

# **Landscapes, languages and data structures**

*Issues in building the Placenames Database of Ireland*

Michal Boleslav Měchura  
Fiontar, Dublin City University

# www.logainm.ie

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na hÉir... +

www.logainm.ie

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop

nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

## BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN

### Placenames Database of Ireland


#### SEARCH

Include street names

Type a placename in Irish or English  
How to search »

Explore Ireland's placenames with our  
interactive map »

#### BROWSE BY COUNTY



Aontroim/Antrim

#### Welcome

Placenames Database of Ireland, developed by Fiontar (DCU) and The Placenames Branch (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht).

#### Placename of the day

« 14/07/2012

**Baile Chláir**  
*gin. Bhaile Chláir*  
*validated name*

**Claregalway**

town  
County: *Galway*

#### Archival records

scanned records available (2)

More information...

#### Announcement

##### Opportunities for Irish language graduates: deadline 16 July

There are 6 places available on a fulltime internship programme (Clár Aimhirgín) for Irish language graduates.

More information »

www.logainm.ie

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na hÉir...

www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Ballincollig&streets=yes

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop

nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN  
Placenames Database of Ireland

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

map data QUICK ZOOM: counties | baronies | civil parishes | townlands

Ballincollig

Include street names

Similar names

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
(townland)  
Kerry

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
(electoral district)  
Cork

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
(townland, town)  
Cork

**Baile an Chollaigh**  
gin. Bhaile an Chollaigh  
validated name

**Ballincollig**  
townland, town  
County: Cork  
More information...

Show placenames

20 mi  
20 km

Imagery ©2012 TerraMetrics - Terms of Use

# www.logainm.ie

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na hÉireann

www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Ballincollig&streets=yes

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop

nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

## BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN

Placenames Database of Ireland

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

map data

county **Corcaigh/Cork**

barony **Múscraí Thoir/Muskerry East**

civil parish **Carraig Ruacháin/Carrigrohane**  
**Cill na Gluaire/Kilnaglory**

townland, town **Baile an Chollaigh**  
*gin. Bhaile an Chollaigh*  
*validated name*  
*(Irish)*

**Ballincollig**  
*(English)*

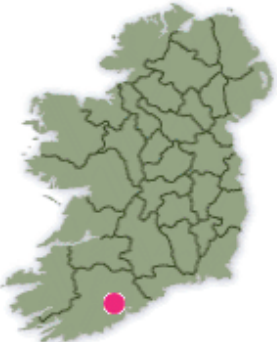
There is or was once a post office here

**Explanatory note**

“ the town of An Collach  
**An Collach** – from the surname Coll (cf. reference to ‘Richard Coll’, knight, 1478)

**Archival records**

scanned records (3)



W 58931 70505  
W 59 71

Larger map

**Ballincollig**

Include street names

Similar names

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
*(townland)*  
Kerry

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
*(electoral district)*  
Cork

**Baile an Chollaigh/Ballincollig**  
*(townland, town)*  
Cork

# Agenda

1. Linguistic properties of placenames
2. Cross-linguistic issues
3. Administrative hierarchies
4. 'Space' versus 'place'

# 1. Linguistic properties of placenames

- Internal structure
- Combinatorial properties
- Lexical relations

# 1. Linguistic properties of placenames

- Combinatorial properties
  - Number
  - Gender
  - Locative prepositions
  - Categorizers

# Locative prepositions

Gaillimh  
*Galway*

→

i nGaillimh  
*in Galway*

An Cheathrú Rua  
*Carrarow*

→

ar an gCeathrú Rua  
*'on' Carrarow*



# Categorizers

Donegal Town

County Donegal

Limerick City

County Limerick

# 1. Linguistic properties of placenames

- Internal structure
  - Constituent structure
  - “Initialisms” (eg. definite articles)
  - Composite names
  - Disambiguators

