

# **The Romanian Terminological Series Corresponding to Lower Plants**

## **Doctoral Dissertation**

### **-Summary-**

The thesis entitled *The Romanian Terminological Series Corresponding to Lower Plants* explores the Romanian vernacular names of algae, bryophytes, lichens and mushrooms. The main purpose of this research is the analysis of the terms used to name these plants and the extraction of their key characteristics. The secondary purposes of this research are the cataloguing of the names registered by different sources, the determination of their etymology and the determination of the naming procedures used to create them. This work was motivated by the lack of a detailed study concerning the Romanian folk names of lower plants. These vernacular names have been recorded in different dictionaries, glossaries, works concerning folklore and ethnology, botany and ethnobotany, but a paper containing a linguistic analysis, apart from the article *Denumiri române ti de ciuperaci*, written by Sanda Reinheimer-Rîpeanu, does not exist. This research uses the inductive method, the deductive method, the onomasiological method and the lexicographical-descriptive method, all merged with the analysis of terms' motivation, and starts from the analysis offered by Dumitru Bejan in his monograph dedicated to Romanian folk plant names, *Nume române ti de plante*, by Sanda Reinheimer-Rîpeanu, the author of the article already mentioned, and from the articles written by Ioan Milic on the subject of the Romanian phytonomy. The folk names for lower plants were gathered from a variety of sources: dictionaries and glossaries, books and articles on folklore, botany and ethnobotany. Very important in establishing the corpus were: the botanical dictionary written by Zacharia Panțu (appeared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century), the ethnobotanical dictionary written by Alexandru Borza (early 20<sup>th</sup> century) and the recent works of Constantin Dr gulescu, all of these sources providing a very rich inventory of Romanian vernacular names used for lower plants. The information provided by the Romanian language dictionaries, particularly by Dicționarul limbii române, the authority in identifying the etymology and the circulation of the analyzed terms, are added to these sources.

The first chapter of the thesis, entitled *Folk Plant Terminology. Concepts. Contrasts*, has a theoretical character. It is divided into two subsections. The first subsection, *A Few Metaterminological Issues*, and the second one, *The Scientific and Folk Plant Nomenclature*, aim to establish the acceptance of the items that configure the terminological apparatus of this research, focusing on the concepts of *terminology* and *term*, their definition and fundamental characteristics, the status of folk terminologies and the definition and main characteristics of folk terms. Starting from the three paradigms of study (the wüsterian theory, socioterminology and its branch, lexematics, and ontoterminology) it was noticed that all of them are interested in logic, the

hierarchy of concepts, the linguistic coding, word formation and the characteristics of the terms used in science and technology. Folk terminologies have been marginalized and the main features of folk terms haven't been discussed and analyzed by these three major directions of research. Only lexematics makes an exception by touching this issue tangentially and establishing that folk terminologies resemble the scientific ones because they both make distinctions in the order of things and the relations established between terms are the same with the ones established between the elements of the extralinguistic reality. Also, in this chapter it has been established that folk plant names are a nomenclature, a list of names. This nomenclature can be defined as the totality of vernacular plant names which were inherited, borrowed or created and are used by a community that speaks a particular language (often a standard one), which entail the coordinates of culture, civilization and language appertaining to the community in question and which are characterized by the following traits: empirical dimension, denominative variability, denominative imprecision, denominative specialization, vague denomination and cultural specificity (Milic , 2010). For the active users, who usually live in small settlements (villages, communes), folk botanical names, although imperfect in comparison with the scientific ones, are just as efficient and accurate as the latter.

