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Cutting across Linguistic Borders? Interlingual Hair Salon Names in Plurilingual Switzerland

Abstract: This chapter examines a corpus of 12,000 names given to hair salons in Switzerland. Amongst these, interlingual salon names displaying evidence of language play, often in the form of puns and hybrid compounds, were then analysed for the choices of language, their structure and meaning. The names under discussion comprise phrases whose constituents, from different language systems, are combined, blended or juxtaposed for humorous or surprise effects. Findings include the identification of major strategies used in the creation of these salon names, the use of near homophones, exploiting near homography, and the respelling of ‘foreign’ material as if it were ‘local’. Particular attention is paid to the English form *hair* which dominates the construction of these interlingual names. This chapter argues that the choice to play with words sourced from different languages not only allows the namers of the salons to display local and professional identities, but to also display creativity, which is highly valued in the hairdressing profession.

Keywords: English, French, hair salons, Italian, interlingual wordplay, metro-lingualism, names, Romansh, Switzerland, (Swiss) German

1 Introduction

This chapter examines interlingual wordplay found in the construction of the names of Swiss hair salons, all examples of what might be considered a quotidian form of linguistic creativity. It provides an analysis of the linguistic components and strategies of combination that are found in these names and the social effects they imply. Switzerland is an interesting site to investigate interlingual wordplay. With its four national languages, French, German, Italian and Romansh, there are already intra-national linguistic borders to cross. In German-speaking Switzerland, there is also a diglossic relationship between Standard German and forms of Swiss German such as Züritüütsch, the dialect of Zurich while Romandy, the collection of French cantons, is home to varieties of Arpitan or Franco-Provençal. A fifth language, English, provides a great deal of the source material for interlingual play.

The chapter begins with a review of the linguistic ecology of Switzerland before considering some of the theoretical issues surrounding the mixing of languages. Rather than following the traditional lines of enquiry into the phenomenon, namely codeswitching and borrowing analysis, I explore the notion of metrolingualism, which argues against the idea of languages as discrete systems, nameable and identifiable with a given place or places. Theoretical considerations are followed by an outline of the methodology. A brief overview of bilingualism in the data gives way to a discussion of the five strategies for interlingual wordplay identified in the data set. The chapter ends with a reconsideration of what interlingual wordplay might mean for salon namers in the confederation.

2 The Language Situation in Switzerland

Switzerland is a multilingual nation which enshrines the languages German, French, Italian and Romansh as having official status in its constitution (Grin 2010: 66). The status afforded these four masks a more complex arrangement of languages within the confederation of Swiss cantons. Sociolinguistically, German, French and Italian have more status than the minority language, Romansh. Spoken in discontinuous areas in the east of Switzerland, it is used in official communication between the state and Romansh speakers. Consequently, a Romansh text does not always appear alongside the other three official languages on state documents (cf. Rash 2002: 116). While texts in the big three languages frequently co-occur in official discourse, this is not reflected in the lived practices of the Swiss. Most Swiss, perhaps apart from Romansh speakers, need not use a language from another Swiss region in any domain of communication in their daily interactions. A principle of territoriality and decentralisation means that language policy is delegated to the purview of each of the twenty-six cantons (Rash 2002: 113), with most declaring themselves monolingual territories among which there are one Italian-speaking canton, Ticino, four French speaking cantons, and seventeen monolingual German territories. These are joined by the three French-German territories and by the canton of Graubünden, where three languages, German, Italian and Romansh are spoken. In the cases of the bi- and trilingual cantons, official language policy is determined at the sub-cantonal level, i.e. either by the district, or even smaller, by the commune.

The complexities around the official languages further disguise the richness of the linguistic landscape of the country. While standard Swiss varieties of French, German and Italian hold official status, other varieties hold important

roles in the daily communication of many Swiss, particularly in the case of German speakers. Dialects of Swiss German are the mother tongues of most in this language zone, without marking speakers as belonging to particular classes or age groups (Watts 1999: 71). Swiss German varieties are used for everyday interaction, and few areas other than writing are restricted to Standard German, often described as *Schriftdeutsch* or ‘written German’ (Franceschini 1997: 116). Standard German is the language of much of the education system, used in elements of the mainstream media and is the form of German taught in the other linguistic regions of Switzerland.

Likewise, Romandy, or the French-speaking area, is also home to another language, Arpitan or Franco-Provençal, often called Romand, by French-speaking Swiss. This language, like Standard French and Romansh, belongs to the Gallo-Romance family. Its dialects once thrived in neighbouring Western France, and it has remained relatively strong in Northern Italy. The number of speakers in Romandy, currently estimated at 7000, is on the decline. The language is no longer being passed down to the younger generation and is largely only spoken by older generations in rural areas (Lewis, Simons and Fennig 2015).

Beyond these local languages, another language plays an important role, particularly in communication across the internal borders of the country: English (Davidson 2010). English is regarded by many Swiss as a convenient *lingua franca* across language borders within the country and a covert fifth national language (Dürmüller 2002, Demont-Heinrich 2005). Changes to the education system led by the Canton of Zurich have seen English replace other Swiss languages as the second language learnt in many schools (Stauffer 2001: 60). Such official moves towards expanding the role of English in Switzerland has been perceived as threatening the commitment to encourage knowledge of the national languages (Grin and Korth 2005).