# “Initialisms”

The Rise

The Burren

The Five Roads

The Square

An Baile Mór

An Bhó Dhearg

An Cheathrú Rua

An tArd

Na hArda

# Definite articles

Éire

*Ireland*

→

muintir na hÉireann

*people of 'the' Ireland*

Gaillimh

*Galway*

→

sráideanna na Gaillimhe

*streets of 'the' Galway*

sa Ghailimh

*in 'the' Galway*

*but also*

inGaillimh

*in Galway*

# Composite names

Terenure-Cherryfield

Lios Mór agus Magh Cholpa

Lismore and Mocollop

Ballaghgowla and Froghan

Phibblestown or Hansfield

Baile Fiobail nó Páirc Hans

# Disambiguators

Loch an Dúigh Theas; Black Lough (South)

Balbriggan Rural, Baile Brigín (Tuath)

Ashtown A; Ashtown B

Tullyglush (Nevin); Tullyglush (Kane)

# 1. Linguistic Properties of Placenames

- Lexical relations
  - Words that frequently occur in placenames
  - Donyms
  - “Placename recycling”

# Demonyms

Galway



Galwegian

Tír Chonaill



Conallach



# “Placename recycling”

Lismore  
*County Waterford*

→

Lismore Park  
*Waterford City*

Ballymore  
*County ???*

→

Ballymore Bridge  
*County Kildare*

## 2. Cross-linguistic issues

- Borrowing
- Gaps
- Anglicisation
- Translation
- Re-interpretation

# Borrowing

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the website logainm.ie. The page title is "BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland". The search bar contains the number "1166922" and the checkbox "Include street names" is checked. The search results are displayed in a table-like format with the following information:

county	Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin
barony	Ráth an Dúin/Rathdown
civil parish	Baile na Manach/Monkstown
town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ <b>Dún Laoghaire</b> <i>gn. Dhún Laoghaire</i> <i>validated name</i> <i>(Irish)</i></li><li>▶ <b>Dún Laoghaire</b> <i>(English)</i></li></ul>

Below the search results, there is a note: "There is or was once a post office here".

**Archival records**

scanned records (4)

**Permanent link**

<http://www.logainm.ie/1166922.aspx>

# Gaps

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the logainm.ie website. The address bar shows the URL [www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=An+Sáipéal&streets=yes](http://www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=An+Sáipéal&streets=yes). The page title is "BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland". The main content area shows a search for "An Sáipéal" with the following details:

county	Ciarraí/Kerry
barony	Corca Dhuibhne/Corkaguiny
civil parish	Dún Chaoin/Dunquin
townland	Inis Mhic Aoibhleáin/Inishvickillane
island or archipelago	Inis Mhic Aoibhleáin/Inishvickillane
minor feature	<b>An Sáipéal</b> <i>gin. an tSáipéil</i> <i>non-validated name</i> <i>(Irish)</i>

Additional information includes: "This is in the Gaeltacht" and a "Permanent link" to <http://www.logainm.ie/1394765.aspx>. On the left, there is a search box containing "An Sáipéal", a checked option for "Include street names", and a "Similar names" dropdown menu. Below the search box, a red-bordered box highlights the entry: "An Sáipéal (minor feature) Kerry".

# Anglicisation

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Bunachar Logainmneacha na Héireann' (Placenames Database of Ireland) website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Gaoth+Dobhair&streets=yes](http://www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Gaoth+Dobhair&streets=yes). The website header includes the title 'BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland' and navigation links for 'About', 'Ask a question', 'Translate a list', and 'Leagan Gaeilge'. Below the header, there are links for 'Educational resources', 'Information resources', and 'Placenames orders'. A search box on the left contains the text 'Gaoth Dobhair' and has a checked option for 'Include street names'. Below the search box, there is a section titled 'Gaoth Dobhair/Gweedore (locality) Donegal'. The main content area features a map of Donegal with a callout box for 'Gaoth Dobhair'. The callout box contains the following information: 'Gaoth Dobhair', 'gin. Ghaoth Dobhair', 'validated name', 'Gweedore', 'locality', 'County: Donegal', and 'More information...'. The map includes a scale bar for 20 miles and 20 kilometers, and a 'Show placenames' button. The footer of the website contains copyright information: 'Data: © Government of Ireland 2008-2012', 'Technical solution: © Fiontar 2008-2012', and 'Contact: logainm@dcu.ie'. Logos for 'Fiontar DCU' and 'An Roinn Ealaíon, Oldireachta agus Gaeltachta Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht' are also present.

