the same set as of the non-standardized geographical names.[1]

Parallel with the international standardization, the UN adopted resolutions about exonyms. The 2nd Conference (organized in 1972) recommended that national

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[1] *In 1972 the 2nd UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names occupied with the international standardization. After than the national names authorities standardized the geographical names, these standardized local names should be used in maps and charts which are intended for international use and also in all international publications in which geographical names do not appear in the running text, such as international time-tables or tables of international statistics (Recommendation II/31). (UN 1972)*

geographical names authorities prepare lists of exonyms currently employed, review them for possible deletions, and publish the results (Recommendation II/28), and also recommended that in those cases where exonyms are retained, the local official forms should be shown in addition as far as possible (Recommendation II/29). The 5th Conference (organized in 1987) turned up the tendencies, it recommended a further reduction in the use of exonyms and also recommends that countries intensify their efforts to persuade private and public organizations, such as educational institutions, transport companies and the media, to reduce the use of exonyms in their publications or, at least, to increase the use of geographical names in their local standardized form (that is, endonyms) (Recommendation V/13). (UN 1972, UN 1987)

While the definitions of the notions exonym and endonym haven't changed until in consequence of the international standardization the exonyms (mainly if they aren't standardized names) were pushed into the background. Aurousseau felt the incontestable usage of the exonyms but the UN-resolutions in the seventies and in the eighties felt the exonyms (as non-official names) to be undesirable.

In fact there was a difference between the non-standardized names and the exonyms: their meanings were not the same. We can notice two differences. At first: the allonym of the standardized name on the official language (e.g. Cluj) is endonym but it isn't standardized name. Secondly: the minority name (e.g. Kolozsvár) is exonym but it can become standardized name according to the recommendations of the UN about the multilingual areas.

We can state that the reason of the discussion about the exonym was that the UN recommendations against the usage of the exonym contradicted into one of the main principles of the UN process of standardization; that is the local names policy. The local names policy is that the local name serves as the basis of the standardization.

The UN dwells on minority names and multilingual areas at the national standardization topic. At the basis of standardization is the local name policy: at the collection of the geographical names we have to use of the local form (Recommendation I/4-B), at the office treatment a factor is the multilingual areas (Recommendation I/4-C). After these recommendations there is an entire recommendation which calls upon the geographical names in multilingual areas (Recommendation I/4-D). This one declares that the national authority determine the geographical names in each of the official languages and other languages as appropriate; gives a clear indication of equality or precedence of officially acknowledged names; publishes these officially acknowledged names on maps and gazetteers. On the 2nd conference they highlighted the consultation with minorities; adopted a common orthography for all geographical names of the minority language; used that orthography for the standardization of the place names in the minority language within their territory; published the standardized names on their official maps and national gazetteers (Recommendation II/36). (UN 1967, UN 1972)

So the UN in the recommendations of the standardization speaks clearly about the aiding of the minority names, but in the recommendation of the exonyms the minority

names were classified as exonyms, so their usage were kept within limits. This was the paradox which evoked the discussion.

3. THE DEFINITIONS AND THE USAGE OF THE NOTIONS AFTER 1989: THE BORDERLANDS WHICH HAVE THE MINORITY NAMES

Since the end of the eighties several tries were for the solution of the paradox.

At first was the double-definition of Back and Breu which treated the subject nuanced (Back–Breu 1989).

Endonym (the definition of Back and Breu): name of a geographical feature used in one of the languages occurring in that area where the feature is situated (general interpretation), or in one of the official languages (cartographic interpretation).

Exonym (the definition of Back and Breu): name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language has official status (general interpretation), or that language doesn't occur (cartographic interpretation). The Austrian authors dealt with the subject subtle: in general interpretation the limit between the sets of the endonym and exonym is to be occurred; in cartographic interpretation the limit is to become official. So in a multilingual area we can classify the allonyms of a geographic feature in this way: in general interpretation the name in official language (e.g. the Romanian name Cluj-Napoca) and the name in minority language (e.g. the Hungarian name Kolozsvár) are endonyms, the other names in languages which don't occur in the area (e.g. the German name Klausenburg, the Polish name Koloszwar or the Latin name Claudiopolis) are exonyms. In cartographic interpretation only the official name is endonym, the others (together with the minority one) are exonyms. So the minority names according to Back and Breu in general interpretation are endonyms but in cartographic interpretation are exonyms.

This was the first attempt in solving the paradox. In the borderland area a set was taking shape: the minority names which were defined or endonym (general interpretation) or exonym (cartographic interpretation).

In the nineties the UN modified the definitions and after improvements, the definitions listed above were adopted in the nineties (Glossary 2002):

Exonym: Name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language has official status, and differing in its form from the name used in the official language or languages of the area where the geographical feature is situated.

Minority name: Toponym in a minority language.