3 Theorising Language and Hybridity

There is, however, always a pull in the opposite direction, moving away from recognising non-permeable borders surrounding languages. In reality, the movement of lexical forms across the internal borders of Switzerland has a long history (Rash 1989). Standard Swiss German and the Swiss German dialects all contain forms from French and Italian and the same is true in the other direction, though to a lesser extent (Rash 2002: 124). Because of the more intimate contact between languages in trilingual Graubünden, Romansh, too, contains its fair share of borrowing (Rash 2002: 124). In fact, several key lexical items in

the semantic field of hairdressing demonstrate this point. While the most common words for ‘hairdresser’ and ‘hair salon’ in Germany are *Friseur / Friseuse*, in Switzerland they are *coiffeur(e)* and *coiffure* from French. These forms are commonly used in Standard Swiss German, in the Swiss German dialects, in Swiss Italian, Romansh and in French-speaking Romandy. In fact, a marker of Swiss German dialects in the salon names is the use of localised spellings of the word. Across the German-speaking territory we find *Cuafför*, *Gwafför*, *Gwaför* and *Kwafför*. Other pertinent terms such as *salon*, *studio* and *atelier* are long-term borrowings across intra-national Swiss linguistic borders.

In the last decade, linguists have been questioning the borders around language systems. Otsuji and Pennycook (Otsuji and Pennycook 2010, 2011, 2013; Pennycook and Otsuji 2014) argue that such conventions of naming languages and their territories and tying specific language codes to cultures are grounded in ideology. They suggest that approaches to bilingualism which analyse the mixing and switching of codes do nothing but reify the constructed boundaries around language and tell us little about contingent practices of language users who have elements from more than one language in their linguistic repertoire. They propose examining the means by which people exploit their linguistic repertoire willfully and playfully under the term *metrolingualism*. For Otsuji and Pennycook (2013: 83) in globalised metropolitan settings hybrid language use in signage and advertising is unremarkable in its abundance. Examining workplace talk in Australia (2010, 2013) and Japanese (2014) where languages collide, they argue that the mixing of Japanese and Australian English is not interpretable under the many rubrics of interpreting triggers for codeswitching and mixing (2013: 83), but is a disavowal by speakers of maintaining mental borders around languages and severing the links between language and cultural background.

This ideological interpretation of metrolingualism moves again. Converging with the field of semiotic landscapes, Pennycook and Otsuji (2014) suggest that particular spaces offer affordances for the linguistic repertoire of individuals within them. In the bistro in Tokyo they examined (2014: 162), Japanese, French, Italian and English are available to speakers to negotiate the various tasks and identities of the interactants and the modes of communication to do so. But as their examples show, there is no simple correspondence between language and task in the restaurant – serving food to Japanese speaking customers and instructing the French speaking chefs (2014: 176–177). In fact, there are two interesting elements in the interactions pertinent to the hairdressing salon names research presented here. Pennycook and Otsuji (2014: 177) argue persuasively that the names of food are already translingual. Pizza may have had its origins in

Italy, but the ties between pizza and its birthplace have long been severed. Likewise, expressions such as *bon appétit* may also have become delinked from their ‘mother tongue’. Arguably, this is not simply a linguistic borrowing into English, but the adoption of a social practice. The fact that in Switzerland *coiffure* and *coiffeur* have been delinked from a single code and are shared across the communicative space of Switzerland suggests that Swiss salons are both physical spaces, in which practices might highlight particular elements of a linguistic repertoire as well as more metaphorical spaces or fields within which social practices including linguistic ones have certain meanings and values.

The participants of Otsuji and Pennycook’s metrolingualism research vary in their fluency in different corners of their linguistic repertoires. In earlier iterations of their research (Otsuji and Pennycook 2010, 2011), speakers showed high degrees of bilingual competence, while by 2014 this seems not so clear-cut. In the research tradition of polylingualism, which avows the separation of linguistic systems, fluency, as part of the older views of bilingualism and multilingualism, is dismissed as unnecessary. This view in that tradition is summed up by Jørgensen et al. (2011: 34): “Language users employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims as best they can, regardless of how well they know the involved languages.”

In the names of hair salons, we will see that the texts produced are fragments, single noun phrases or complex, co-ordinated or juxtaposed noun phrases. We know nothing of the namers’ competence in the languages used in these fragments nor of the competences of those that come into contact with their texts. What we do know, however, is that salon namers feel free to deploy their linguistic resources across a number of linguistic levels, participating in interlingual language play to create humorous effects and communicate their professional and local identities.

In examining the results of the salon namers’ creations, I am guilty of the ‘sloppiness’ and ‘anything goes policy’ of some critics (Delabastita 2001: 47), as I extend the term *wordplay* from the more commonly used classifications of punning and paronymy to the deliberate and creative deployments of phrases, words and morphemes and the graphemes that represent them to create novel, unexpected and / or humorous effects. Put more simply, I examine wordplay in the sense of the pleasure of playing with words. The breadth of this definition aligns with the discussions of wordplay, language play and creativity in the linguistics and applied linguistics tradition of Crystal (1998), Cook (2000) and Carter (2004). In the case of the corpus of Swiss salon names, I examine only the cases where two or more languages are evident in the creation of names. While

interlingual punning can be created using a single word, my interest here is the deliberate juxtaposing of different language resources.