# Translation

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na ... x Bunachar Náisiúnta Logainmneacha x +

www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Butler's+Bridge&streets=yes

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN  
Placenames Database of Ireland

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

map data

county **An Cabhán/Cavan**  
barony **Lucht Tí Uachtarach/Loughtee Upper**  
civil parish **Castleterra**

town

- ▶ **Droichead an Bhuitléaraigh**  
*gn. Droichead an Bhuitléaraigh*  
*validated name*  
*(Irish)*
- ▶ **Butler's Bridge**  
*(English)*

There is or was once a post office here

**Explanatory note**

“ The Irish form is a translation

**Archival records**

scanned records (4)

**Permanent link**


<http://www.logainm.ie/4507.aspx>

**Butler's Bridge**

Include street names

[Droichead an Bhuitléaraigh/  
Butler's Bridge](#)  
*(electoral district)*  
Cavan

[Droichead an Bhuitléaraigh/  
Butler's Bridge](#)  
*(town)*  
Cavan



H 41 11  
Larger map

# Independent etymologies

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the logainm.ie website. The page title is "BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland". The search results for "Loch Garman" are displayed, showing the county of Wexford and the validated name "Loch Garman" in Irish. The page also lists sub-units and a permanent link.

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na ... x Bunachar Náisiúnta Logainmneacha x +

www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Loch+Garman&streets=yes

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop

nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

map data

**Loch Garman**

Include street names

Similar names

Filter search results

By category

**Loch Garman/Wexford**  
(county)

**Loch Garman (Tuath)/Wexford, Rural**  
(electoral district)  
Wexford

**Loch Garman (Tuath) (cuid)/Wexford Rural (part)**  
(electoral district)  
Wexford

**Loch Garman (Uimh.1 Uirbeach)/Wexford No 1, Urban**  
(electoral district)  
Wexford

county

▶ **Loch Garman**  
*gin. Loch Garman*  
*validated name*  
(Irish)

▶ **Wexford**  
(English)

**Sub-units**

baronies (11) · electoral districts (126) · towns (33) · civil parishes (146) · townlands (2309) · rivers (26) · cliffs (1) · bays (1) · passes (1) · castles (1) · canals (1) · hills (3) · promontories (10) · localities (3) · bridges (1) · population centres (61) · estuaries (3) · lakes (2) · islands and archipelagos (5) · marshes (1) · monuments (2) · mountains and mountain ranges (5) · streets (7) · villages (1)

**Permanent link**

<http://www.logainm.ie/100019.aspx>

# Reinterpretation

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the logainm.ie website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Barra+an+Teampaill&streets=yes. The website header includes the title "BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland" and navigation links such as "About", "Ask a question", "Translate a list", and "Leagan Gaeilge". Below the header, there are tabs for "map" and "data". The main content area displays the following information:

county	Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin
city	Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin
street	<b>Barra an Teampaill</b> <i>gín. Bharra an Teampaill</i> <i>(Irish)</i> <b>Temple Bar</b> <i>(English)</i>
	<b>Permanent link</b> <a href="http://www.logainm.ie/1380149.aspx">http://www.logainm.ie/1380149.aspx</a>

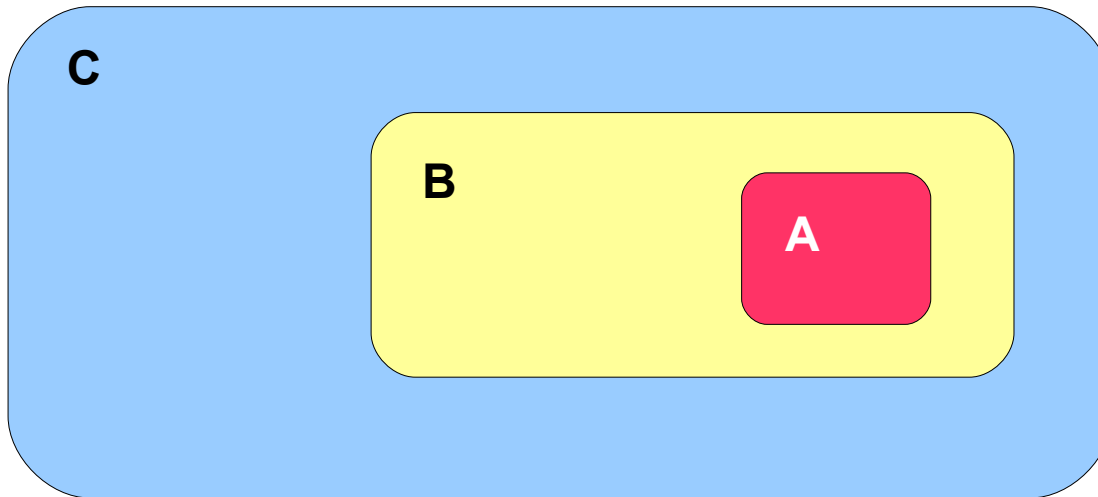
On the left side of the page, there is a search box containing "Barra an Teampaill" and a checkbox for "Include street names" which is checked. Below the search box, there are two entries for "Barra an Teampaill/Temple Bar": one labeled "(street) Dublin" and another labeled "(locality) Dublin".



