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ROMANIAN-ITALIAN RELATIONS REFLECTED IN THE ONOMASTICS OF ROMANIAN PUBLIC SPACE

Резюме: Настоящото проучване разглежда въпроса за лингвистичните и културни различия/идентичност от гледна точка на румънско-италианските отношения, отразени в ономастиката на румънското публично пространство. Корпусът се състои от италиански търговски наименования в Румъния (по-специално на предприятия, основани от румънски емигранти, но също и от италианци), имена на сдружения, принадлежащи на румънци в Италия и на румънски фирми на италианска основа. Целта на анализа е едновременно да се подчертае употребата на стандартния език заедно с диалектните разновидности и да се оформи интерлингвистичния човек, особено когато става дума за румънци, които са се установили в Италия. Диглосията, езиковият контакт и лингвистичното смесване са само част от характеристиките, присъщи на италианската ономастика в румънското публично пространство. Психосоциалните обстоятелства, обуславящи употребата на италианско-румънски търговски наименования в румънската/италианската общност, доказват запазването на лингвистичната идентичност на собствената култура, но също и склонността към изменения.

Ключови думи: ономастика, търговия, италиански, румънски, лингвистика

1. Introduction

The last decades have brought forth the issue of linguistic homogeneity, of linguistic boundaries that have become more and more penetrable, as opposed to state boundaries. The development of the Euro-

pean Union, the migration process – especially in Romania, after 1989 – and the minorities have led to numerous interethnic and/or interlinguistic contacts in Europe. Through time, a series of economic, political and social connections have been formed between the Romanian provinces and the Italian principalities. These bonds have facilitated the linguistic contact. To better understand the current Italian-Romanian social and linguistic relations reflected in the onomastics of the Romanian public space, it is necessary to point out the economic circumstances that have favoured the migration in both directions. Federico Focacci speaks of four types of migration between Italy and Romania, each with its own set of characteristics. The first important migrational movement from Italy to Romania starts at the end of the nineteenth century, before the First World War and it lasts until the beginning of the following century. The reason for this pendular emigration (Italians would come to Romania in spring, and they would return to their homeland in autumn) is a strictly economic one, given the fact that the Italian construction companies won the main auctions in Romania. The second migrational phase describes a movement in both ways after 1989, when Romanian boundaries opened. Romanians move to Italy for economic reasons, at first working illegally, but then living there permanently and legally. On the other hand, Italians are drawn to the low cost and cheap labour found in Romania. After the year 2000, the migrational fluxes increase in both directions. However, not only unemployed people, workers etc. leave Romania, but also higher education graduates in search of a better life. Some of them find legal employment, others continue to work illegally. Many Romanians open small and medium-sized businesses on the Italian market, especially in the construction field. The other way around, Italians want to delocalise the industrial activity by investing in Romania because of the low costs. Partnerships between Italian firms and Romanian companies have often been established. During this time, Italian banks open branches in Romania (*Sao Paolo*) or purchase Romanian banks (*Unicredit România [Unicredit Romania]*). The last migrational flux was facilitated when Romania joined the European Union. This meant for many Romanians of all ages a chance to go to the Western world in search of better jobs. Due to the fact that many of these individuals come from ethnic groups

and some of them commit acts of violence in Italy, the movement towards this country is seen as an invasion, hence the rejection of Romanians settling there. Italians, however, are interested in obtaining EU funds for Romania, thus explaining the large number of Italian investors in the country.

Within this context, the issue of cultural and linguistic identity arises. Reality proves that permanent interactions develop between members of different communities, facilitated on the one hand by migrations and minorities (the diaspora) and on the other hand by globalisation, a process intensified in the twenty-first century. Therefore, culture can be defined as a changing process created by individuals for the purpose of interactions, exchanges etc. Migrations have created a series of social and political mutations, primarily racism and nationalism, but they have also stimulated the development of a new market for linguistic and communicative resources (Blommaert 2010: 3). Linguistic areas have thus been created (Trudgill, 2000: 161)¹.