4 Hair Salon Research

We should consider salon naming an act of everyday linguistic creativity or, as some have called it, ‘small c creativity’ (Jones 2014: 5) and, for the names of this study, a good example of play across linguistic borders. While much research in the area of interlingual wordplay has focussed on ‘big C Creativity’, i.e. literary outputs, often to tease out the complexities of interlingual punning in celebrated texts, much less research has been done on more quotidian examples of this interlingual creativity. Relatively recent linguistic studies highlighting non-literary humour and wordplay include Crystal (1998), Norrick (2003), and Partington (2006); see also Härmävaara and Frick (this volume). Research in the field of names and naming has occasionally examined hair salons. Byrd (1982) and Wilhelm (1988) examine the strategies of American salon namers, while, as part of a wider examination of business naming patterns in Finnish, Pahta and Taaivitsainen (2004) track the changes in salon names in the Helsinki telephone directory between 1953 and 2003. Pire (2000, 2001) includes hair salons in the corpus of French commercial names he examines. Byrd (1982) identifies strategies for the creation of American salon names, which are relevant here:

- (1) personal names
- (2) type of building or place where the hairstyling is carried out
- (3) names indicating a geographic location
- (4) names claiming a connection to another part of the world
- (5) euphemistic names for the profession
- (6) cute names
- (7) names indicating customer type
- (8) mimicry of corporate businesses
- (9) spelling innovations (Byrd 1982: 183–188).

Firstly, briefly explaining some of the categories, number five refers to the use of terms such as *hair designer* or *hair design* for ‘hairdresser’ and ‘hairstyling’. Names in number seven identify elements of the customer’s identity, most typically gender and ethnicity, while category eight is the use of terms like *co* or *company, unlimited* etc. In the cute name category, Byrd (1982: 185–187) puts those names which are alliterative, based on puns, or create novel word forms with the term *hair*. In almost all of her examples of these categories, we find

elements of languages other than English and references to foreign cultures, most notably French which is implicated in stereotypes of fashion and elegance. Pahta and Taavitsainen (2004) found French, too, in the names of the salons of Helsinki, though by the later end of the research period, it appears as if English has replaced it. Notably, as with the salons of Switzerland, hybrid forms and evidence of interlingual wordplay, were also found in Finland.

This Finnish research suggests that the use of English in business names must be understood in the context of an ever increasingly proficient population of English users in Finland, and that they represent a localisation of the language. The names are not intended to communicate across linguistic borders, but to symbolise the “local habits as well as cultural conventions and national stereotypes” of the country (Pahta and Taavitsainen 2004: 183).

5 The Data

There are over 12,000 hair salons in Switzerland according to Swiss Telecom’s online phone directory, local.ch. From this database, the names of Swiss hair-dressing salons were extracted in searches canton by canton. The site’s language management practices somewhat mirror those of the country in that searches can be made in German, French, Italian and English. Twenty-three different data sets were constructed in this manner. Because of display limitations on local.ch, restricting the viewer to the first 1000 items of a search result, other strategies had to be used for the three largest cantons, Zurich, Vaud and Bern. To work around this, searching by geographical regions within each of these three cantons was attempted. The regions used on the site, however, do not always correspond to the official sub-cantonal districts and in some cases local.ch regions overlapped with each other. For the three large cantons, this search strategy netted within 100 salons of the target produced by a cantonal search. While not a perfect dataset, it certainly contains more than a representative number of Swiss hair salons.

For each search, the data was tagged so that it always carried its cantonal origins¹ and its concomitant official language(s). A set of tags were used to

¹ The tags used to mark the canton of a salon name are the same two-letter codes used by the Swiss government.

– German-speaking cantons: AG – Aargau, AI – Appenzell Innerrhoden, AR – Appenzell Ausserrhoden, BL – Basel Landschaft, BS – Baselstadt, GL – Glarus, LU – Lucerne,

comment on the structure of the actual name; these included whether the name was monolingual or multilingual, as well as tags for the strategies outlined in the body of the paper. Set aside from the data in each search were those salons whose names comprised only proper nouns. Most of these were simply the name of the owner of the salon; however, fictional people, goddesses and place names and fragments of street addresses, which were treated here as names, i.e., proper nouns, also fell into this category. Dealing with at least 12,000 salon names, I restricted the focus of the research into overt examples of language play; therefore, I excluded salons whose names were single word forms. While importing a single word across a language border can create language play, my interest is largely restricted to when the languages play together, that is, when forms from two languages are juxtaposed or intertwined to produce a salon name.

The remaining data was examined for its structure with respect to the language or languages of the canton. While many of the examples of interlingual wordplay were obvious, I consulted with speakers of the languages involved in cases where I doubted my interpretation,² though any faults in the analysis remain my own.

The data in this chapter will be reproduced in the orthography presented on local.ch including nonstandard capitalisation and punctuation. Terms denoting their status as companies such as *Sàrl* and *GmbH*, i.e. French and German terms for ‘limited liability company’, etc. have been discarded. Information about the cantons of origin is presented, also indexing the cantonal official language(s) attached.³ Where each component of the name needs to be considered in detail, a gloss with a tag indicating the language of origin is subscripted to each word.

NW – Nidwalden, OW – Obwalden, SG – St Gallen, SH – Schaffhausen, SO – Solothurn, SZ – Schwyz, TG – Thurgau, UR – Uri, ZG – Zug, ZH – Zurich

- French-speaking cantons: GE – Geneva, JU – Jura, NE – Neuchâtel, VD – Vaud
- Italian: TI – Ticino
- Bilingual cantons: BE – Bern, FR – Fribourg, VS – Valais
- Trilingual canton: GR – Graubünden

2 I would like to take this opportunity to thank my language consultants, Ruth Buchanan, Claudia Campbell, Alex Finkle, Giovanni Koba, Philippe Morvan, Bora Rossini, and Dennis Vogel.

3 Abbreviations for languages in the indexed examples: A – Arpitan, E – English, F – French, G – (Standard Swiss) German, I – (Standard Swiss) Italian, R – Romansh, S – Spanish, SWG – Swiss German Dialect.