The second chapter, *The Folk Romanian Nomenclature of Lower Plants*, has a practical character and is concerned with the Romanian folk plant names given to lower plants. It is, in its turn, divided into two sections. The first section, entitled *Lower Plants. Definitions. Classifications*, includes the definitions and brief descriptions of the four types of lower plants: algae, bryophytes, lichens and fungi. The second section of the chapter, *The Typology of Romanian Folk Names for Lower Plants*, includes, as indicated by the title, the typology of the romanian vernacular names used for inferior plants. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse this terms, their origins and the denominative procedures used to create them. The vernacular botanical names are analysed according to the type of plant. This division, which uses the categories of modern Botany, was chosen to facilitate the analysis. At the end of each section concerning the vernacular names appertaining to each plant category, are mentioned the names used by specialists in the field of Botany. These names are analysed separately because they are not of folk origin. They have been taken into consideration because some sources put them alogside folk ones and because they mark the connection between the vernacular nomenclature, the standardized nomenclature registered in different Romanian scientific works and the international botanical nomenclature (the scientific names given after Linné's rules). It must be mentioned that a precise delimitation between folk names of Romanian origin, folk names of loan translation origin and names which represent names created by botanists which, thanks to mass-media and school, are very well known: „în mai multe țări, este greu să se delimiteze ceea ce e metaforă paralelă de ceea ce este calc” (P lăteanu, 1982:7).

The analysis of Romanian folk names used for lower plants reveals that, in what concerns the terms etymology, all four plant groups have two layers: a main one and a secondary one. The main etymological layer includes the terms of foreign origin, like the terms inherited from Latin and the terms borrowed from languages like Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Polish and Hungarian etc. The secondary etymological layer includes the synthetic and analytic terms that were formed with the linguistic resources and techniques specific to our language. These are: derivation, compounding, conversion, clipping, folk etymology and blending. Derivation, compounding and clipping are the most productive processes. Conversion is very poorly represented. Folk etymology and clipping are identified only in the case of mushroom names. Synthetic and analytical names are approximately equally distributed in the case of lower plant vernacular names. In the case of synthetic names obtained through derivation, progressive derivation and diminutive suffixes are often used. Analytical names are divided in bimembral and polymembral names. In the case of the bimembral ones, there are used the following patterns of formation: *noun+adjective*, *noun+noun in genitive*, *noun+preposition+noun*, *noun+verb (supine)*, *noun+conjunction+verb* and in the care of the multimembral ones there are used the following patterns: *noun+preposition+noun+adjective*, *noun+adjective+adjective*, *noun\_adjective+preposition+noun*, *noun+preposition+demonstrative pronoun+adjective*. Bimembral names that use the genitive pattern (*noun+noun*) and accusative pattern (*noun+adjective*, *noun+preposition+substantive*) are predominant. The preposition used in most compounds is *de*. The prepositions *cu* and *de pe* rarely occur. As for the determiners used in the case of compound terms, it must be mentioned that they have a functional role because they mark, in most cases, the difference between related plant species and help identify plants as accurately as possible. In the case of names formed by compounding that have as head term a generic name as *mu chi*, *burete* and *ciuperc* and a determiner, the degree of specificity is not very high. This situation is changed in the case of the names that designate specific groupings of lower plants that share some features. This is evident in the case of mushroom compounded names which contain as governing term a term which functions as a generic and which, with the help of a determiner, allow a very accurate identification of plants (for example, names formed with the governing terms *hrib* – *hrib de stejar*, *hrib negru*, *hrib pucios*; *l ptuc* – *l ptuc dulce*, *l ptuc galben* , *l ptuc ve ted* ; *râ cov* –*râ cov de brad*, *râ cov de fag*, *râ cov ro u*; *vinețic* – *vinețic galben* , *vinețic l ptoas* , *vinețic negricioas* , etc.). Some determiners have a relational role, establishing links between names. In all of these cases, the names do not have the same number of components, the link being made between the synthetic and bimembral names and the bimembral and trimembral ones. These names mark very clearly the difference between resembling plants: *creste* (*Ramaria flava*) - *creast m runt* (*Ramaria crispula*), *g lbior* (*Cantharellus cibarius*, *Cantharellus tubaeformis*) - *g lbiori de stej rete* (*Cantharellus cibarius* var. *pallidus*), *burete ro u*

(*Boletus lupinus*, *Boletus satanas*, *Ganoderma lucidum*, *Hygrocybe coccines*, *Lactarius volemus*, *Mycena strobilina*, *Russula lepida*, *Russula rubra*, *Russula vesca*) - *bureți roșii otr vitori* (*Amanita muscaria*), *bureți galbeni* (*Russula ochroleuca*) - *bureți galbeni cu lapte* (*Lactarius volemus*). Statistically, along with compounding, clipping is an often used means to create new lower plant names. This means, based on phytonyms already in use, is specific for the folk plant nomenclature. Under the influence of the economy principle in language, the names created by compounding have been "clipped" by removing the governing term (which is a generic one), the remaining term (the original determiner) being used as a synthetic plant name, often by having its morpholexical body altered by the addition of lexical-grammatical suffixes.