# 3. Administrative hierarchies

- Nested hierarchies
- Overlapping hierarchies

# Nested hierarchy

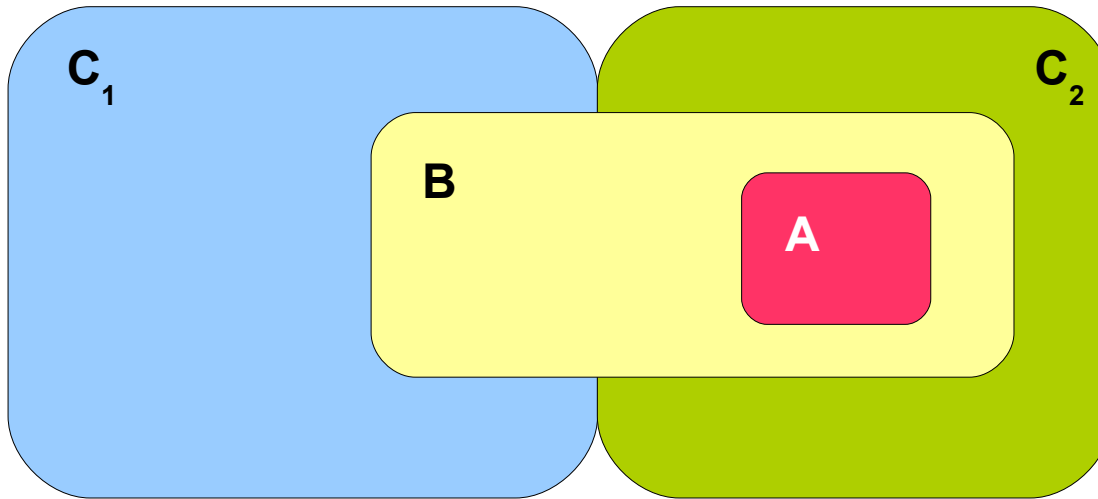


A is in B  
B is in C

---

A is in C

# Overlapping hierarchy



A is in B  
B is in  $C_1$   
B is in  $C_2$

---

A is in ???

## 4. 'Space' versus 'place'

# How many 'Donegals' are there?

Firefox

logainm.ie - Bunachar Logainmneacha na ... x Bunachar Náisiúnta Logainmneacha x +

www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=Donegal&streets=yes&listText=&filterParent=100013&filterType=

logainm.ie focal.ie ainm.ie ceardlann/workshop nuachtlitir/newsletter · FIONTAR

BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN  
Placenames Database of Ireland

About Ask a question Translate a list **Leagan Gaeilge**

Educational resources | Information resources | Placenames orders

map data

county **Dún na nGall/Donegal**

barony **Tír Aodha/Tirhugh**  
**Báinigh/Banagh**

electoral district **Dún na nGall/Donegal**

civil parish **Dún na nGall/Donegal**  
**Cill Ó mBaird/Killymard**

townland

- ▶ **Dún na nGall**  
*gln. Dhún na nGall*  
(Irish)
- ▶ **Donegal**  
(English)

There is or was once a post office here

**Sub-units**

streets (1)