6 Wordplay in Bilingual Salon Names

6.1 Preliminary Overview

The data sets immediately reveal that all the territorial languages of Switzerland appear in the names of hairdressing salons, including, various dialects of Swiss German, Romansh and Arpitan. Of the latter two, there are only a few, all of which are restricted to their home cantons.

- | | | | |
|-----|---|----------|---------------------|
| (1) | Gwafför | Lozärn | LU _G |
| | hairdressing _{SWG} Lucerne _{SWG} | | |
| | ‘Lucerne Hairdressing’ | | |
| | | | |
| (2) | Creaziun | Jaura | GR _{G/R/I} |
| | creation _R woman.of.Val Müstair _R | | |
| | ‘Jaura Creation’ | | |
| | | | |
| (3) | La | Tschoupe | VD _F |
| | DET _A hair / tuft.of.hair _A | | |
| | ‘The Tuft’ | | |

In all cantons, the major languages of Switzerland, German, French and Italian, are used in the names of salons alongside English and occasionally other world languages, including Turkish, Latin, Japanese and Indonesian. Illustrating the frequency of combinations of language, some rough statistics of two relatively small cantons are given, French-speaking Jura and German-speaking Schaffhausen. For Jura there are 139 unique salon names. Of these, forty-one consist only of a proper noun phrase. Additionally, there are eleven instances where a noun phrase contains only a head noun. Discarding these, the remaining salon names comprise 69 monolingual French phrases, five monolingual English phrases and five cases where the phrase could be interpreted as French or English. There were nineteen cases where there was unambiguous interlingual wordplay, i.e. two languages were adjacent within a salon name. This number may seem insignificant, but when we examine the monolingual names, we discover that nearly 40% of the French phrases are made up of a proper noun juxtaposed with a French noun such as *salon*, *coiffure* ‘hairdressing’, or *coiffeur* ‘hairstylist’.

- (4) Coiffure Martine JU_F
 hairdressing_F NAME
 ‘Hairstyling Martine’
- (5) Romina Création JU_F
 NAME creation_F
 ‘Romina Creation’

Such titles, where there is no overt grammatical embedding of the name, i.e., without morphemes marking the name as a possessor, are treated as monolingual (issues in word order notwithstanding), as names themselves do not usually belong to specific languages in this study. Names are only understood as being in a particular language in the cases of grammatical embedding, or when a place name has specific forms in different languages. An example of this is in (1) where a Lucerne dialect name is given.

The Schaffhausen data presents a similar picture. Twenty-five of the set of unique names are bilingual. The dominant language of the canton, German, also dominates the monolingual data with thirty-three of the names being monolingual multiword German phrases. However, when we look more closely, twenty-six of the monolingual German phrases comprise a single German word and a proper noun. In most instances, this form denotes the kind of business or the profession itself. That is, the majority of the monolingual German phrase names are made up of a term such as *Coiffeur*, *Coiffure* or *Salon* and an adjacent proper noun. Note that when these terms are used they are considered to be long-term and widely understood borrowings into a cantonal language and tagged accordingly. Such terms appear in dictionaries of the language, in the case of the languages of Switzerland, they are assigned a gender. For example, *Hairstylist* or *Hair-stylist* is a masculine noun in German, while no dictionary consulted assigned a gender to *Hair*. Below we see examples of German monolingual salon names of the type Salon + proper noun.

- (6) Haarwerk Berringen SH_G
 hair_G-works_G TOPONYM
 ‘Hairworks Berringen’
- (7) Salon_G Marianne SH_G
 salon_G NAME
 ‘Salon Marianne’

salon names, I identify a number of strategies for styling such names which will be explored in the next section.

- (1) playing with possession structures
- (2) punning and respelling strategies
- (3) morphological replacement
- (4) lexical substitution
- (5) interlingual orthographic play

6.3 Playing with Possession

One form of language play that appears quite frequently, particularly in salon names from German-speaking cantons, is to contrast languages in noun phrases containing possessors. In these cases, the coding of the possessor is in a language different from the possessum. Possession in Standard German requires genitive case morphology on the possessor. When that role is taken by a name, then the suffix *-s* indicates the possessor. This is somewhat parallel to the English construction where proper noun human possessors are the most likely types of noun phrase to receive the clitic *'s*. German possessors which end in sibilants, however, require an apostrophe to mark their role but without the addition of another sibilant (Duden 2011: 97). In more colloquial varieties of that language the apostrophe is used beyond the context of final sibilants, though Glück and Sauer (1995: 106) argue that is derived from English. The following examples come from all of the major linguistic regions of Switzerland, and, for this reason, I argue the possessors are embedded in an English structure while the possessum noun phrases are not.

- | | | |
|------|--|-----------------|
| (12) | Elsi's Haar Atelier | ZG _G |
| | NAME-POSS _E hair _G workspace _G | |
| | 'Elsie's Hair Studio' | |
| | | |
| (13) | Dani's Hoortröimli | SO _G |
| | NAME-POSSE hair _{SWG} -dream _{SWG} -DIM _{SWG} | |
| | 'Dani's Hairdreams' | |
| | | |
| (14) | Mym's Création | JU _F |
| | NAME-POSSE creation _F | |
| | 'Mym's Creation' | |

- (15) Guido's Coiffeur TI_I
 NAME-POSS_E hairstylist_I
 'Guido's Hairstyling'

In these examples the possessors are explicitly embedded in an English structure whereas the possessed items are from other languages. Rarely is the association between the languages and the roles within possession structures reversed:

- (16) Gabis Hairshop SO_G
 NAME-POSS_G hair_E-shop_E
 'Gabi's Hairshop'

- (17) Connys Hairworld SH_G
 NAME-POSS_G hair_E-world_E
 'Conny's Hairworld'

Here, the possessor names are encoded by the German genitive *-s*, while the possessum noun phrases are compounds formed from English material. In the data under analysis, Swiss French speakers do not play with this strategy. There are no salons where a non-French noun phrase is possessed by a French noun phrase containing a proper name, i.e., there are no forms N_{E/G/I/OTHER} de_F NAME. By contrast, Swiss Italian namers use this strategy. Here names are inside prepositional phrases marking them as possessors. They are positioned following phrases in another language.