The names belonging to the secondary etymological layer allow the identification of two denominative patterns: a descriptive one and a metaphoric one (which contains most of the terms which represent, in terms of word formation, basic words). The names that come under this etymological layer reflect the following features: color, appearance (shape), smell, taste, consistency, secretion of different substances, behavior, place and time of growth, use (in religious rituals, household or traditional medicine), adverse effects and superstitions related to plants. The features that are most often indicated are color, appearance (shape) and place of growth. Within the metaphorical pattern, alongside with the proper metaphors, it can be noticed the existence of a quite large number of determined metaphors (Gheție, 1978:183), meaning compound metaphors in the case of which the governing term receives a qualifier. By the direct indication of a plant's feature, this qualifier gives the compound metaphor a restrictive character. This type of metaphors do not have the same degree of autonomy as the proper ones because of their tight relationship with the extralinguistic elements (to be compared *aburel, codorâ te* and *p str vi* with *lâna apei, togm gelul brazilor* and *urechea nucului*).

Usually, the reference elements for metaphors (synthetic or analytical) are: objects commonly found in the traditional household (*scafiț , pilugele, cui oare, feldera p mântului*), piece of clothes (*p l rii, p l ria arpelui, c ciula piticilor*), traditional food (*azimioare, pit , crumpei, ca ii cioarei, brânza mâții, carnea mielului, carnea g inii*), wild animals (*perele cerbilor, p l ria arpelui*) and domestic ones (*c priț , oițe*) specific to our geographical area, anatomical parts (*ciucioi, brânca ursului, laba ursului*), physiological phenomena (*be ina calului, be ina sasului, râia broa tei*), ethnic groups (*be ina sasului, hriba lui Iano , p l ria țiganului*), socio-professional groups (*ciob na , nev stuțe*), supernatural entities (*oul balaurului, copilul dracului, lingura Maicii Domnului, lingura zânei*). Alongside these two categories, the character of this nomenclature has imposed the introduction of a third group, the one of the hybrid names. These represent an intermediate category which includes all the compound names that could not be introduced in the other two categories owing to the nature of the determiner (they indirectly indicate a feature of the

plant in question). As seen from the analysis of the folk plant names, this category is best represented in the case of mushrooms (*buretele arpelui, ciuperc ciob neasc , vinețica țapului*).

A specific characteristic of the secondary ethymologic layer is the names' transparency: the linguistic motivation can be easily identified. This transparency has as result a very strong connection with the extralinguistic world. The folk botanical nomenclature is not a closed domain: it is in a continuous process of change, reshaping, enrichment with new members. The proof consists in two elements: the constant communication between the folk botanical nomenclature and the scientific one and the active process of name creation. The communication between the two botanical nomenclatures is made both ways: some names of scientific origins enter (through school and media) in the vernacular one (an example is *truf* and the compound names formed from this word) and the vernacular nomenclature offers to the scientific one linguistic resources and naming patterns (for example, *iasca de cioat a foioaselor*). Exhaustive lists with vernacular terms used to name lower plants do not exist so the newly created names cannot be identified. But it can be stated that the process is still active. The proof lies in the name *ciuperci de-ale moa ii* (*Boletus scaber*), a name belonging to the idiolect of a woman from the area of F g ra , recently registered. With regard to the age of words it can be assumed that some of them are as old as the community that that uses them.

The third and last chapter, *The Characteristics of the Romanian Folk Nomenclature for Lower Plants*, includes the identification and the explanation of the features belonging to this nomenclature. These are: the empirical dimension, the denominative variability, the denominative imprecision and the cultural specificity.