Endonym: Name of a geographical feature in one of the languages occurring in that area where the feature is situated. Standardized endonym; Endonym sanctioned by a names authority.

So the UN definition of the exonym approximately is the same as the original Aurousseau's definition: the exonym is a name for a geographical feature where the language isn't official. But the UN definition of the endonym differs from the original Kronsteiner's definition: the set of the endonyms grows with the minority names.

So the two definitions adopted on the conference delimit the names in two sets which were overlapping. In the case of the endonyms the limit is to be in occurrence, in the case of the exonyms the limit is to be non-official. So in a language there is a set of the geographical names which are both endonyms and exonyms: those names which refer to geographic features where the language is in occurrence but it isn't official. The question is how we can apply for these names the recommendations? As endonyms their usage has to be aided, as exonyms their usage has to be decreased. Strangely the UN uses the term minority names but doesn't use it here for the elimination of the overlapping between exonym and endonym.

Even more: the UN associates the process of the standardization with the notion endonym: standardized endonym is the endonym sanctioned by the names authority. Thus standardized endonyms are not only the official names but also the standardized minority names. E.g. the Romanian names authority compiled in 2001 a list of minority names which in accordance with the law of the local government are also standardized endonyms as their Romanian allonyms. The Hungarian name Kolozsvár takes part of this list so this name is standardized allonym with the Romanian name Cluj-Napoca.[2]

So in the nineties the UN definitions with overlapping register the problem (that is the minority names couldn't be only exonym but they are very close to the endonym), but they don't solve the paradox, and what is more: it grew more complicated.

The problems with the overlapping first was studied on the GeoNames international workshops (Frankfurt, 2000 and Berchtesgaden, 2001), and later at the 8th UN conference (Berlin, 2002) where some of the former resolutions were recalled and it was adopted a recommendation concerning the establishing of the Work Group on Exonym; that had a conference in Prague in 2003.

Pavel Boháč (Boháč 2000) on the symposium organized in Frankfurt, insisted on the overlapping of the definitions. The author documented the uncertainty of definitions mostly with German toponyms from Alsace (France): it is inadequate, that the minority names are both endonyms and exonyms because the UN aids the usage of endonyms but wants to decrease the usage of exonym. The authors wanted to modify the definitions of exonyms to liquidate the overlapping. In his opinion in the area where the names are used but the language isn't official the names should be only considered endonyms.

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[2] *On the 8th Conference in the report of Romania a special consideration was given to the recent official recognition of the graphical form in the ethnical minority languages for the localities where the minorities represent over 20 per cent of the local population. (UN 2002)*

Boháč proposed the following definition for the exonym: Name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language is spoken, and differing in its form from the name used in the language or the languages of the area where the geographical feature is situated. Compared with the former authors it was new how Boháč used his definition in this context, the term of the standardized endonym, he mentioned that the minority names can be separated from the endonyms of the official language because they aren't standardized endonyms.

Boháč didn't clarify the term spoken language: how much should be the relative proportion or the absolute number of the language community and how large can the area be?

Within the exonym workshop organized in Berchtesgaden, there was a proposal about improving the term area mentioned above (Sievers–Jordan 2002). The authors proposed an additional explanation to the term exonym. The term area, means a country or any administrative unit established within a country for linguistic management purposes. It also included areas where toponyms of a given language enjoy a specific status. In accordance with this proposal the set of exonyms decreased with the minority names which have a specific official status. E.g. the Hungarian name Kolozsvár which was standardized by the authority and appears on name-plates shall be only endonym and shall not be exonym.

Within the session of the UN working group organized in Prague, Woodman (Woodman 2003) considered adequate the solution of Boháč but he specified that it isn't indifferent who speaks the language in that area. He proposed the enlarging with the attribute: indigenous. Indigenous language is the language native to a given region (Glossary 2002) – so the language which's speakers lives in the area for centuries.[3] Woodman considered as an advantage of the Boháč's proposal that the names couldn't turn magically into endonyms from exonyms or vice versa, in consequence, the usage of laws in other words, not the power classifies them to one part or to another but the limit of interpretation.

Within the same session Adamič (Adamič 2003) there were discussions for more categories: in his opinion there are pure endonyms and pure exonyms; and between them exonyms with specific status or soft geographical names.[4] The definitions are unstable when they are dealt with toponyms of a language spoken within an area, with language that isn't official there. The various definitions considered these toponyms either exonyms or endonym, or both. It is not indifferent that the name in which side of the limit of interpretation is used, because the UN – in his standardizing activity – recommends the endonym to be used and recommends the decrease of the usage of exonyms. We can observe that the limit between the two notion moves from the border of the state-area to the

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[3] *Woodman's example: the Portuguese name Genebra of the city Geneva (Switzerland) cannot be endonym because of the local Portuguese population which are mostly immigrant workers and they lives there not for centuries.*

[4] *I called the attention to the similar uncertainty of the definitions: there are three groups of names which are described with two notions. After my proposal it would be reasonable to treat separately these 'internyms' (the minority names) (Bartos-Elekes 2002).*

border of the language-area: Back and Breu raised first this question and proposed two interpretations; according to the proposal Sievers–Jordan; these names are on one or on the other side of the limit in function of jurisdiction; the UN classified these names in both categories; and the proposal of Boháč and Woodman moved them to the set of endonyms. Presumably the alternative proposals were liberated in consequence of the changes of regimes in Central Europe.

