

Fictitious Animal and Plant Names in Fantastic Literature in Cross-Linguistic Comparison

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the names of fictitious species of animals and plants and on their position in the narrative of selected works of fantastic literature. The examined sample of occasionalisms will be drawn mainly from popular and influential texts, which include Tolkien's works, Pratchett's texts, the Harry Potter series, the Hunger Games series and other works. The aim of this paper is to capture how the presence of creatively named animals and plants contributes to the construction of a fantastic fictional world, both in terms of traditional word-formation theories and in the context of cognitive poetics and linguistics. The position of the sign in the word-formation system of both the original language of the work and of the selected translations will be analyzed – mainly English, German and Czech versions will be taken into account. A cross-linguistic comparison should then show that the choices made by the author or the translator in naming fictional species correspond, on the one hand, to the linguistic habits and conventions of the language in question, while, on the other hand, providing room for linguistic experimentation and influence from other languages (especially the language of the original text). Moreover, the paper will show how the chosen texts, through the usage of fictitious names of species, attempt to meet the readers' expectations for speculative literature (the presence of the magical, boundary crossing, hybridization, linguistic creativity and linguistic construction, etc.), as considered by Atteberry, Dědinová, Oziewicz and other scholars of the fantastic literature field.

Keywords: fantastic world building, fictitious species, occasionalisms, speculative literature, word-formation