

Culture Dependent Toponym Types (The Concept of SETTLEMENT in Different Cultures)

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DOI: 10.2436/15.8040.01.105

Abstract

This paper argues for the views that (i) toponyms constitute cultural values; (ii) characteristic habitation names taken from genetically unrelated languages, when examined in the framework of cognitive linguistics, can reveal the concept of SETTLEMENT evolved by people belonging to different cultures; and (iii) human conceptualization of such entities as settlements is as much culture-specific as universal. The concept of SETTLEMENT encoded in the observed name forms has been detected to comprise (presumably) universal domains (highlighting mostly central, often spatial features of habitations, e.g. type, size, shape, age, position); culture-specific domains (highlighting various peripheral features of habitations, e.g. religion, market, event); and unique domains (highlighting some, usually abstract peripheral features of habitations, e.g. lifestyle, individual ownership, military success, commemoration of royalties, erudition). Cognitive linguistic approach adopted in the paper helps to collect which distinct aspects of human culture are reflected in the conventionalised settlement name forms of different languages, promotes to identify the boundaries of cultural regions and explains why toponyms are so highly sensitive to cultural changes.

1. Toponyms as Cultural Values

It is a long-established and widely accepted view that toponyms constitute cultural values. This consideration relies partly on the semantic contents, and partly on the linguistic features of place-names. The semantic contents often reflect unique, mostly historical or social features of cultures (e.g. the Hungarian settlement name *Ács* comes from a word meaning ‘carpenter’ and denoted a habitation where people of this trade were settled to serve the king in the Arpadian Era [1000–1301]; FNESz, 1: 53). The linguistic features preserve elements of extinct languages (e.g. the English river name *Tarrant* originates from British¹ **Trisantonā*, a name meaning ‘strongly flooding one’; CDEPN, 600), or old structures and dialect words of still used languages (e.g. *Somló*, the Hungarian name of a Transdanubian hill, is a derivation of the dialect word *somlik* ~ *somlyik*, meaning ‘[a walnut] comes out of its husk’, referring here presumably to a steeply sloping hill or, less likely, to a rocky hilltop towering above a green forest; FNESz, 2: 483). Officially, geographical names are declared to be important parts of human cultural heritage requiring maintenance and protection in today’s rapidly changing world (UNGEEN Resolutions: e.g. VIII/9, 2002: *Geographical names as cultural heritage*; IX/4, 2007: *Geographical names as intangible cultural heritage*; IX/5, 2007: *Promotion of the recording and use of indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names*; see also UNGEEN Media Kit 2, 7).

2. Cognitive Linguists on the Semantics of Proper Names

Cognitive linguists agree that proper names are not just simple labels referring to their denotata, but have a complex structure of meaning. The meaning of a proper name incorporates the speakers’ encyclopaedic knowledge about the entity bearing the name. Elements of this knowledge, elaborated mentally in various degrees of detail, are stored in cognitive domains, each comprising a set of features the speakers obtain about the denotatum

¹ British, an ancient Celtic language spoken in Britain before the 6th century AD, later developed into Old Welsh, Breton, Cornish and Cumbric.

by perceiving, abstracting, schematising and categorizing their relevant everyday experiences. The domains, forming a complex matrix, are in figure–ground relationships in the semantics of proper names: some domains are central, others are peripheral to understanding. A domain containing linguistic information, also a component of the matrix, clarifies how a proper name is used in the language: a proper name is supposed to identify a single entity in the universe of discourse. Thus, the type/instance distinction (i.e. a type can be abstracted on the basis of several instances), typical of common nouns, is neutralized in the semantics of proper names. Proper names are epistemologically grounded by their own virtue: “type, instantiation, quantity, and grounding are conflated in a single expression whose component parts fail to correlate with these semantic functions” (Langacker, 1991, 59; see also Langacker, 2008, 316–318). Furthermore, derived or compound proper names behave as linguistic units in the sense that speakers do not necessarily have to process their constituents one by one to be able to use or understand them in utterances (Tolcsvai Nagy, 2008; Reszegi, 2009). In a culture, it is conventions that determine which entities are given psychosocial importance by being identified with the help of proper names (Langendonck, 2007, 167–168).