The empirical dimension of the botanical folk nomenclature refers to the fact that the process of plant naming is based on primitive, pre-scientific principles. The entire folk plant nomenclature is the result of empirical knowledge. The proofs brought to support this trait are: the correspondence between folk names, scientific names and the extralinguistic reality, the folk denominative model and folk taxonomy. The comparison between the folk names of lower plants, the scientific ones and the extralinguistic reality reveals the imperfect overlap between the two nomenclatures. A perfect correspondence between the plant names and the extralinguistic plan exists just in the case of the scientific nomenclature. In the case of folk nomenclature such a correspondence does not exist because the creators of these names, which were using observation as the main „method of research”, could only name the plants that they were able to see or whose effects, mainly harmful ones, they were able to notice. Plants which did not made their presence noticed (like microscopic ones), did not receive names. Basically, for the inhabitants of a certain region, it was like they did not even exist.

The folk denominative pattern, the second proof of the empirical character of this nomenclature, is highlighted by the patterns used in the denominative process. The denomination is not made by official rules, like in the case of the scientific names. However, through the observation of those names belonging to the secondary etymological layer (which represent the majority of the names recorded in different sources), in the domain of ethnobotany it has been deduced the existence of two major denominative patterns: a descriptive one and a metaphoric one. If a comparison is made between these two types of names, each belonging to its pattern, it can be noticed the fact that each inferior plant receives a set of names, some metaphorical and some non-metaphorical. For example, *Coprinus comatus* receives the following folk names: *bureți nebuni*, *bureți popenchi*, *cap de arpe*, *c ciula arpelui*, *ciuperci nebune ti*, *p l ria nebunului*, *țâța vacii*. This statistic element proves that the two patterns are equally productive and that are equally important in the communities that use them.

The third proof of the empirical dimension of the folk nomenclature is represented by the folk taxonomy which is, as stated in the multiple studies in the field of ethnobotany, implicit. Through the analysis of the folk taxonomies, it can be deduced the manner in which the members of different communities organize the lower plants. The presence or absence of folk names for these plants and their features give evidence for the way in which they are classified and for their importance in the traditional world. Thus, the lower plants are divided, as deduced from the generic terms extracted from the folk nomenclature in question, in just two categories: mosses and mushrooms. Algae, plants considered useless in the peasant household, did not receive a proper generic name because they were not seen as belonging to a distinct group of plants. In the group of mosses are included plants which in the scientific botanical taxonomy are known as bryophytes and lichens and which have the following characteristics: are green plants, are small in size, grow mainly in forests as small colonies. In the case of fungi, there are two generic terms: *burete* (regional term) and *ciuperc* (stylistically neutral term). For ordinary people, these terms name the lower plants that can be seen with the naked eye, plants that are edible, inedible and toxic, parasitic or saprophytic, which grow on the trunks of uprooted trees, forest soil or meadows, road edges, with separable (cap and stem) or inseparable bodies and, thus, they became generic and almost synonymous. In this respect, the evidence is given by the great number of folk names for macromycetes that were created with the help of these two terms, names which often name the same plants. The generic value of these two terms is reinforced by their use in the creation of compounded folk botanical names, based on the pattern *generic term+determiner*, in which the determiner indicates an observable feature of the plant in question. Alongside these generic names, there is a number of mushroom names created by compounding, using the same pattern but with the help of an “umbrella term”, a term under which a series of mushrooms is known on the basis of their common features. These terms can be

considered secondary generic terms, subordinated to the primary ones (*burete* and *ciuperc* ). What distinguishes the proper generic terms from the secondary ones is the denominative capacity of the latter: they name a specific subcategory of fungi. The identified secondary generic terms are: *ciuciulete*, *hrib*, *m n tarc* , *pitarc* , *iasc* , *l ptuc* , *râşcov*, *vineţic* , *ureche*, *v c lie i zbârciog*. A close look on the list of vernacular names used for mushrooms reveals the existence of some other names that name compact groups of fungi. What separates them from the categories discussed above is their inability to form new folk names by compounding and to be transferred in order to name other plants from the same category. The vernacular names situated at the periphery of the secondary generic terms are: *babiţ* , *barba caprei*, *cocârle*, *copit* , *hulubiţ* and *oiţe*.

The denominative variability is the second feature of the Romanian folk names given to lower plants. By the application of E. Coseriu's ideas regarding the diatopic, diastratic ad diaphasic variation, it is obvious that, in the case of the Romanian vernacular names for talophytes, we can identify variation at the geographical, socio-cultural and stylistic levels, exactly like in the case of common language.