The individuals' status in minority communities is interesting. These persons are fixed on a certain language, they speak in time and space (Blommaert 2010: 4), they use their mother tongue within their families, but they resort to their adoptive country's language at the workplace and in society, in different stages of the literary language. The choices these individuals make can be regarded as acts of self-expression (Kim & Drolet, 2009: 1556). Subsequently, the individuals are given the choice between a high variety and low variety of the mother tongue or the adoptive country's language, according to their education and expectations (Trudgill 2000: 128). Furthermore, a language has a different status in a country where it is spoken by the majority, than in the minority groups from another state (Trudgill 2000: 137; Coulmas, 2005: 137). This aspect has led to the inequality of languages (Blommaert 2010: 3), but also to the use of such languages as English, Italian, French in different fields around the world.

Therefore, the ratio between alterity and identity in the context of globalisation should be analysed from the point of view of the migration that requires separation from the homeland, possibly, but not compul-

sory in ethnic communities, and a difficulty in adjusting to the new society. Special attention should also be paid to the way in which the speakers in an environment where a different language is spoken manage their language in order to establish intercultural interactions (Bowe & Martin, 2007: 1).

This study² aims to analyse the onomastics of Romanian public space from the viewpoint of Romanian-Italian relations, which have clearly improved in the last few years. In Italy, commercial names (including names of cultural associations, companies and shops) reflect both the need to preserve a cultural and personal identity, and the necessity for a cultural exchange, for integration and acceptance in the new community. Most of the times, store owners or presidents of cultural associations are Romanians, but there are cases of bi-ethnic partnerships. When it comes to Italian commercial names found in Romania, the focus is not on cultural identity, because there are many businesses, shops, restaurants owned by Romanians that use such designations besides the ones belonging to Italians. Consequently, these names are mostly due to globalisation, to the attempt to adjust to Western requirements, to such an extent that the message and the expectations coming from the owners and the customers change.

2. Romanian commercial names in Italy

The principles applied in the creation of commercial names are different from the grammatical rules of standard language. These names have, primarily, the role to identify, to individualize, as they are distinctive. Equally so, commercial names are not transparent, as it is often difficult to decipher the message behind the onomastic formula. The reasons for this are the linguistic mobility, the status the language used has in different communities and the customers' various expectations. Distinctive names serve as indicators of quality, of the type of activity or of other characteristics belonging to products or services rendered (Schack, 2008: 57). What the names of Romanian commercial businesses in Italy show is that people pendulate between the need to affirm their identity and the desire to facilitate intercultural communication.

a) Romanian **cultural associations** in Italy firstly aim at keeping their own identity, but also at establishing an intercultural exchange, at sharing what their country has particular with the members of that new community. Cultural identity ensures continuity for the ethnic groups, which is the element that unites their past, present and future. In the context of globalisation, intercultural communication is the effective means through which peoples can discover and relate to each other in such a way as to eliminate violence, racism, nationalism. In the public space, the focus is on the relationship between the linguistic sign and the objects it designates. Under these circumstances, linguistic resources change their values and functions, thus making the linguistic sign rather emblematic (Blommaert 2010: 31). It is not the linguistic sign but the emblem that should be understood; hence the different perceptions speakers have of the sign.

The names of Romanian cultural associations in Italy consist of generic collocations and terms that become blazons for that group, insignias of the members' common origin. From a semantic viewpoint, the designations of Romanian associations from the Peninsula fall into the following categories:

a¹) generic descriptive names in Romanian

- that refer to a specific group: *Asociația Etnico-Culturală a Românilor din Ivrea și Canavese (ACERIC) [The Ethnic Cultural Association of Romanians from Ivrea and Canavese]*, *Asociația Românilor din Terentino Alto-Adiga (ARTA-A) [The Romanians' Association from Terentino Alto-Adiga]*, *Asociația Asistenilor Medicali Români din Italia [The Romanian Nurses' Association from Italy]*, *Asociația Micilor Întreprinzători Români [The Association of Romanian Small Businesses]*, *Asociația Cetățenilor Români în Italia (ACRI) [The Association of Romanian Citizens from Italy]*, *Diaspora Românească [The Romanian Diaspora]*, *Federația Românilor din Italia (FARI) [The Federation of Romanians from Italy]*, *Lumea Copiilor [Children's World]*, *Liga Românilor din Italia [The League of Romanians from Italy]*, *Românii în Italia [Romanians in Italy]*, *Românii în Friuli în Italia [Romanians in Friuli in Italy]*.

- that refer to good socio-cultural relations between the two countries: *Asociația Româno-Italiană Frăția* [The “Brotherhood” Romanian-Italian Association], *Asociația Mereu Împreună* [The “Always Together” Association], *Asociația Italia-România Viitorul Împreună* [The “Italy-Romania Future Together” Association], *Asociația Culturală Italo-Româno (ACIR)* [The Italian Romanian Cultural Association], *Concordia, Institutul Lombard pentru Schimburi Economice și Culturale Româno-Italienne (INSIR)* [The Lombard Institute for Economic and Cultural Exchanges between Romania and Italy], *RO-ITA, San Marino-Italia-România* [San Marino-Italy-Romania];

- that refer to Europe and democracy: *Euromei (Euroromânii în Italia-ERI)* [European Romanians in Italy – ERI], *Europa* [Europe], *Pro Europa* [Pro Europe].

a²) distinctive Romanian names that contain:

- terms that refer to cultural identity, patriotism: *Asociația Socio-Culturală Dacia* [The “Dacia” Socio-Cultural Association], *Bună seara, România* [Good Evening, Romania], *Dacoromana 2009, Dacia Nicolaiana, Dacia Felix, Hora Unirii* [The Union Hora], *Italia România Suflet Românesc* [Italy Romania Romanian Soul], *Noi suntem români* [We Are Romanians], *Partid Identitatea Românească* [The Romanian Identity Party], *Propatria* [Pro Country], *SI-RO, Spirit Românesc* [Romanian Spirit], *Ulpia Traiana Sarmisegetuza, Vatra Românească* [The Romanian Hearth];

- names of regions or cities from Romania: *Alba-Iulia Nord-Est* [Alba-Iulia North-East], *Bucovina, Carpatica, Carpatzi*³ [The Carpathians];

- names of cultural or historical figures: *Asociația Socio-Culturală Ovidius* [The “Ovid” Socio-Cultural Association], *Academia Culturală Eugen Ionescu* [The “Eugen Ionescu” Cultural Academy], *Asociația de Prieteni Italo-Română Decebal* [The “Decebalus” Association of Italian-Romanian Friends], *Decebal-Traian* [Decebalus-Trajan], *Ovidio, Nicolae Bălcescu, Spiru Haret, Vasile Alecsandri*.

A certain standardization is noticed in the case of the names from the a¹) category. This process is done by using typical collocations which describe the type of activity rendered by that institution and it also shapes

the target customers. The names of most of these organizations are logos that are meant to be distinctive and to individualize.