- (18) Style Me di Bottoni Paola TI_I
 style_E me_E of_I NAME
 'Paola Bottoni's Style Me'

- (19) Petit Soleil di Simonetta Vania TI_I
 little_F sun_F of_I NAME
 'Simonetta Vania's Little Sunshine'

In the possession play examples (16) and (17), the possessor precedes the possessed, the preferred order in English. French only allows the reverse order for non-pronominal possessors. A source for this N_{E/F} OTHER di_I NAME may be its use among Italian namers of products in the beauty and fashion field. We also find a few cases where non-animate are possessed with the *'s*. English has a preference for the *'s*-possession strategy for animate and topical noun phrases (cf.

Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartik 1985: 5.117). Forms marked by the English clitic 's may also appear following the possessed, a word order not usually found in English or German possession constructions with proper noun possessors.

- (20) Coiffeur My's AG_G
 hairstylist_G NAME-POSS_E
 'My's Hairstylist'
- (21) Haarschnittstelle Edward's ZH_G
 hair_G-cut_G-spot_G NAME-POSS_E
 'Edward's Haircut Spot'
- (22) coiffure Heaven's BE_{G/F}
 hairstyling_F heaven-POSS_E
 'Heaven's hairstyling'

6.4 Punning and Respelling Strategies

The use of the English form, *hair*, is of course not unexpected for this particular industry; however, it is useful not only for its semantic content. Salon namers take advantage of the pronunciation of this word of this English word, using it to respell words in other languages containing a similar phonetic sequence, i.e. interlingual paronymy. In some cases, there is no semantic or morphological unity to the replaced sequence of sounds. This is most easily demonstrated when we consider the insertion of *hair* in proper nouns:

Tab. 1: *Hair* respellings in proper nouns

	Salon name	Target proper noun	
(23)	Hair mès coiffure	Hermès	GE _F
(24)	Rob-HAIR-to Coiffure	Roberto	NE _F
(25)	Coiffure Hairzog	Herzog	SG _G
(26)	Coiffeur Usthair	Uster (TOPONYM)	ZH _G
(27)	Coiffeur wintHAIRthur	Winterthur (TOPONYM)	ZH _G

Pronouncing *hair* as if it were a French form deletes the /h/ as the French grapheme <h> is silent, which suggests that French pronunciations of examples (23) and (24) would sound no different to French pronunciations of *Hermès* or *Roberto*. This kind of interlingual humour is not restricted to playing with proper nouns.

Tab. 2: *Hair* respellings in German forms

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	Gloss	
(28)	Salon Hairlich	herrlich	'gorgeous, marvellous'	BL _G
(29)	hairstyling hairzlich	herzlich	'heartfelt, cordial'	LU _G
(30)	Coiffure Hairzblut	Herzblut	'lifeblood'	BE _{G/F}

The examples above show *hair* substitutions in German forms. In examples (29) and (30) the English-sourced form has not replaced a complete potentially free morpheme. Only in example (28) is a complete syllable replaced. In the French-speaking cantons the use of the phonetic qualities of *hair* is even more apparent as it frequently replaces a final rhyme spelled <aire>, <er>, <ère>, or <erre>, pronounced /ɛʁ/:

Tab. 3: Final-syllable *hair* respellings in French forms

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	Gloss	
(31)	Jupit'Hair	Jupiter	'Jupiter'	VS _{F/G}
(32)	Myst'hair Coiffure	Mystère	'mystery'	FR _{F/G}
(33)	L'art de pl'hair	Plaire	'the art of pleasing'	JU _F
(34)	L'univ'hair de Jade	L'univers	'Jade's universe'	JU _F
(35)	Jennif'hair Coiffure	Jennifer	'Jennifer'	VD _F
(36)	Vhair	Verre	'glass, mirror'	VD _F
(37)	Quoi F'haire	Faire	'what to do? what's to be done?'	VD _F

Example (37) is also nearly homophonous with the verb *coiffer* 'to style hair', adding another layer to the pun, see, among others, example (58) below. Final syllable *hair* names are also found in German: *Legendhair* (LU_G) playing on

legendär ‘legendary’ and *MILLIONHAIR* (ZH_G) for *Millionär* ‘millionaire’. Note that the reverse of the French and Italian situation holds here. That is, German has a phoneme /h/ which is retained in a German speaker’s pronunciation of *hair*. The most frequent and widespread example of this strategy plays on the near homophony of the nouns *atmosphere*, *Atmosphäre* and *atmosphère* in English, German and French, although the German form contains one more syllable than the others. The <h> is part of the digraph <ph> in all three languages and does not ‘interfere’ with the pronunciation. Twelve salons have some form of wordplay on these forms:

(38)	Coiffeur Atmosphair	BE _{G/F}
(39)	Atmosphair	FR _{F/G}
(40)	Atmosp’Hair	SO _G
(41)	Atmosph hair	VD _F
(42)	Atmosphair Coiffure	VS _{F/G}
(43)	ATMOSP’HAIR	FMBL _G
(44)	Atmosp’Hair Coiffure	LU _G
(45)	AtmospHAIR	VD _F
(46)	AtmospH’Hair	VD _F
(47)	Atmosp’hair	VS _{F/G}

The different orthographies suggest they do not all belong to a chain. It must be noted that versions of this salon name are also found in France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom, as a Google search will reveal. This *hair* respelling strategy is not restricted to final syllables. Also it can be combined with other respelling games. The names below rely on the pronunciation of the French letter names, <n> /ɛn/, <r> /ɛʁ/, and <j> /ʒi/. Combined they form a very close approximation of French *énergie* ‘energy’.