**Permanent link**


<http://www.logainm.ie/14030.aspx>

**Dún na nGall/Donegal**  
(electoral district)  
Donegal

**Dún na nGall/Donegal**  
(town)  
Donegal

**Dún na nGall/Donegal**  
(civil parish)  
Donegal

**Dún na nGall/Donegal**  
(townland)  
Donegal



G 93527 78484  
Larger map

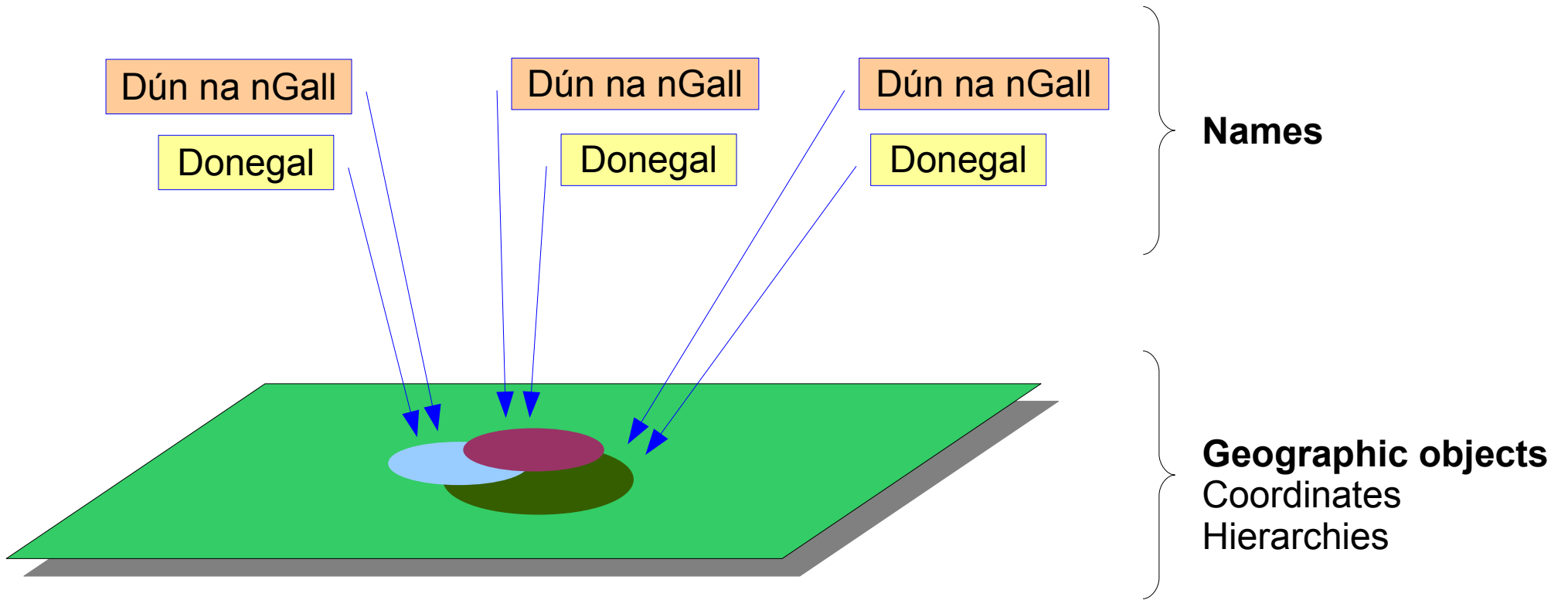
# 'An Baile Mór'