More often than not, names appear both in the mother tongue and in Italian on the frontispiece of these establishments or in the online world. There are, as well, Romanian cultural associations that only use the language of the adoptive country. This can be explained by the possibility of making these institutions more easily known and by the way in which Romanians have been perceived lately. Using Italian gives credibility, stimulates the locals' involvement in a possible game of getting to know and recognise culture. Therefore, designating formulas in Italian that refer to the Romanian community are encountered (*Associazione della Comunità Ortodossa [The Association of the Orthodox Community]*, *Associazione Autonoma Sindacale Stranieri [The Association of Independent Foreign Auditors in Italy]*, *Comunità Romena di Pistoia [The Romanian Community in Pistoia]*, *Romeni di Padova [The Romanians from Padova]*, *Forum degli Intellettuali Romeni d'Italia [The Forum of Romanian Intellectuals in Italy]*, *Gruppo Asociativo Lavoratori [Workers' Association]*). They aim at an intercultural exchange (*Associazione Italia-Romania [The Italy-Romania Association]*, *Associazione per l'Amicizi tra Italia e Romania [The Association for Friendship between Italy and Romania]*, *Amici della Romania [Friends of Romania]*, *Alhanza Romena [The Romanian Alliance]*, *Insieme nell'intercultura [Together in Interculture]*) or they hint at Europe (*Associazione Europea Italia-Romania Universo 2000 [The Universe 2000 European Association Italy-Romania]*, *Fondazione Europea Drăgan [The Drăgan European Foundation]*, *Democrazia e Liberta [Democracy and Freedom]*).

b) Romanian shops and restaurants in Italy preserve through their nomenclature and activity various aspects of cultural identity; they try to affirm the Latin origins of the Romanian people. The names of these establishments are clues to the kind of activity rendered and to the quality of the products/services offered. Next to the generic collocation *Magazin alimentar românesc [Romanian Grocer's]* or *Magazin cu specialități românești [Romanian Specialties]*, another distinctive and individualizing term is found most of the times. This can either give trans-

parency to the name, or make it enigmatic, depending on the client's perception of the sign. Thusly, names can contain:

b¹) anthroponyms or names of Romanian dances, like *Ciuleandra*. Names that include anthroponyms can be divided into these categories:

- names of owners or their origin: *Crina*, *Condor*, *Geanni e Claudio* [*Geanni and Claudio*], *Itu*, *La Vrânceanca* [*At Vrânceanca's*], *Ladispoli Gyongy*, *Magazin Alimentar La Tibi* [*Grocer's: At Tibi's*], *Mihai*, *Mara*, *Margherita*;

- names of literary characters: *Dracula*⁴, *Miorița*;

- names of historical figures: *Decebal* [*Decebalus*];

Even if the store sells Romanian specialties, the name can be in Romanian (*Ciuleandra*, *La Tibi* [*At Tibi's*], *Mara*,) or in Italian. (*Geanni e Claudio* [*Geanni and Claudio*], *Da Giulia e Alessio* [*At Giulia and Alessio's*])

b²) regions, cities from Romania or the world. Many owners choose to name their businesses using the name of their hometown or of the region where they grew up.

- from Romania: *Alba.Ro*, *Alba-Iulia*, *Bucarest* [*Bucharest*], *Banat Market*, *Banatu*⁵ [*The Banat*], *Carmangeria Maramureșului* [*The Butcher's Stall of Maramureș*], *Cotnari*, *Carpatica*, *Dobrogea Cam & Cri*, *Danubiana*, *Moldova*, *România* [*Romania*], *Romanizza*, *Roma...nia*⁶, *Transilvania* [*Transylvania*], *BM* (< Baia Mare);

- from Italy: *San Giorno* (named after the location of the shop);

- from the world: *Himalaya*.

Depending on the language of origin, these designations can be: in Romanian (*Alba-Iulia*, *Banatu* [*The Banat*], *Moldova*, *Transilvania* [*Transylvania*]), in Italian (*Il Danubio* [*The Danube*]), in English (*Bucharest*).

b³) generic term in Romanian

- collocations that refer to national specialties: *Crama Românească* [*The Romanian Wine Cellar*], *Magazin Alimentar Românesc* [*Romanian Grocer's*], *Magazin Alimentar cu Specialități Românești* [*Romanian Specialties*], *Restaurant Românesc* [*Romanian Restaurant*], *Tradițional-RO* [*Traditional-RO*], *RO-Mixt* [*RO-Miscellaneous*];

- terms that hint at national history: *Dacii și Romanii* [The Dacians and the Romans], *Daco România* [Daco Romania], *Dacia Română* [Romanian Dacia], *Haiduc* [Bandit];

