Symposium on the Theory and Practice of Toponym Etymology
(ICONN 5)

Barbara Bába
University of Debrecen, Hungary

The Problems of Etymological Clusters of Toponyms in Dialectical Approach

Keywords: etymological clusters, phonetic variants, toponym etymology

In some cases phonetic variants formed by the changes in sound history occur in lexeme pairs that can be traced back to the same origin. The members of these lexeme pairs can differ from each other both semantically and morphologically. We may mention several examples for the phenomenon from the very early period of Hungarian language history (e.g., szipog 'to sniff'–szivárog 'to leak', mell 'breast'–mál 'hillside', kajla 'bent'–hajlik 'to bend', etc.). However, in many cases, the etymological cohesion of the members of the word pairs raises questions. For example, since in general the nasal sound disappears in the nasal + plosive clusters in Hungarian (e.g. had 'war', hab 'foam', eb 'dog'), deriving lexemic pairs from the same etymon, such as hangya 'ant'–húgy 'piss', langyos 'lukewarm'–lágy 'soft', domb 'hill'–dob 'drum', correctly awaken suspicion. Name pairs formed by means of divergent development are also known among place names, e.g., Csitár–Csatár, Komló–Kömlő, Somogy–Sümeg, Piski–Püski, etc. However, since the connectivity of such names is also questionable in some cases, their etymological review is absolutely justified.

Oliviu Felecan, Adelina Emilia Mihali
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Centre of Baia Mare, Institutul de Lingvistică și Istorie Literară „Sextil Pușcariu" al Academiei Române, filiala Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Sighetu Marmației – An Etymological View of Urban Toponymy

Keywords: Sighetu Marmației, etymological hypotheses, urban toponymy, street names

The municipality of Sighetu Marmației is situated on the bank of the Tisa river and has been recorded in official documents since 1326. The town has always been defined by multi-ethnicity as it is also apparent in its name: Hungarian *(Máramaros)sziget*, German *Marmaroschsiget*, Ukrainian *Сиґіт(-Мармароський)*, and Slovak *(Marmarošská) Sihoť*. This study proposes an etymological analysis of urban toponymy, based on the explanations provided for the name of the town (in Thraco-Dacian, Hungarian, and Ruthenian), the old names of certain villages which have become neighbourhoods (Iapa, Lazu Baciului, Șugău, Valea Cufundoasă, Valea Hotarului), and the street names employed in the twentieth century. The diachronic and synchronic perspective allows for the understanding of the etymological complexity of old and recent names related to the languages used in the area throughout the centuries.

Róbert Kenyhercz
Debrecen Reformed Theological University, Debrecen, Hungary

The Interpretation of Data and Sources in Etymological Research

Keywords: data, sources, medieval charters, etymology

The aim of the paper is to emphasize the importance of source criticism in etymological research. It is widely known that the main sources for the early history of toponyms of the Carpathian Basin are the charters created in the medieval Hungarian Kingdom because these official documents contained a large number of vernacular proper names embedded in the Latin text. However, it is important to mention that the medieval charters were produced by the chancery and *loca credibilia* along specific principles and needs. I argue that this circumstance always has to be considered during the interpretation of the data. I would like to show some examples illustrating that – in certain cases –

we have to take into account the nature of the sources in the reconstruction of the genesis of place names. My goal is to offer a short outline of this issue through my own investigations.

Éva Kovács
University of Debrecen, Hungary

A Historical Linguistic Analysis of Old Hungarian Toponyms

Keywords: toponym etymology, place name reconstruction, linguistic environment, 11th-13th-century charters

Etymologization is traditionally considered to be the most important part of place name analysis in historical linguistics; therefore, the historical-etymological study of toponymic data found in early charters (11th-13th-century sources) is central in my paper. In connection with the description of the linguistic elements, I refer to general historical phonetic and orthographic factors, and also to more recent findings in historical linguistics. I examine not only the etymology, the linguistic origin of the words, but also other points of interest in name analysis. Concerning the toponyms, I also wish to find objective prompts for proper name analysis and attempt to localize the objects with the help of later occurrences and surviving forms of the names. Meanwhile, I also consider the structure and the morpho-phonological features of the names.

Evelin Mozga
University of Debrecen, Hungary

The Difficulties of Identifying the Etymologies of Anthroponyms

Keywords: etymology, anthroponyms

In my presentation I discuss the difficulties involved in identifying the etymological background of anthroponyms from the Early Old Hungarian Era and I list various methods which may help us explain a specific name form. When identifying the etymology of a name, first we have to identify the root of the name and link it to a linguistic stratum; then we need to explore the processes of name adaptation during which the name was integrated into the Hungarian anthroponym system. I introduce several methods which can often be successfully utilized in separating etymological strata. I use several anthroponym examples to illustrate how the family relations outlined in the context of the Census of the Abbey of Tihany (1211) and circumstances relating to family relations can contribute to our understanding of a certain name form.