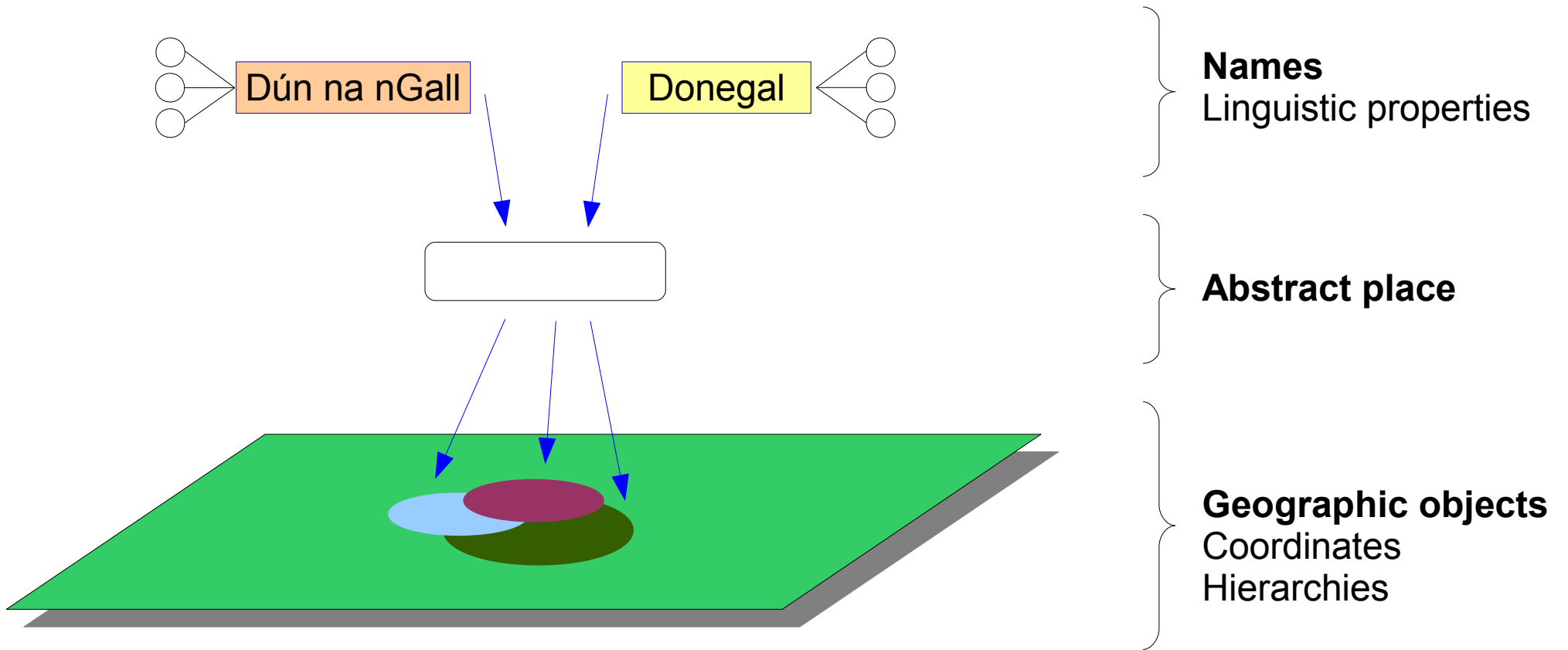
The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the logainm.ie website. The browser's address bar shows the URL [www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=An+Baile+Mór&streets=yes](http://www.logainm.ie/Viewer.aspx?text=An+Baile+Mór&streets=yes). The website header includes the title "BUNACHAR LOGAINMNEACHA NA HÉIREANN Placenames Database of Ireland" and navigation links for "About", "Ask a question", "Translate a list", and "Leagan Gaeilge". Below the header, there are tabs for "map" and "data", and a "QUICK ZOOM" section with links for "counties", "baronies", "civil parishes", and "townlands".

The search results on the left side of the page are as follows:

- An Baile Mór** (townland) Dublin
- An Baile Mór/Ballymore Eustace** (electoral district) Kildare
- An Baile Mór/Ballymore Eustace** (townland, town) Kildare
- An Baile Mór/Ballymore Eustace** (civil parish) Kildare
- An Baile Mór/Ballymore**

The map on the right shows the island of Ireland with several orange circular markers indicating the locations of "An Baile Mór". A "Show placenames" button is visible in the top right corner of the map area. A scale bar at the bottom left of the map shows 50 miles and 50 kilometers. The bottom right corner of the map area contains the text "Imagery ©2012 TerraMetrics - Terms of Use".







**THANK YOU.**

**Placenames Database of Ireland**  
[www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)

**Michal Boleslav Měchura**  
Fiontar, Dublin City University  
[mechrmdcu@dcu.ie](mailto:mechrmdcu@dcu.ie)