- random names: *Căprioara* [The Deer], *Floare de Colț* [The Edelweiss], *La Bunica* [At Granny's], *La Strada* [The Street], *Noroc* [Good Luck].

b⁴) names in Italian

- which speak of the purpose of the store: *Alimentari Tipici Rumeni* [Romanian Specialties], *La Bottega Rumena* [Romanian Shop], *Mille Prodotti Rumeni* [Thousands of Romanian Products], *Romano* [Romanian], *Salumeria Rumena* [Romanian Delicacies], *Vecchia Macelleria* [Old Butcher's];

- which include the name of the owner: *Alimentari Mara* [Mara Grocer's], *A casa di Viola* [At Viola's], *GMG Alimentari* [GMG Grocer's] (George Muntean and his wife, Giulia);

- terms that refer to cuisine: *Alimentari La Croce* [Grocer's The Cross], *La Ambria* [Ambria], *Il Forno* [The Oven], *La Gastronomia* [The Gastronomy], *Sapori* [Flavors];

- random terms: *Il Piccolo Padre* [The Little Father], *Il Galletto d'Oro* [The Golden Rooster], *La Noce* [The Walnut], *Piccolini* [The Little Ones].

b⁵) hybrid names created from a word in Italian and one in Romanian: *Paneteria Transilvania* [The "Transylvania" Bakery], *Sapori Esteri din Strambico* [Freign Flavors from Strambico].

It is important to point out the fact that there are many small businesses in Italy, especially in the field of construction, which are owned by Romanian emigrants who give their name to the company and operate as Individual Enterprises from Romania. Additionally, there is a frequent use of the preposition "la [at]" with business names (*La Bunica* [At Granny's], *La Tibi* [At Tibi's], *La Vrânceanca* [At Vrânceanca's]). This method is commonly encountered in Romania since 1989, as a result of the liberation from the uniformity and the standardization imposed by communism. It is also a consequence of ownership, of taking possession.

A cultural dialogue aims at knowing the other and oneself better. Between Italians and Romanian emigrants there are not just interlinguistic contacts, but interethnic contacts as well. The cultural opening pursues

the acceptance of alterity and its interpretation in relation to its own identity. The analysed names reflect a predisposition towards a cultural exchange.

3. Italian trade names in Romania

Italian is the second most used language in the onomastics of Romanian public space, after English. The high percentage of Italian trade names is explained by its similarity to Romanian and by its harmony. Equally so, the large number of Italian investors since 1989 has led to many business names in their mother tongue. There are designations like *Bella turistica* [*Beautiful Tourism*] (boarding house), *Bellavista* [*Beautiful View*] (boarding house), *Bella Rosa* [*Beautiful Rose*], *Bagna Com*, *Capelli* [*Hair*] (hairdresser), *Croco* [*Crocus*], *Cassa Dekor Ciao MM* [*Bye Decorations MM*] (Ciao Maramureş), *Cuciola* [*Puppy*], *Donna Moderna* [*The Modern Lady*], *Eterna di Livio* [*Livio's Forever*], *Fiocco di neve* [*The Snowflake*], *Financial Cassa* [*House Financial Cashier's Office*], *G&G Montaggi* [*G&G Assemblage*], *Geometrico* [*Geometric*], *Italia Ristorante* [*Italian Restaurant*], *La Fontana* [*The Fountain*], *La Livio Dario* [*The Livio Dario*], *Ma fio rellò*, *Octaviano Construct*, *Primavera* [*Spring*] (the pizzeria was given this name because it was built in spring), *Rosa dei Venti* [*Compass*], *Rimini Impex* (a shop that sells sanitary products, “labelled” with the name of a town in Italy), *Quattro Cris* [*Four Cris*], *Square Crescent*, *Santa Vita* [*Holy Life*] (a clinic), *Transporte Spedizione Mobile* [*Mobile Transport and Shipping*], *Ti amo* [*I Love You*], *Vasero Edil* [*The Vaser Building*] (a company from Vişeu de Sus, Maramureş, a town that is renowned for the trip with the “mocăniţa” (a steam train) on the Vaser Valley railway; the toponym is translated in Italian).