Tab. 4: *Hair* as French <r> letter name

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	Gloss	
(48)	N’Hair J	Énergie	‘energy’	BE _{G/F}
(49)	N’Hair Gie	Énergie	‘energy’	VD _F

This strategy of *hair* respelling has an equivalent in German-speaking areas, where *Haar* replaces the sequence <ar> in words of other languages. *Haar* can also be found replacing sequences of letters <ar> in words in other languages.

Tab. 5: German *Haar* respellings

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	
(50)	Coiffeur Haarmony	Harmony _E	NW _G
(51)	Haartist Coiffure	Artist _E	ZH _G
(52)	STHAAR der Coifuresalon	Star _E	SO _G
(53)	Phaaradiso	Paradiso, 'paradise'	SZ _G

While partial respellings, which replace <c> or word final <que> with <k> in French, e.g. *Karact'R* (GE_F), *Dynamik* (VS_{F/G}), are quite common, complete respellings are rare and therefore stand out. They go beyond the Swiss dialect forms for *coiffure*. In these cases, German-speaking salon namers have reworked forms from English and French. The form *Stäil* in (55) for example was described by a Swiss informant as how you might try and spell the English word.

- (54) Bon Schur Coiffeur SO_G
 bon_F jour_F Coiffeur_G
 good_F day_F hairstylist_G
 'Hello Hairstylist'
 'Good Shearing Hairstylist'
- (55) Ürner Stäil UR_G
 Uri_{SWG} style_E
 'Uri Style'
- (56) Coiffeurladen Meihär ZH_G
 Coiffeur_Gladen_G my_E-hair_E
 hairstylist_G-shop_G
 'Hairstylist Shop My Hair'

Example (54) warrants further examination, as one reviewer pointed out, *Schur* translates as 'shearing', creating a pun on another level. A twist on this respelling strategy is found in German-speaking Saint Gallen, *Coiffeur Cora Zón* dis-

plays a respelling of the Spanish form for ‘heart’ to produce a personal name, punning on the popular naming strategy of *Coiffeur* + *Name*.

6.5 Morphological Replacement

Hair is not only used to replace phonetic sequences but also morphemes. In a few cases, the French infinitive marker *-er* has been substituted with *hair*. The strategy is unusual here as French speakers consider the infinitive marker, pronounced /e/ as considerably less homophonous with *hair* than the final-syllable examples (31–37) above. Therefore, it is an example of paronymic wordplay across languages.

Tab. 6: *Hair* as the French morpheme *-er*

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	Gloss	
(57)	Parad'hair Coiffure	parader	‘to parade, to show off’	GE _F
(58)	Coiff'Hair	coiffer	‘to style hair’	BE _{G/F}

While example (58) could also be read as *quoi faire* ‘what’s to be done?’ as in example (37), this reading was not offered by my native speaker informants, whose first interpretation was the verb ‘to style hair’. These replacements suggest an influence from the match between French spellings and *hair* rather than phonetic similarity in this context. In German, the potentially free form *her* ‘towards speaker’ can combine with other elements to make more complex words. In the salons of German Switzerland, *hair*, phonetically similar to the German particle *her*, takes its place, creating morphologically complex hybrid forms:

Tab. 7: *Hair* as the German morpheme *her-*

	Salon name	Target of wordplay	Gloss	
(59)	HAIReinspaziert	Hereinspaziert _G	‘come in’	NW _G
(60)	hair-damit	her damit	‘give it here’	SG _G
(61)	HAIRVORRAGEND	Hervorragend _G	‘outstanding’	AG _G
(62)	Coiffeur Hairein	Herein _G	‘inside’	BE _{G/F}
(63)	Vorhair Nachhair	Vorher _G Nachher _G	‘before, after’	ZH _G

Example (63) is a particularly felicitous piece of interlingual wordplay as it combines two levels of humour. Firstly, there is the near-homophony of *her* and *hair*. The prepositions *vor* and *nach* already contain the meanings ‘before’ and ‘after’. Secondly, the attachment of *her* / *hair* creates compounded temporal adverbs allowing the semantics of *hair* to come into play as well. A third level plays on the advertising strategy of the before and after photo demonstrating to consumers the improvements or benefits a product or service will make.

