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Criteria for the Use of Exonyms

• For understanding exonyms it is necessary to stress that they have emerged due to a natural demand:
  o Frequently used names of other languages which are difficult to pronounce should be adapted to once own language
    ▪ Names easy to pronounce are easier to be memorized
      • promote topographical knowledge (the density of the mental map)
    ▪ Names easy to pronounce are more frequently used
      • there is no hesitation to use them
      • this promotes topographical preciseness of communication
  o This demand exists with all categories of names, e.g. with names of international enterprises and brands or in tourism, and it would in many fields be unwise to resist it:
    ▪ Shell: in Italy Monteshell
    ▪ Spar: in Italy Despar
    ▪ Suchard (exonym confined to pronunciation)
    ▪ Nestlé
    ▪ Uffici in Florence: “Offices” on Italian travel guides for an anglophone audience

• It is a misconception that exonyms are just the expression of imperialistic attitudes. This is only true for some periods of history and for some political situations.

• What we should do, is to find an uncramped, open approach towards exonyms. It is impossible and also to the disadvantage of the UN to oppose in the long run to a natural demand in communication

• There are, however, kinds of use of geographical names, in which exonyms are less important or in which they should even completely be avoided:
  o What I would like to do is to present criteria in this respect
• What is also important with the use of exonyms is to be politically sensible. I will also touch this problem briefly.

• It should anyway be our goal to promote communication
  o Communication is neither to be impeded
    ▪ by rigid and inflexible principles (like 1 name for 1 object)
    ▪ nor by the arousing of political animosities.

My question is: Which are the criteria affecting the use of exonyms?
(1) **Object-related criteria:** the object itself is relevant, not the name

- **Importance of the object**
  - the larger and the more important the object is, the more frequently the name is used
  - Frequently used names are very likely to be adapted to the receiver language
  - Objects across language boundaries make in oral and written communication the use of exonyms imperative (Danube, Alps)

- **Nature or culture object**
  - A culture object (city, settlement, country) is much more related to a certain culture (and language) than a nature object,
    - which does not respect country and language boundaries
    - and is very often composed of a specific and generic term, which asks for translation
  - With nature objects also classifications vary:
    - “Western Carpathians” in Romania and outside Romania

- **Spatial distance between object and receiver community**
  - the longer the distance the smaller the number of exonyms
  - **In Austria**
    - the exonyms of **even small places in the border regions** of Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic are well-known by the local population on the Austrian side of the border
    - this is not the case with exonyms in Poland (which are well known in Germany)
  - **An Austrian school atlas** is to render also the exonyms of small places in our neighbourhood, but not in Poland

- **Time-layer of the object**
  - One has to differentiate between objects currently existing and historical objects, inexistenst today
  - Current objects have always an endonym
  - Historical objects
    - e.g. **historical states and provinces** like Roman Empire, Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire, Habsburg Empire, Galicia (crownland of the Habsburg Empire), Tauria (Crimea + coastlands at the Sea of Azow)
    - e.g. also **ancient sites and excavations**
• Partly they have no current endonym (historical endonyms at the maximum: Imperium Romanum, Osmanli imperatorlugu)
• Partly the current endonym is irrelevant and not associated with the historical object: village Hissarlik for ancient Troy
• Much more appropriate: to use the exonym, which in many cases corresponds to the historical endonym (Herculaneum etc.)

(2) Endonym-related criteria: the word, its structure and script are relevant
   o Linguistic structure of the endonym
      ▪ A compositum including a generic term is more likely to be used as an exonym, since the generic term asks for translation
      ▪ and the specific term will in many cases have to be adapted (e.g. from the adjective to the substantive form)
   o Script of the endonym
      ▪ An endonym transliterated or transcribed will not be recognized by the member of the donor community as an endonym anymore (also it may still be classified as an endonym)
      ▪ Therefore: Scruples to introduce an exonym are not as strong

(3) Criteria referring to the relation donor-receiver community
   • Linguistic relation donor/receiver language (includes the 2nd criterion)
      o The more the meaning and the structure of the endonym is transparent for the speaker of the receiver language and the easier it is for him to pronounce it correctly, the weaker the need for an exonym
   • Cultural (other than linguistic) relation donor/receiver community
      o The closer cultural (and socio-economic) relations in past and present between donor and receiver community, the more exonyms exist and the wider they are in use
   • Prestige, communication value of the donor language
      o People always are inclined
         ▪ to participate in the prestige of a language
         ▪ to demonstrate their language skills
      o Therefore: Endonyms of
         ▪ a global language (like English)
         ▪ an official language in some fields of communication (like French in post services)
• of other languages with a high cultural and historical prestige in the receiver community (like Italian, Spanish in German speaking countries; Hungarian in the Pannonian Basin) will hardly be replaced.

(4) Medium-related criteria
• Means of communication used (the two extremes)
  o Cartographic publications:
    ▪ a technical medium for a rather limited and educated auditory
    ▪ Symbols (and not only names) determine the location extension of an object
    ▪ Pronunciation is not a problem with map interpretation
    ▪ Exonyms are not so important in maps
    ▪ However: Some maps (atlases) have to correspond to textbooks – might be a motive for using exonyms
  o Oral speech:
    ▪ Pronunciation is of utmost importance
      • “Will I be able to pronounce the endonym correctly or should I rather choose the safe way of using the exonym?”
    ▪ Adjective forms and declinations of endonyms sound strange (not in English, since there is no difference, but e.g. in German)
    ▪ When an exonym is widely in use: the use of the endonym may convey the impression of demonstrating how well-educated one is (Budapest, Lisboa)
    ▪ Very much depends on the communicative situation:
      • personal relation to the partner
      • intention of communication

• Actual conditions of medium use
  o Is it to be used mainly outside the donor language region?
    ▪ e.g. publications with an educational purpose (school books, school atlases)
  o or inside the donor language region
    ▪ e.g. publications with the purpose of orientation:
      • road maps
      • large-scale topographic maps
      • navigation systems

(5) Criteria related to the level of communication
• Official or unofficial character of communication
  o Scientific (technical) versus popular
  o Public speech versus bilateral communication
• Atmosphere of communication
If I address a good friend I will not be afraid of being blamed for a wrong pronunciation.

In an official hearing or examination I will try to avoid uncertainties.

As a rule: In a situation, where somebody wants to be

- especially polite
- wants to win somebody for his interests
- wants to prevent arousing bad feelings
- is not sure about the personal attitude of his counterpart
he/she will avoid using exonyms.

(6) Audience-related criteria

- Linguistic scope of the audience
  - Multilingual or monolingual
  - relevant only with non-verbal forms of communication (e.g. cartographic)
  - in written and oral communication always one specific language is used (e.g. now: I communicate with you in English, although you are a multilingual auditory)
  - back to cartographic communication: as soon as a map addresses members of more than one language community it has to avoid exonyms.