Semantically speaking, simple one-word Italian names can be divided into the following categories:

- anthroponyms: *Damiano*, *Giorgio*, *Matteo*;
- terms related to gastronomy: *Croco* [*Crocus*] (pizzeria), *Gastronomia* [*Gastronomy*], *Maroni* (a restaurant from Baia Mare⁷, a city famous for its “Chestnut Festival”, an event that takes place in this town where many chestnuts grow);

- words that hint at the type of activity rendered: *Edilizia* [Building], *Geometrico* [Geometric], *Italico* [Italic], *Legno* [Wood], *Martelino* “small hammer”, *Pavimenti*, *Pavimente* “pavement”;
- terms of endearment: *Cuciola* [Puppy];
- names of vegetables: *Zucchini*;
- words that refer to family members: *Il Padrino* [The Godfather] (restaurant);
- terms that suggest quality: *Bella* [Beautiful], *Buonissimo* [Delicious] (confectionery), *Capriccio* [Whim], *Massimo* [Maximum], *Senti* [Feel], *Volare* [Fly] (cosmetics);
- toponyms from Italy: *Bergamo*, *Rimini*, *San Marco*, *Venezia* [Venice];
- names of Italian products: *Peroni*;
- names that copy Italian companies: *Biani*;
- brands: *Benvenuti*, *Leonardo*.

Structurally speaking, the Italian blended names are found to a greater extent in the commercial nomenclature in Romania because of the necessity to find a distinctive, creative and mysterious name. Therefore, the choice of trade names emphasises the productivity of language and the speakers’ creativity. Onomastic formulas consist of:

- two words in Italian: *Andante Construct*, *Bella Turistica* [Beautiful Tourism], *Bianco e Nero* [White and Black], *Canteri Sclavi* [Shipyard Slaves], *Don Pio* [The Pious Gentleman], *Donna Moderna* [The Modern Lady], *Dario Edile* [Dario Building], *Edil Trezzo* [Trezzo Building] (building materials), *Edil Star* [Star Building], *Edil Tony*⁸ [Tony Building], *Finestra Più* [More Windows], *Giulio Gessi* [Giulio Chalk], *Infra-structure & Sistemi* [Infrastructure & Systems], *La Bella Verona* [The Beautiful Verona], *Prima Bella* [Beauty First], *Trio Giorgio* [The Giorgio Trio], *Sempre Bene* [Always Good];
- two terms in Italian + a commercial abbreviation: *Cassa Pronta Construct* [Finished House Constructions], *Marino Legno & Co* [Marin Wood & Co], *Piccolo Mondo Impex* [Small World Impex] (a shop that sells clothes for children);
- an Italian anthroponym / toponym / term + a commercial abbreviation: *Georgeo Trans* [Georgeo Transport], *Mondo Trans* [World Trans-

port], *Octaviano Construct* [*Octaviano Constructions*], *Rimini Impex*, *Roberto Serv* [*Roberto Services*];

- words in Italian + a Romanian structure: *Amirante Agent de Asigurări* [*Target Insurance Agent*] (a *mirante* ‘which targets’), *Centro Trei C* [*The Centre of the Three C’s*], *Club Il Destino* [*The Destiny Club*], *Due G. Edil Construcții* [*Two G’s Building Constructions*], *Edil Concept* [*Concept Building*], *Grande Pescarul* [*The Great Fisherman*], *Ligno Sistem* [*Ligno System*], *Total Edil* [*Total Building*], *Valentino România* [*Valentino Romania*];