Places usually get their names on the basis of their most salient, thus most identifying features. In the course of naming – a cognitive act in itself, strongly dependent on how the namers construe the mental representation of the designated entity –, domains profiled in the name forms are selected with respect to the conceptualization of the actual space. Hence comes the important assumption of cognitive linguistics claiming that language reflects the cognitive processes of the holistic human mind. As a consequence, examining language, a faculty of the mind (cf. Kövecses, 2006, 11, 331), can provide us with an insight into the operation of human cognitive abilities in general.

3. Cognitive Linguistics and the Revised Theory of Linguistic Relativity

Starting from the nineteenth-century Humboldtian idea about the unity of language, thought and culture, in the first half of the twentieth century a group of American anthropological linguists, Franz Boas, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf elaborated a long-debated but influential theory about the nature of the relationship between language and thought in the context of distinct cultures, known today as the *Sapir–Whorf hypothesis*. After some thirty years of total rejection by structural and generative linguists, in the current view, though the strong version of the hypothesis asserting that language determines the way we think (*linguistic determinism*) is no longer considered to be tenable, the weak version of the hypothesis emphasizing that language influences thought (*linguistic relativity*) is generally accepted: “The way a given language encodes experience semantically makes aspects of that experience not exclusively accessible, but just more salient for the users of that language” (Kramsch, 2000, 13; see also Dirven, Wolf and Polzenhagen, 2007, 1204).

Cognitive linguistics, with its strong interest in the mental representations behind linguistic facts, soon realized that the principle of linguistic relativity could adequately account for certain differences in corresponding linguistic and non-linguistic categorizations observed in different cultures of the world (e.g. in sorting and triads tasks; see Pederson, 2007, 1022). Cognitivists argue that the proofs of the effects of linguistic relativity have heretofore been sought for in the wrong segments of language use: instead of examining the ways people speak about culturally determined factors of their experiences (different cultural features are obviously expressed in different ways in languages), attention should be given to language structures referring to objective reality (e.g. to the domains of SPACE or TIME), the perception and mental construal of which by the same human organs is potentially universal (Pederson, 2007, 1016). If the semantics of such structures displays different approaches to the same facts, this is because humans’ universal conceptualizing capacity is constrained by

cultural (including linguistic) factors. In short, differences in conceptualizations are mediated by language, which in turn is partly responsible for these differences: “According to cognitive linguists, language not only *reflects* conceptual structure, but can also *give rise to* conceptualisation” (Evans and Green, 2006, 101).

As a consequence, in cognitive linguistics a new consideration has been emerging regarding the universal and culture-specific features of languages:

“Cognitive linguists and anthropologists have amassed evidence for universal processes by which humans build cognitive models, schematize experience, categorize concepts, and construe scenes. At the same time, they have demonstrated that there is immense variation in the ways that people build, schematize, link, and construe, as seen in the marvelous variety of world languages and cultures” (Palmer, 1996, 117).

These seemingly opposing tendencies do not necessarily exclude each other as was suspected previously by anthropological and generative linguists, the former focusing on specificities, the latter giving emphasis to universalities. Recently, attempts have been made to combine the ideas of these popular 20th-century trends in linguistics with the principles of cognitive linguistics to form the basics of *cultural linguistics* (Palmer, 1996, 2007), or *cultural semantics* (Kövecses, 2006). The biological and physiological characteristics of the parts of the human body (e.g. of the sensory organs, of the brain), common to all people, are responsible for the universalities in perceiving, schematizing and categorizing the features of entities (things, events, places, etc.) in our surroundings. In doing so, however, our attention seems to be restricted by culturally significant aspects of our understanding of the world, giving rise to several specificities. As a result of such mental processes, the mind does not simply create prototypes, but develops *cultural prototypes* of entities (for the term see Kövecses, 2006, 36), based on potentially universal bodily experiences influenced by cultural factors. This process, as discussed below, may well affect the concept of SETTLEMENT evolved by people belonging to distinctively different cultures.