The denominative imprecision, the third feature of the folk Romanian nomenclature of lower plants, is divided into two cases: one name is given to several plants and one plant receives several names. In the case of lower plants, rarely is a plant registered with just one vernacular name. The majority of these plants have at least two-three names, each depending on the feature considered most important and on the naming pattern considered most important by their creator. For example, the plant scientifically called *Morchella esculenta* is known as *burete*, *burete de bub* , *uretele dalacului*, *ciuc la i*, *ciuciulete*, *pupi*, *zbârciog* and alga *Tribonema sp.* is called *alb streal* , *br di* , *iarb de balt* , *lân de ap* , *lân verde*, *râie bro teasc* , *zmoal* . The use of the same vernacular name for several plants is motivated by the presence of the same characteristic (color, smell, taste, place of growth) in the case of all the plants that received the name in question. The phytonym *lân verde* is used for the algae *Conferva sp.*, *Spirogyra sp.* i *Tribonema sp.*, *a a apei* is used for the bryophytes *Mnium ondullatum* and *Philonotis fontana* and *burete ro u* names the mushrooms *Boletus lupinus*, *Boletus satanas*, *Ganoderma lucidum*, *Hygrocibe coccinea*, *Lactarius volemus*, *Mycena strobilina*, *Russula lepida*, *Russula rubra* and *Russula vesca*.

The fourth characteristic, the cultural specificity, is proved by a number of elements which underline a series of components specific for the culture of the people who created and used the folk names that belong to this nomenclature. In this regard, very important are the vernacular names which that make reference to the pre-Christian and Christian layer. The commitment to Christianity is accentuated by the phytonyms which have as components the name of Divinity or of the Devil's: *cimpoiul dracului* (*Lasiosphaera gigantea*), *copilul dracului* (*Phallus impudicus*), *lingura Maicii Precista* (*Ganoderma lucidum*), *p h relul Maicii Domnului* (*Cladonia pyxidata*), *pâinea lui*

*Dumnezeu* (Lactarius deliciosus), *pipa dracului* (Lycoperdon spp.) or refer to specific uses of some mushrooms: *iasc de candel* (Phellinus ignarius). The pre-Christian layer is evident through the phytonyms that refer to pagan entities: *c ciula piticilor* (Hygrocybe coccinea), *ciuperca întroielelor* (Ganoderma lucidum), *hora Rusalilor* (Marasmius oreades), *lingura Frumoaselor*, *lingura Milostivelor*, *lingura strigoaicei*, *lingura zânei* (Ganoderma lucidus). To all of these must be added the plant names which point out the peasant world by the use of terms that have as primary reference point objects specific for the peasant household or animals specific for our fauna. Some examples of folk plant names that evoke objects specific for the rural life are: *burdu* (Lasiosphaera gigantea), *burhoi* (Lycoperdon perlatum), *cupițe* (Cyathus striatus, Lactarius piperatus) and some that evoke animals specific to our country are: *râia broa tei* (Cladophora sp.) *barba caprei* (Clavulina cinerea, Clavulina cristata var. Coralloides, Ramaria crispula, Ramaria formosa), *buretele viperei* (Amanita phalloides) and *creasta g inii* (Ramaria botrytis, Ramaria flava). Another proof of the cultural specificity of these folk names is represented by the primitive beliefs and practices that are strongly tied to some of the plants in question, namely the fungi group. For example, Ganoderma lucidum grows where the pagan entities called Iele have eaten and Marasmius oreades appear in the places where the pagan entities called Rusalii have danced, in the year in which many plants from the species Agaricus campester appear, there will be a harsh, cold winter and at the harvesting of the species of Polyporus squamosus a cross is made on top of the mushroom by the harvester in order to preserve its properties. Related to the linguistic and cultural specificity of Romanian folk botanic nomenclature of lower plants are the phraseological units which contain folk names in question like: „Piatra când ade mult la un loc, prinde mu chi”, „Numai ciuperci în cap nu mi-au crescut”, „Pân nu plou , nu se fac ciupercile”, „Pagub -n ciuperci!”, „A umblat dup ciuperci, i-a dat peste pufuleți”.

