

Summary

There is a close relationship between names, the awareness of names, their use, and the different social groups. Besides their signifying, differentiating, identifying, etc. roles, certain names and name variants also provide information about the people, groups of people using them. This is studied by socioonomastics (and within that toponym sociology) in consideration of as many aspects as possible, from the perspective of both the speaking communities and language.

I also intend to contribute to the discussion of issues related to toponym sociology with my dissertation. I set out to explore toponym awareness and toponym use from the perspective of the language use of Hungarians living in Romania, and more specifically the Partium region. My findings are based on previous publications and my own studies of contemporary language. I conducted research on contemporary language in eleven settlements of the region. I collected toponyms in nine villages, while in two additional settlements, in Kisbábony in Szatmár County and Szalárd in Bihar County, I also conducted toponym-sociological studies besides recording the toponymicon.

My results are presented in five chapters of my dissertation. While the first three units provide more of a background to the dissertation, thus dealing with theoretical and methodological issues, the last two sections provide a comprehensive overview of my name sociological studies in the communities of Kisbábony and Szalárd.

The first chapter offers an introduction to the field of name sociology and toponym sociology. Besides the definition of name and toponym sociology, the chapter introduces the key research areas related to these. The second chapter presents the sociocultural background of the examined region, the Partium (and more specifically Kisbábony and Szalárd). In this section one can become familiar with the Romanian context through issues related to toponym politics and toponym contactology. First, I introduce the pieces of legislation related to toponym use and their application in daily life. Finally, I briefly discuss toponym borrowing and the reasons for such borrowing. The third chapter presents my surveys and the means of toponym collection and toponym awareness studies. Besides the introduction of factors influencing toponym collection (e.g., the phenomenon of name attitudes), I also address the methodological issues related to the surveys and the associated methodological decisions (the management of toponyms and toponym variants, passive name awareness, the categorization of respondents according to age).

The key parts of my dissertation are represented by chapters four and five. In these two sections I present the results of my studies in name sociology and my related conclusions. These were formulated on the basis of several hundred interviews. I primarily discuss two bigger topics: name awareness-name usage and cognitive mapping.

After the introduction of the Kisbábony and Szalárd toponymicon, I discuss the topic of name awareness and name use from the perspectives of age, gender, occupation and mobility, as well as moving away and returning, the different linguistic-ethnic-denominational groups, and the base and peripheral toponymicon. Finally, I focus on the toponymicon of Kisbábony and Szalárd from another perspective, i.e., that of cognitive mapping. Based on the maps drawn by the respondents and the related explanations, I study the opinion of the different groups related to space and more specifically to toponyms.