4. Cultural Influences on the Concept of SETTLEMENT

4.1. With respect to the concept of SETTLEMENT manifested in the habitation names of different languages and cultures, first let us briefly consider two extremities: English settlement names here are chosen to stand for the Western culture in general and Chinese habitation names are used to represent the culture of the Far East.²

Characteristic English habitation names suggest that a settlement, by and large, has been conceived by the namers as a built-up place of measurable extension (e.g. *Mickleby* ‘the large farmstead or village’, NYorks; *Littleton* ‘little settlement’, Hants, Surrey; CDEPN, 411, 376) and spatial dimensions (e.g. *Longton* ‘the long village’, Lancs, Staffs; CDEPN, 381–382); situated in a given position (e.g. *Eastham* ‘east village or estate’, Mers; *Northcott* ‘north cottage[s]’, Devon; *Netherby* ‘lower village or farm’, Cumbr; CDEPN, 204, 441, 431); next to a prominent geographical feature (e.g. *Clapham* ‘homestead on or by a hillock’, Beds; *Trentham* ‘the homestead or estate on the river Trent’, Staffs; CDEPN, 140, 627); determined by natural (e.g. *Ashton* ‘ash-tree settlement’, Ches, Northants; *Clayton* ‘settlement on clayey soil’, Staffs, SYorks, WSusx, WYorks; *Moreton* ‘the moor settlement’, Dorset, Essex, Mers, Oxon, Staffs; *Storrington* ‘the storks’ farm’, WSusx; CDEPN, 22, 142, 421–422, 582) as well as man-made environment (e.g. *Brigstock* ‘the bridge settlement’, Northants; *Milnthorpe*

² Grammatically, the most characteristic name form in both languages is a compound of a generic and a specific constituent, with the specific element preceding the generic one (Stewart, 1975, 20, 291). Thus, mostly settlement names of this structure are listed here as illustrative examples.

‘outlying settlement with a mill’, Cumbr; *Sturton* ‘farm or village by the paved road’, Northum; CDEPN, 87, 414, 588); in the past belonging to (a group of) people (e.g. *Bedworth* ‘Bēda’s enclosure’, Warw; *Rennington* ‘the estate called after Regna’, Northum; CDEPN, 47, 497) and settled by inhabitants living (e.g. *Danby* ‘farm, village of the Danes’, NYorks; *Normanton* ‘settlement of the Northman or -men’, Derby, Lincs, WYorks; CDEPN, 178, 440–441); working (e.g. *Linton* ‘flax-farm’, Cambs, H&W; *Sutterton* ‘shoemaker farm or village’, Lincs; CDEPN, 375, 590); practising religion (e.g. *Felixkirk* ‘St Felix’s church’, NYorks; *Marstow* ‘Martin’s holy place’, H&W; CDEPN, 227, 401) or inhabiting temporarily (e.g. *Aldwick* ‘the old farm or trading-place’, WSusx; *Newton* ‘[the] new settlement’, Cambs, Ches, Cumbr, H&W, Lincs, Lincs, Norf, Northants, Staffs, Suff; CDEPN, 8, 436–438)³ (cf. also Cameron, 1996, 141–154).

Based on some better-known settlement names of the Chinese language,⁴ broadly speaking, a settlement seemed to have been conceptualized not only as a built-up place of measurable extension (e.g. *Dacun* ‘big village’; *Xiaochengzi* ‘little city’); situated in a given position (e.g. *Taipei* or *Taipei* ‘Tai[wan] north’; *Nanking* ‘southern capital’); next to a prominent geographical feature (e.g. *Shanghai* ‘[place] above the sea’; *Jiangkou* ‘confluence of two rivers’); determined by natural (e.g. *Hong Kong* ‘fragrant harbour’; *Changsha* ‘[city of the] long sands’; *Kweilin* ‘the cinnamon grove’ or ‘forest of Sweet Osmanthus’) as well as man-made environment (e.g. *Damiaio* ‘big temple’; *Hangzhou* ‘the city of the boats’); in the past belonging to (a group of) people (e.g. *Yangshan* ‘Yang [family] mountain village’; *Shihkiachwang Hopeh* ‘Shih-family village’) and settled by inhabitants working there (e.g. *Chinkiang* ‘river market [town]’ or ‘garrison [of the] river’; *Shasi* ‘market on the sands’); but also as a place of peace, harmony and wealth (e.g. *Yonghe* ‘perpetual peace’; *Daping* ‘great tranquillity’; *Changxing* ‘lasting prosperity’) of symbolic value (e.g. *Zhudong* ‘bamboo east’; *Fengdu* ‘phoenix capital’; where *bamboo* symbolises virtue and *phoenix* represents the Empress) (FNESz, 1: 565, 2: 221; Spencer, 1941; Stewart, 1975, 291–293; Creamer, 1995–1996, 906–909; Watkins, n.d.; Tucker, 2000–2011).⁵