The last part of the paper represents the general conclusions and provides a synthesis of the main elements that characterize the nomenclature in question and its genesis. The way in which this nomenclature appeared is shown by the two etymological layers. It involves the combination of the two denominative processes specific to the folk botanical nomenclature (descriptive and metaphorical), with the borrowed and inherited phytonyms and with the formative processes specific to the Romanian language. The names that belong to the main etymological layer constitute the core or the base from which many other folk names from the secondary etymological layer were created (the exception being the vernacular names of algae). The secondary etymological layer, through its component elements and their processes of creation, represents the fruit of the terminologization process which had as result the creation of this inventory of phytonyms. In other words, the folk Romanian nomenclature of lower plants has taken and processed in its melting pot various lexical items, from various fields of knowledge, with the help of the model offered by the naming patterns



and formation processes. This „borrowed” lexical units which are used as lexical phytonymic resources are the result of transfer: from the common vocabulary, from the terminology of animals and body parts, of household objects and products, of mythology, religion and folk medicine (interterminological transfer) and from the folk Romanian botanic nomenclature to the folk Romanian nomenclature of lower plants (intraterminological transfer). In fact, in the case of intraterminological transfer there are two sources: the folk nomenclature of superior plants and the folk nomenclature of lower plants itself. The intraterminological transfer and the use of clipping as a main mean of development of this nomenclature stand as proof for its self-regenerative force. The folk botanical names have as source point the individual creations (based on borrowings and original names on the basis of the usual formation and naming processes), that spread, like any other lexical element, on a territory more or less extended (sometimes do not exceed the boundaries of a small region or a village). Botanical folk names were created with the purpose to communicate about these elements of the natural world, from the desire to know and transmit the knowledge in question, knowledge about their use as food, medicines, natural pigments sources and within the various ritual practices (pre-Christian and Christian), concerning the ecological characteristics of plants (place and season of growth) and their toxicity. Such folk names are transmitted from generation to generation orally, are enriched with new ones (borrowed or created within the language in question) and are subjected to modifications (phonetic, morphological or lexical), all these processes and procedures taking place within the community that uses the botanical folk names.

From the perspective of the theories regarding terminology, it appears that, like in the case of the scientific and technical terms, most of the analyzed botanical terms are transparent from the perspective of motivation theory. They have a strong connection with the extralinguistic world and they perform delimitations in reality, delimitations which are limited by the human senses (empirical methods for knowledge) and by the cognitive capacity, and the referential function is, owing to the strong extralinguistic connection, very well represented. The degree of generalization is not very big, folk nomenclature tends towards natural language, as also proved by the emotional content of the metaphorical terms and the ones formed by derivation with diminutive and augmentative affixes. They are subjected to the rules and processes specific to the Romanian language, to phonetic distortions and accidents, which proves their flexible and dynamic character. They are not easily borrowed from one language to another and their translation is often difficult. Nevertheless, folk botanical terms have a precise destination and satisfy the needs of communication of the linguistic community that uses them. They are precise on a limited territory, each rural community having a specific number of folk names, which are generally known in the community in question and are only used in order to name the plant species which are important for

them. However, seen in their entirety, are deprived of efficiency and accuracy. The source-domains of these names are specific to the Romanian culture and civilization. It becomes clear that the folk botanical terms that were analyzed lie at the borderline between common language and scientific language. They belong to both, ethnoscience (based on empiric knowledge) and common language, because they set out delimitations in the order of things and, at the same time, are subjected to changes and variations, to denominative imprecision and linguistic specificity, as all the words that belong to common language.

The terminological series corresponding to the folk Romanian names given to lower plants consists of all the lexical units which were inherited or borrowed or created within the linguistic community that speaks Romanian, with the purpose to name this elements of the natural world, names which are used by the rural and urban social categories, which are different from scientific and technical terms, are specific to texts and discourses which belong to folk speech and has the following characteristics: empirical dimension, denominative variability, denominative imprecision and cultural specificity. The Romanian folk botanical nomenclature of lower plants is based on the denominative processes and word formation patterns specific to the Romanian civilization, culture and language and represents a part of the traditional knowledge about the world, passed down from generation to generation and in which the utilitarian factor is blended with the aesthetic-intellectual one.