Yaw Sekyi-Baidoo
University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

The Locative Adverbial Morphemes (Particles) and Etymology of Akan Settlement Names

Keywords: settlement names, adpositions, ecological features, semantics

The adpositions ‘mu’, ‘ase’, ‘so’, ‘ntam’ are recurrent in Akan settlement names (Owu-Ewie, 2014), and are generally known to represent the physical, locative senses of ‘in’, ‘under’ ‘on’, ‘within’ respectively, with the interpretation of *‘on the River Pra’* (Praso), *‘under an orange tree’* (*Ankaase*) or ‘*in-between two rivers’* (Nsutam). A consideration of the relative positions of the ecological resources and derived settlement names points to the fact that though the idea of location of position may be inherently evident in the settlement names, the particles may mean more than the literal concepts of relative physical position or location.

The paper discusses the cognitive resources of the locative particles in the context of the ecological features, the onymic narratives, and Akan cosmology in order to establish the place of the

particles in representing the etymology of the names and the Akan philosophy of settlement and settlement naming.

Pavel Štěpán
Czech Language Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic

Problems of Etymological and Motivational Interpretation of Czech Compound Toponyms

Keywords: toponyms, compound toponyms, interpretation of toponyms, etymology of toponyms, motivation of toponyms

Unlike in many other languages (e.g. Germanic, Romance or Finno-Ugric), compound formations constitute only a small minority of toponyms in Czech (as well as in other Slavic languages). However, they require a special approach for their interpretation. While their etymology, i.e. identification of the individual components, may be often clear and unproblematic, questions may arise when revealing their motivation as well as the identification of the syntactic relationships between the components (in many settlement names it is not entirely clear, for example, whether they referred primarily to the inhabitants or they include a topographical description of the given locality). The aim of the paper is to identify these problems and relations between etymology and motivation of the individual toponyms, both in the case of settlement and non-settlement names. Besides this, I also address the issues of etymological interpretation of compound toponyms and the identification of a certain form as a compound.

Melinda Szőke
University of Debrecen, Hungary

A Historical Linguistic Analysis of Hungarian Toponyms in Non-Authentic Charters

Keywords: non-authentic charters, Hungarian toponyms, 11th century

Foreign texts containing Hungarian words are indisputably important sources of data for the study of early periods of Old Hungarian. Only a few charters have survived from the 11th century, an era marking the beginning of Hungarian literacy. Medieval charters contain several place names that still have not been explained in detail. Moreover, linguists have studied primarily those early charters that were also authenticated. I believe that besides the low number of authentic sources from this early period, those of uncertain authenticity (e. g. transcripts and false charters) should also be studied. In my presentation I show how the non-authentic charters influence etymological analyses. The choice of subject is also intended to prove that the almost complete rejection of these chronologically-doubtful charters containing Hungarian linguistic elements in linguistic studies is unfounded.

Valéria Tóth
University of Debrecen, Hungary

Methodological Problems in Etymological Research on Old Toponyms of the Carpathian Basin

Keywords: toponym etymology, Carpathian Basin

The area of the Carpathian Basin that belonged to the former Kingdom of Hungary was a truly diverse region both in a linguistic and ethnic sense. Therefore, the etymological study of its toponymic system may be carried out successfully only by means of international cooperation. As part of this cooperation, we primarily addressed onomasticians of different Slavic languages, German, Romanian, and Hungarian but in terms of more general theoretical questions, in our research project we also count on the work and insights of scholars working with other languages.

In the opening lecture of the symposium, I would like to present various methodological questions that represent a challenge in toponym-etymological studies.

I discuss the significance of distinguishing between name-givers and name-users, which is essential because written sources can only highlight current name usage, while the act of name-giving could be centuries apart. This is a circumstance that cannot be neglected in terms of drawing ethnic conclusions based on the linguistic form and etymology of toponyms. Therefore, in toponym-etymological studies we should use the method of linguistic reconstruction, which considers not only the final etymon of the toponym but also its occurrence in the given written source, its complete historical dataset, and its local attributes (its name environment). At the same time, it also brings several benefits if names belonging together from a lexical and/or functional perspective (name clusters) are treated together during etymological analysis.

I also argue that certain types of sources may also pose difficulties from an etymological perspective. It is not an easy task to identify the age of toponymic data in charters of an uncertain chronological status (forged, copied or interpolated charters). The etymological (and in general terms, linguistic) study of toponyms in such charters therefore requires great caution.

The question of etymological authenticity also has to be in the focus in etymological studies. This means that the etymology of certain toponyms cannot be established with the same degree of certainty and the possibility cannot be verified to the same degree. I provide a detailed overview of this issue as well in my paper.

Finally, I also discuss why I consider the use of functional language theory to be the most appropriate and suitable theoretical framework for toponym-etymological research.