- a word in Italian + a Romanian anthroponym: *Ana Edil* [*Ana Building*], *Duo Ady&Ady*, *Dolce Laura* [*Sweet Laura*], *Edil Hojda* [*Hojda Building*], *Edil Pintilie* [*Pintilie Constructions*], *Fratelli Ivașcu* [*Brother Ivașcu*], *Hapca Construzione* [*Hapca Constructions*] (*Hapca* is the owner’s surname), *Impresa Mihali* [*The Mihali Company*], *Mihali Cartogesso* [*Mihali Plasterboard*], *Ovi Ponteggi* [*Ovi Scaffolding*] (scaffolds, metal frameworks);

- an Italian term + a Romanian toponym: *Promovari Sarmisegetusa*, *Il Tartufo Alba* [*The Alba Truffle*];

- an Italian term + a Romanian anthroponym + a Romanian term: *Edil Danci Proiect* [*Danci Building Project*] (offers construction projects);

- an Italian anthroponym + a Romanian anthroponym: *Giorgio Săcianu*, *Giovanni & Marius*;

- an Italian word + an English word: *Alestimenti Services* [*Fitting Services*] (cleaning services for buildings, cars and rigs; it was the first company of this type in Borșa), *Bella Design* [*Beautiful Design*], *Caffee & Games Mario* [*Mario Café & Games*], *Fabrizia Fashion*, *Fratello Creations* [*The Brother Creations*], *Valentino Office*.

Hybrid names (with one word in Italian and another one either in Romanian or English) are innovative, as they take advantage of every part of speech that a language has to offer. The unpredictable names created by abbreviation or blending have the same role. These names are, most of the times, transparent, as the blended terms can easily be identified: *Arteferro* (it. *arte* ‘craft, art’ + *ferro* ‘iron’), *DavideRom* (Davide, the name of the owner’s son, born in Italy + Roman, surname), *Electrogiorgio*

(electric + Giovanni, although the owner's name is Ioan [John], his friends call him Giovanni because he worked in Italy), *Ladonna*, *MarcoTim* (Marco, the son, + Timiș).

When it comes to the anthroponyms encountered in the onomastics of businesses in Romania, it should be mentioned that many of them are in fact translated Romanian anthroponyms. This is due to migration. Some of them, however, refer to the names belonging to owners' children who were born in Italy and given Italian anthroponyms. As a matter of fact, migrations have triggered an increased interest in foreign names, at first seen as an innovation within the group, and then as a fashion for the whole society.

Many Italian commercial names are given by Romanians that worked in Italy. This explains the numerous linguistic or spelling mistakes, mostly caused by diglossia. The Romanians that settled in Italy did not have access to a formal education in their adoptive country because of the circumstances surrounding their emigration. Most of them learnt the language on the streets, at their workplace etc. In these informal contexts, they only used the low variety of the language, the one also used in commerce, regardless of the dialect. Coulmas (2005: 128) draws attention to the fact that in diglossia, the low variety is a lesser index of social identity, and more of a support for social inequality. And it is so because individuals with little or no education are limited in their choice between high and low varieties, given that the first requires a formal education. Therefore, there are many doublets in the commercial nomenclature in Romania, caused by poor mastery of Italian. The noun *cassa* [*cashier's office*] is used both in the financial field, and with the meaning of 'house', for which the correct spelling is *casa* (*Cassa Pronta Construct* [*Finished House Constructions*]). For the second meaning, the word is spelled following the phonetic principle, disregarding its etymology: *La casa e pesca* [*The House and Fishing*]. The name *Bonnlavorro* falls into the same category. It is based on the praise: *Buon lavoro* [*Good Job*]. The term *impresa* 'business' (It.) is spelled *imprezza*, keeping its meaning (*Impresa Mihali, Imprezza*). The Italian adjective, feminine, *bella* [*beautiful*], is found with its correct form – double *l*, but also with one *l*. *Piațeta*, meaning „small market” (It.) is spelled following the phonetic principle for

Romanian spelling. For the term *building*, there are three words in Italian: *edilizia*, *edile*, *edil* (*Edil Star [The Star Building]*, *Dario Edile [The Dario Building]* and *Samir Edilizia [The Samir Building]*).