A minor related morphological strategy for interlingual play is the affixing of morphemes to bases with different origins, without recourse to homophony or paronymy. Modelled perhaps on the English formation *cafeteria*, the Spanish suffix denoting a place of business, *-ería* is attached to forms (originally) from English, French and Italian:

- | | | | |
|------|---|--|-----------------|
| (64) | Styleria Hair | | AG _G |
| | style _E -erías hair _E | | |
| | ‘Styletereria Hair’ | | |
| (65) | Capelleria Hairdesign | | SG _G |
| | hair _I -erías hair _E -design _G | | |
| | ‘Hairetereria Hairdesign’ | | |
| (66) | Coiffeteria Onyx | | BS _G |
| | hairstyle _G -erías onyx _G | | |
| | ‘Hairstyletereria Onyx’ | | |
| (67) | Lockeria | | BS _G |
| | curl _G -erías | | |
| | ‘Curletereria’ | | |

Example (67) *Lockeria* may have multiple levels of language play. *Locke* in Standard German means ‘curl’, so *lockeria* would mean literally ‘place where curling is done’, or ‘curling business’. In (Swiss) German, *locker* can mean ‘cool, relaxed’, too. The meaning would be either something like ‘the place where being made cool is done’ or even ‘the place where you are given a haircut in a relaxed atmosphere.’⁴ We may add to this set, the form *Coiffurama* found in French-speaking Vaud and Valais and in a German-speaking part of the Bern

⁴ Thanks to a reviewer for this suggestion.

canton. The suffix *-rama* is a backformation from the Greek nouns *cyclorama* and *panorama*.

6.6 Lexical Substitution

Pronouncing *hair* as a French word with a silent <h> allows salon namers the opportunity to replace (near) homophonous words from within French phrases. There are more than ten salons where *hair* has replaced French *air* ‘air’. These names make puns on a number of French expressions with many examples of wordplay with the expression *l’air du temps* ‘the talk of the town, spirit of the times’.

- (68) Coiffure dans L’hair Du Temps BE_{G/F}
 hairstyling_F in_F DET_F-air_F of.DET_F times_F
 ‘Hair salon in the Spirit of the Times’
- (69) C’est dans l’Hair GE_F
 it-is_F in_F DET-air_F
 ‘It is in the air’
- (70) Bulle d’hair GE_F
 bubble_F of_F-air_F
 ‘Air bubble’
- (71) Changer d’Hair JU_F
 change_F-INF_F of_F-air_F
 ‘to get a fresh start, to change direction’
- (72) Courant d’Hair VS_{F/G}
 current_F of_F-air_F
 ‘Draught of Air’
- (73) Au Grand Hair VS_{F/G}
 at_F.DET_F great_F air_F
 ‘In the Great Outdoors’
- (74) magie dans l’hair VS_{F/G}
 magi_C_F in_F DET_F-air_F
 ‘magic in the air’

- (75) Tête en l'Hair VS_{F/G}
 head_F in_F DET_F-air_F
 'Head in the Clouds'

Another French expression, *nouvelle ère* 'new era' frequently shows replacement of the noun with the English element *hair*. Interestingly, the English noun is classified as masculine, like the French form for 'hair', and in contrast to the feminine *ère*. This transformation of gender is marked by an apostrophe in the salon names – *Nouvel'Hair* (GE_F, NE_F, JU_F, VD_F) marking the deletion of the feminine ending to create the masculine form of the adjective for nouns beginning with vowels. Salon namers can take the substitution *hair* for *air* further by using the letter <r> for both terms as the French letter is called *erre* and pronounced /ɛʁ/.

- (76) R de Rien BE_{G/F}
 hair_E / air_F of_F nothing_F
 'Casual'; 'seeming insignificant'
- (77) R Coiffure FR_{F/G}
 hair_E / air_F hairstyling_F
 'Hair Styling'
- (78) L'R du Temps GE_F
 DET_F-hair_E / air_F of-DET_F Times
 'The talk of the town'
- (79) R' mode coiffure GE_F
 hair_E/air_F-fashion_F hairstyling_F
 'Hair'fashion hairstyling'
- (80) Look' R VD_F
 look_{F/E}-hair_E / air_F
 'Look'Hair'
- (81) R-lab GE_F
 hair_E / air_F-lab_E
 'Hair-lab'

- (82) R'Style VD_F
 hair_E / air_F-style_E
 'Hair'Style'
- (83) R-play Studio VS_{F/G}
 hair_E / air_F-play_E studio_F
 'Hair-play studio'

The form *look* has been borrowed into French as in the expression *un nouveau look* 'a new look' and is the base for subsequent innovations *relooker* 'to make over' and *relookiste* 'image stylist'. The final form makes a pun on 'airplay' and the double meaning of *studio* as workspace and the place where music is recorded. This is a pun that could not be made in English. The names containing the letters *er* /ʀɛʁ/ in German and *erre* /'erre/ in Italian are also near-homophones with *hair*, especially in an Italian pronunciation of that term which deletes the /h/.

- (84) Coiffeur R Plus TG_G
 hairstylist_G hair_E plus_G
 'Hairstylist hair plus'
- (85) Style Erre Più TI_I
 hairstylist_G hair_E plus_I
 'Hairstylist hair plus'
- (86) eRre style TI_I
 hair_E style_E
 'hairR style'
- (87) Linea R TI_I
 style_I hair_E
 'Style Hair'

6.7 Orthographic Cues to Wordplay

The final strategy the salon namers may deploy is not so much about creating but drawing attention to interlingual wordplay. While perhaps some features of the orthography used in salon signage might be lost on [local.ch](#), it is clear that orthographic devices such as non-standard capitalisation, the apostrophe and

the hyphen are used to introduce or bracket unexpected elements created through interlingual wordplay. We have already seen examples of this in the *atmosphere* names, examples (38–47) above. Using apostrophes to highlight interlingual wordplay is strongly associated with salon names in French-speaking cantons. This strategy seems related to the functions of the apostrophe in French commercial names, where it can mark the deletion of silent letters, *MOV'MENT Coiffure* (GE_F), and juxtaposition with deletion of the first element's silent letters as found in *Coiff'hit* (JU_F) from *coiffe*, the imperative of 'to cut', turning it into 'cut it!'. The apostrophe also signals the embedding of English elements as in *Al'Hair'Natif* (VS_{F/G}), and the introduction of letter names, see examples (80) and (82) above (Pire 2000, 2001: 67–70). Salon namers in German-speaking cantons use apostrophes only when engaging with the playful possession strategy. The hyphen for these namers is used to create novel compounds from at least one English-sourced element of their repertoire or to join single letters or initials to another lexical item.