As we can see, some components of the concept under discussion, especially those determined by objective reality, can definitely be identified in both languages (e.g. size, position). Other components, though common at a general level, might obviously be influenced by local factors at a specific level (e.g. geographical guideposts, environment, history). Certain components, finally, tend to manifest themselves rather only in the settlement names of one of the languages (e.g. the positive associations in connection with the lifestyle led in a habitation). One might suspect that the components (i.e. the domains) comprised in the concept of SETTLEMENT generally fall into these three large categories: (i) (presumably) universal, (ii) culture-specific and (iii) unique domains (cf. the variations of conceptual metaphors as shown in Kövecses, 2006, 155–180).

³ Examples of English settlement names are followed by an explanation taken from CDEPN, the indication of the county in which the settlement bearing the name (without a distinctive addition) can be found as well as the number of the relevant page in the source. Indications of county names employed here are those of the CDEPN (in alphabetical order): Beds = Bedfordshire, Cambs = Cambridgeshire, Ches = Cheshire, Cumbr = Cumbria, Derby = Derbyshire, Devon = Devon, Dorset = Dorset, Essex = Essex, Hants = Hampshire, H&W = Hereford and Worcester, Lincs = Lancashire, Lincs = Lincolnshire, Mers = Merseyside, Norf = Norfolk, Northants = Northamptonshire, Northum = Northumberland, NYorks = North Yorkshire, Oxon = Oxfordshire, Staffs = Staffordshire, Suff = Suffolk, Surrey = Surrey, SYorks = South Yorkshire, Warw = Warwickshire, WSusx = West Sussex, WYorks = West Yorkshire.

⁴ Chinese settlement names are transliterated and translated here according to the English traditions.

⁵ Images of good luck and happiness are often conjured up by Japanese habitation names as well, e.g. *Fukuoka* ‘good luck hill’, *Wakayama* ‘total song mountain’, *Tokushima* ‘virtuous island’ (FNESz, 1: 482, 2: 782; Stewart, 1975, 293–294).

4.2. Firstly, (presumably) universal domains of the concept of SETTLEMENT reflected in settlement names, generally speaking, often have a reference to a striking, basic trait of the habitation itself (e.g. type, size, shape, age), or to a definite positional feature of the inhabited place (e.g. in relation to another settlement, or with respect to the cardinal points of the compass). These characteristics of the habitations are easily and primarily perceived by any observer; moreover, positional features, at a given time in history, are highly informative on the localization of settlements.

4.3. Secondly, though several domains of the concept of SETTLEMENT are potentially universal, their actual appearance in habitation names is strongly culture-dependent. Let me quote here three such domains as arbitrarily selected examples: RELIGION, MARKET and EVENT.