4. Conclusion

Romanian names found on Italian territory, associated or not with existing Italian collocations, mark the connection between a human being and his birthplace. In isolation, an individual searches for his origin, for his identity as a human being, as an individual in a community, as the son of a nation. On the other hand, these names, besides affirming ethnic uniqueness, show the cultural opening that every twenty first century country should have. This is also emphasised by the use of Italian together with Romanian in the onomastics of cultural associations and Romanian companies in Italy.

Things are different in Romania because, alongside the Italian investors' affirmation of linguistic identity, one can find both diglossia and the use of the informal linguistic variety by Romanian business owners that have returned from Italy. Another category of Romanian owners, that had not had contact with Italy, choose to "baptize" their new businesses with foreign names. They aim to draw people's attention, based on the deep-rooted belief that "everything that is foreign has good quality". This is actually a mimetic phenomenon, copying foreign forms that cannot be adapted for the Romanian's traditional mind. And that is why there are so many linguistic mistakes. From a different point of view, however, this preference for Italian commercial names is explained by the fall of communism and the fast climb up the psycho-social ladder. Locals from small or traditional communities often rename, unofficially, these businesses with the owner's name or nickname/byname, or they connect it with another point familiar within the community.

Hence, several conflicting tendencies can be observed: taking pride in being Romanian in some cases, the need for tolerance in Italy and the necessity to affirm the qualities acquired outside Romania, the synchronization with the Occident in the case of Romanian based companies that have Italian names. Because of globalization, the individual is faced with having to adapt to different cultures, due to either the media, travelling

or certain circumstances that require the use of two or more languages. The focus must be on the contextual paradigm because the same linguistic sign can send different messages in different contexts. For Italians, a Romanian commercial name indicates an ethnic minority group. For Romanians, however, it is a symbol of affiliation to a nation. An Italian name means quality in Romania. Therefore, an equality relation cannot be established between cultural and linguistic identity.

NOTES

¹ Linguistic areas – „this term is used to refer to areas where several languages are spoken which, although they are not necessarily very closely related, have a number of features in common, as a result of the diffusion of innovation across language boundaries”.

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³ The spelling is without diacritical marks, the group *tz* being used instead of *ț*, a replacement often encountered in the online world.

⁴ The use as a commercial name of the onomastic formula *Dracula* or of the toponym *Transilvania [Transylvania]* (also found in other parts where Romanian emigrants are found) is explained by the fact that this area has had free publicity since Bram Stoker’s book was published. The author sees Voivode Vlad Țepeș [Vlad the Impaler], named Vlad Drăculea after his father joined the Order of the Dragon, as a bloody tyrant, a vampire. According to this author, Dracula lived in the Bran Castle, in Transylvania.

⁵ The spelling is done following the phonetic principle, marking the dialectal speaking, without the definite article.

⁶ The graphic aspect of commercial onomastics should be observed, because it strengthens the owner’s message and holds a possible clue for the customer. In this case, the resemblance between the name of the Italian capital and the name of the homeland is highlighted. The spelling makes this name to be regarded and understood differently by Romanians and by Italians.

⁷ The city of Baia Mare is located in the North of Romania, and it is the seat of Maramureş County.

⁸ The hypocorism is spelled following the English pattern, with a final *y*.

⁹ As well as the abbreviations *Com*, *Co*, the term *Company* ‘Companie’ (Ro.) is in English. The abbreviation *Com* has multiple meanings, suggesting, in some cases, the term *Comerţ* [Commerce]. *Serv* < *Servicii* [Services]; *Prod* < *Producţie* (Ro.), like *Production*. *Trans* is short for *Transport*, even though in some situations it has a different meaning and, by extension, refers to another activity: the merchandising of car parts. *Impex* consists of the abbreviations for *import* – *export*.

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