In addition to the modifying of the definitions, the usage of exonyms was to be changed in the nineties: a number of people argued for the usage of exonyms.

In spite of the restricting steps the decrease of the exonyms wasn't typical, even more: we can observe an increase in the nineties.

At first there was a proposals aiding the exonyms at the forums in Frankfurt and Berchtesgaden. On these meetings Jordan (Jordan 2000) referred to the rearranging of the power in the nineties and as first after Aurousseau again pleaded for a moderate and politically sensitive use of exonyms; for him the language considerations has the same importance as the political considerations. Jordan pointed out that the exonyms can be spelled easier; the exonyms are more stable (they are independent from the political changes); we have to use exonyms mentioning historical references (e.g. Auschwitz and no Oświęcim); the exonyms indicates traditional connections; the exonyms are often names hidden by an endonym which can be used rarely by the local community or can hurt the local community's feelings. After listing some of the advantages we can follow the principles of the usage: the usage is justified if the exonym is well-known, if it is closer to the mother-country, if the geographic feature is important or is large. The author proposed the reduced usage with the names of counties or if the local official language is well-known. The author proposes the usage in running texts less on maps, especially on maps for tourism. Jordan stresses that we should avoid the fact that the readers could recognize historical frontiers in consequence of usage of exonyms on maps. He thinks important to use endonym and exonym together.

The workgroup organized at Berchtesgaden proposed more recommendation to the UN conference (Sievers–Jordan 2002). The workgroup agrees with the decreasing use of exonyms but stresses importance of protection for several exonyms. They agree with the recommendation II/28 (compiling list of exonyms) but ask for the enlargement of the lists by marking the frequency of usage. They highlighted that the UN has to supervise the validity of the former resolutions aiding the endonyms and restricting exonyms because some of the recommendations can contradict themselves – in consequence the modified endonym and exonym definitions were overlapping.

On the 8th conference (UN 2002) it was adopted the Recommendation VIII/4 which recalled thirteen former recommendation about restricting exonyms and recommends the establishment of the Working Group on Exonyms.

4. THE DEFINITIONS AND THE USAGE OF THE NOTIONS IN 2006–2007: THE LIMIT IS TO BE WELL-ESTABLISHED

The last session (the 23rd) of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was organized in Vienna between 28th of March and 4th of April 2006. Here the experts summarized the recommendations for the next conference. The 9th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) was organized in New York between 21st and 30th of August in 2007.

The session and the conference accept the proposal of the Working Group on Exonyms which in harmony with the definition of endonyms created two definitions without overlapping. The new definitions are as follows.

Exonym: Name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language is spoken, and differing in its form from the name used in an official or well-established language of that area where the geographical feature is located. (WGE 2006, UN 2007). Endonym: Name of a geographical feature in an official or well-established language occurring in that area where the feature is located. (WGE 2006, UN 2007).

So in Vienna and in New York it was adopted the proposal of Boháč–Woodman only the formulation was specified. The limit is that the language should be well-established that is the language which is spoken for centuries.

The definition of the Working Group on Exonyms moves the set of names in overlapping to the set of endonyms. So the minority names according to the new definition are endonyms: toponyms suggested for usage, were proposed for standardization. By this definition the paradox comes to the end. If the conference in 2007 adopts the proposal of the experts on geographical names then the discussion about the terminology of the terms exonym and endonym is terminated.

5. SUMMARY

We summarize the definitions in the table which follows:

DEFINITIONS FOR EXONYMS AND ENDONYMS		Official language (Cluj-Napoca)	Minority language (Kolozsvár)	Unused language (Koloszwar)
Aurousseau (1957)		place-name	exonym	exonym
Kronsteiner (1975)		endonym	exonym	exonym
Back – Breu (1989)	cartographic	endonym	exonym	exonym
	general	endonym	endonym	exonym
Sievers – Jordan (2002)		endonym	endonym or exonym (in function of law)	exonym
UN / glossary (2002)		endonym	endonym and exonym and minority name	exonym
Boháč (2000) – Woodman (2003)		endonym	endonym (the language is spoken, indigenous)	exonym
UN / group of experts (2006); UN / Conference (2007)		endonym	endonym (the language is well-established)	exonym

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