All of the languages of Switzerland use diacritics, but seldom are they added to forms from other languages. That is, the German umlaut is not used to respell non-German words in salon names with the possible exception of the respelling of *style* in example (55) *Ürner stäil*. This avoidance is unusual as in other fields the umlaut has been borrowed, e.g. in band names in the heavy metal genre (Spitzmüller 2012: 270). For French-sourced lexical items, the deletion of an accent often creates a cognate English word. This may not be a deliberate strategy for word-initial vowels when capitalised as the accent here is optional. Elsewhere the deletion of an accent is notable. One salon in the bilingual canton of Fribourg is named *Ideal Coiffure*. The removal of the accent from *idéal* creates a name which can be read as an English-French mix or Standard Swiss German. On the other hand, deleting the accent in *création* renders the name *Hair creation* in Vaud canton monolingual English, albeit it is with one form easily disambiguated by French-speaking readers.

7 Conclusion: Salons of Identity?

Given the frequent use of interlingual wordplay via the strategies illustrated above, it might be concluded that the multilingualism of the Swiss Confederation is reflected in the salon names. This is certainly true when we consider that *coiffure* and *coiffeur* belong to all Swiss languages. But while it is clear that Romansh and Swiss German cannot but assert a Swiss identity, it may not be the case that the identity is always Swiss per se, but a more local, regional one.

Moreover, as was the case for French in the Finnish salons of Pahta and Taavitsainen's (2004) study and in the American salon names analysed by Byrd (1982), the use of French and Italian may be to index cultures beyond Switzerland's borders. Their use in German Switzerland draws on the connotations of France and Italy's association with beauty and fashion, not Romandy or Ticino.

The combination of Swiss languages in salon names is not intended to communicate across the country's internal borders, and, with the exception of the bi- and trilingual cantons, the names are not advertising across local speech community borders either. I argue this is the case for English, too. Outside of the international cities of Zurich and Geneva, there is no large English-speaking community. Hairdressing is a local business, but its practices are international. This push-pull is also felt in the choice of language. On one level, it is easy to argue that the Swiss languages are for local identity and English for professional identity. The central piece of vocabulary in this field appears to be the English-origin noun *hair*. While this form is not a borrowing into the languages of Switzerland, it would be difficult to avoid it in this profession. Other terms frequently used from this field are *cut* and *color*. On another level, however, I argue namers are going beyond this identification of languages as local or professional.

What salon namers do with *hair*, though, depends on other elements in their repertoire. It appears that names from all of the different linguistic regions have the apostrophe possession strategy at hand, but strategies such as morphological replacements are restricted to where near-homophony exists. Namers whose repertoires include elements of Italian or French can play with their lack of an /h/ phoneme and stereotyped accents in English to humorous effect. Those with some knowledge of German, which has /h/ in its inventory, are less likely to deploy this strategy, but are able to make *hair-her* morphological substitutions.

These effects, grounded in the opportunities for wordplay afforded by different languages, suggests another level of analysis. Rather than seeing the interlingual names as examples of the namer's bilingual abilities which locates them in particular linguistic regions of Switzerland, we should focus on the playful aspect of the names they have made. Hair salon names playfully combine elements of the namer's repertoire in a metrolingual fashion. That is, the components of language that each namer has at hand, the words, the morphemes, and orthographic knowledge are simply tools for their creativity. Grammatical structures are transferred from one linguistic system to another, morphemes attach to bases from a different source, and spelling transforms words into another language, producing hybrid systems where the boundaries around

languages collapse. The linguistic systems that separate German from French, say, are irrelevant to the namers, who take up the opportunity to play with the linguistic forms and conventions they have at hand. By examining some of the meaning effects produced by this playing with words, we can see that the communicative effect is the playfulness of the name itself. Many of the names are not enlightening as to the nature of the hairdressers or the salon they work at. Including the forms *Rob-hair-to* or *Hairsblut* in the name tells us little about the salon itself. Nor is it likely that the salon *Au Grand Hair* offers haircuts in the great outdoors. Rather, such names index the creativity of the profession as well as the sheer pleasure of interlingual play.

Names with more complex forms of humour with puns and *hair*-related puns such as *Vorhair Nachhair* may be deemed more successful or sophisticated examples of interlingual wordplay. Their complexity might push them further up what Carter (2012: 136) calls the cline of literariness; a term he uses to describe the self-conscious selection of forms for the associations and resonances they can bring to a text (2012: 136). However, with such a claim it must be understood that literariness is a quality of some types or moments of everyday language as much as a quality of literary texts.

Playing with *hair* and with other elements of their professional register and linguistic repertoire allows the namers a range of effects indexing fashion, beauty and modernity on the one hand and a local identity on the other. More importantly, I argue that the tools of interlingual language play by Swiss salon namers are deployed to display creativity and innovation and to produce novelty and surprise. As metrolingual language users, their strategies of respelling, of substitution and morphological borrowing suggest that salon namers use their linguistic repertoires to play with words not to communicate across geographic borders but by cutting across the ideological borders that artificially create the separate language systems and language regions of Switzerland, their creativity becomes a large part of their message.

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