RELIGION as a domain is highlighted in the settlement names of several cultural areas, but the explicitness of its reference or the religious tradition reflected in the name forms may differ considerably. Regarding explicitness: in the South Pacific region, nineteenth-century missionaries began to use the name form *Nuku'alofa* 'village of love' to indicate today's capital of the Kingdom of Tonga, a name apt for a developing centre of Christianity, in which, however – especially in contrast with the hagiotonyms of Western Europe –, the religious content, to a certain degree, is underspecified (Crocombe, 1995–1996, 944). Religion, an identifying feature of each culture, has different branches. It is no wonder that settlement names foregrounding the potentially general domain of RELIGION at a specific level display the culturally accepted religious tradition practised at the time when the names were born: thus, names might equally reflect the mythological world view of ancient people (e.g. *Delphoi* < Greek '[Grandmother Earth's] womb'; *Lyon* < Celtic 'the fort of the Gaulish god called *Lugus*'; FNESz, 1: 362, 2: 57); and the doctrines of, for instance, Eastern religions (e.g. *Amritsar* < Hindi 'the lake of the immortality'; *Calcutta* < Bengali 'Land of [the goddess] *Kālī*'; *Rampur* < Hindi 'Rama's city'; FNESz, 1: 98, 274, 2: 399; Stewart, 1975, 290). In habitation names, one can identify different approaches even to a single religious trend. To take Christianity as an example: the Catholic place-naming practices widespread in Western Europe in the past have produced a number of settlement names honouring the patron saint to whom the church (or some other ecclesiastic building) of the settlement was dedicated (e.g. *Sankt Pölten* in Austria, *Santo Stefano Ticino* in Italy, *Szentendre* in Hungary and *St Albans* in England venerate Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Saint Stephen, the protomartyr of Christianity, Saint Andrew the Apostle and Saint Alban, the first British Christian martyr, respectively; FNESz, 2: 446, 556; CDEPN, 517). In the Celtic West, however, relevant settlement names do not necessarily reflect the dedication of the church in the habitation; instead, these names not infrequently commemorate the founder of the local church and, consequently, that of the emerging settlement, a holy man regarded as a saint only long after his death (e.g. English *St Davids* ~ Welsh *Tyddewi* 'Dewi's house', named after its founder, a sixth-century Welsh bishop, later the patron saint of Wales; Matthews, 1972, 154). The Protestant place-naming practices adopted in North America, at the same time, have typically created settlement names praising Puritan values (e.g. in the USA: *Providence*, Rhode Island; *Concord*, Massachusetts; *Philadelphia* [< Greek 'brotherly love'], Pennsylvania; Matthews, 1972, 187–189).

Commerce was undoubtedly an important aspect of the early economic life in Europe, including the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. Hungarian settlement names manifesting the domain of MARKET could highlight the fact that the settlement was a market place (e.g. [*Maros*]/*vásárhely* 'market place [on the river Maros]'; FNESz, 2: 103); foreground the person who had the right to organize a market (e.g. *Martonvásár* 'Martin[']s market'; FNESz, 2: 105); or display the day of the weekly market (e.g. *Csütörtök* 'Thursday', *Szombathely* 'Saturday place'; FNESz, 1: 349, 2: 591). The latter concept is missing from the settlement name stocks of

several European languages, including English; however, the same idea is reflected in some habitation names of the Japanese language in the Far East (Stewart, 1975, 96).

A remarkable event that happened at a given place could easily evolve into an identifying feature, especially when the place became inhabited, leading to the appearance of the domain of EVENT in the settlement name. However, different cultures might emphasize distinct aspects of an event: whilst the ancient Israelites tended to stress the action (e.g. the biblical place names *Massah* ‘temptation, tempted’, *Meribah* ‘dispute, quarrel, contention’),⁶ the ancient Greeks focused rather upon the person (e.g. *Athens*, named after Athena;⁷ FNESz, 1: 122; see also Stewart, 1975, 176–183, 196, 201).

4.4. Thirdly, in some cases there is evidence that certain domains are related to the concept of SETTLEMENT only in the languages of a given cultural area. The strong presence of habitation names manifesting the domain of INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP in widely-separated parts of Europe (e.g. names ending in *-ingham*, *-ington* in England, such as *Birmingham* ‘the homestead at or called *Berming*, the place called after Beorma’,⁸ *Beddington* ‘estate called after Beada’, CDEPN, 59, 46; or names ending in *-háza*, *-falva* in Hungary, such as *Gáborjánháza* ‘Gabriel’s manor’, *Mikófalva* ‘Mikó’s village’, FNESz, 1: 489, 2: 144) and their absence in the Maori language in New Zealand (Stewart, 1975, 281–282), for instance, is a consequence of different proprietary structures. Throughout history, warlike peoples were fond of giving habitation names emphasizing the domain of MILITARY SUCCESS (e.g. *Nizza* < Greek ‘victory’, *Cairo* < Arabic ‘the conqueror’; FNESz, 2: 242, 1: 668), an idea totally lacking in Hungarian settlement name stock. Colonizing nations often adopted settlement names foregrounding the domain of COMMEMORATION OF ROYALTIES in the colonies to show their appreciation of and loyalty to their monarchs (e.g. *Antioch*, named by Seleucus I Nicator, Macedonian ruler after his father; *Laodicea*, Antiochus II Theos named the city after his wife, Laodice; *Zaragoza* < Latin *Caesarea Augusta*, commemorating Emperor Augustus; *Jamestown*, Virginia, the first permanent English settlement of colonial America took its name from King James I of England; *Charleston*, South Carolina was named after King Charles II of England; FNESz, 1: 103, 2: 800, 1: 284; see also Stewart, 1975, 203–204; Matthews, 1975, 179–184). In contrast, in Tahiti the habitation name *Vai’ete* was changed into *Pape’ete* (both mean ‘the basket of water’), because its first element happened to be identical with the name of *Vai*, a contemporary chief (Crocombe, 1995–1996, 943–944).

4.5. What is more, toponyms are relatively sensitive to cultural changes. In the course of history, as culture has developed, the domains reflected in settlement names have also become more and more varied: namers invented new naming practices and adapted the old ones to the new requirements. The very many habitation names displaying the domain of ERUDITION in North America (e.g. names evoking ancient history, such as *Memphis*, named after the ancient capital of Lower Egypt on the River Nile, resembling the Mississippi in Tennessee; *Phoenix*, Arizona, a name intended to describe a new city springing from the ruins of a former civilization; or names boasting of literacy, such as *Waverley* ~ *Waverly*,

⁶ “And he [Moses] called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” (*The Holy Bible KJV*, Exodus 17:7).

⁷ According to the myth, the city was named after the goddess Athena, who prevailed against Poseidon in a competition over the patronage of the city by giving the citizens an olive tree, a symbol of peace and prosperity as a gift <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens#Etymology> (08. 12. 2011).

⁸ In other words: ‘the home (ham) of the tribe (ing) of a leader called Birm or Beorma’ (08. 12. 2011.) <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/cs/Satellite/history-of-birmingham?packedargs=website%3D4&rendermode=live> or ‘the farmstead of the sons (or descendants) of Beorma’ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birmingham#History> (08. 12. 2011).

New York, Tennessee, Iowa; *Elsinore*, Utah, California, having their origins in the works of Sir Walter Scott and William Shakespeare, respectively; FNESz, 2: 119; see also Matthews, 1972, 204) manifest the solid educational background of the namers arriving from Europe. The domain of INTELLECTUAL DESCRIPTION in place names has been flourishing ever since (e.g. *Long Island*, New York; *Ecuador* ‘equator’; FNESz, 2: 46, 1: 405; Stewart, 1975, 93). Official changes of settlement names often have POLITICAL OVERTONES, e.g. the 1989 change of the English name of the former capital of Burma (Myanmar) from *Rangoon* to *Yangon* (meaning ‘end of strife’) by the ruling military junta in its effort to emphasize the country’s independence by substituting several allegedly colonial names with more nationalistic Burmese ones (PCGN, 2003/2007).

4.6. All things considered, whilst the domains of TYPE, SIZE, SHAPE, AGE, POSITION, RELIGION, MARKET and EVENT, in a more or less culturally influenced way, seem to form essential parts of the human concept of SETTLEMENT, the domains of INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP, MILITARY SUCCESS, COMMEMORATION OF ROYALTIES and ERUDITION are components of the prototype of entities identified as settlements only in the conceptualization of certain people belonging to given cultures.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, in accordance with the view of cognitive linguistics on the possibility of observing man’s cognitive processes by way of examining language as a faculty of the mind, I have tried above to provide support for the idea that human conceptualization is as much culture-specific as universal. Based on some characteristic habitation names taken from genetically unrelated languages of different cultures, the concept of SETTLEMENT encoded in the name forms has been detected to comprise (i) (presumably) universal (highlighting mostly central, often spatial features, e.g. type, size, shape, age, position); (ii) culture-specific (highlighting various peripheral features, e.g. religion, market, event); and (iii) unique (highlighting some, usually abstract peripheral features, e.g. lifestyle, individual ownership, military success, commemoration of royalties, erudition) domains. A certain set of these domains is given explicit salience at a culture-specific level in the settlement names of a given language, reflecting the cultural prototype for settlements in the speakers’ conceptualization. In other words, the concept of SETTLEMENT seems to display the speakers’ collective knowledge about geographical, historical and social features of habitations as well as their hopes and claims in connection with inhabited places. Moreover, settlement names, being conventionalized linguistic representations of the speakers’ mental construals of the relevant entities, can also be considered as cultural markers: people who can easily conceive the conceptual background behind a coherent group of name forms, in all probability, belong to the same cultural community.

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